

Our Guiding Principles

swisscontact



Swisscontact was founded in 1959 as the Swiss private sector's independent foundation for development cooperation.

Vision

Swisscontact is the leading Swiss organisation in the field of private sector promotion in the South and East. Its objective is to reduce poverty in selected countries of these regions through sustainable development.

Strategy

Swisscontact's strategy for private sector development and poverty reduction includes the following aspects:

- promotion of small urban and rural enterprises (e.g. access to know-how and finance)
- skills development for disadvantaged youth and job seekers
- training for staff and board members of micro finance institutions
- strengthening environmental consciousness through win-win situations
- improving market access for small enterprises and individuals
- developing demand-driven service providers for small enterprises
- policy dialogue for promoting an enabling environment
- etc.

Swisscontact promotes equal opportunities for men and women and includes environmental issues in its projects.

Principles of implementation

The basic principle of Swisscontact's work is "to help others to help themselves." Its conviction that private initiative is the driving force of any development is unique compared to other organisations.

Swisscontact's organisation is characterised by participative and decentralised decision-making structures; it is committed to cost-effective and efficient working methods. All projects are implemented in collaboration with carefully selected local partners. A special effort is made to foster local employees.

Swisscontact's work is subjected to regular internal and external assessments which secure quality and develop knowledge further. Systematic documentation of experience is a permanent task of project management. If necessary, projects are re-aligned. Internationally recognized auditing companies check all the projects annually. Swisscontact is tax-exempted and applies Swiss GAAP FER 21 principles in its accounting methods. Donations are tax-deductible in Switzerland.

In Switzerland, Swisscontact informs on the importance of development cooperation and the results of its projects.

Sources of Funding

Financial commitments from the Swiss private sector, Swiss Government, municipalities, cantons, foundations and individuals ensure the viability of Swisscontact's development work.

Swisscontact actively participates in public tenders of projects. Target markets are permanently screened. Consortia with partner companies and development organisations offering complementary services are formed on a case-by-case basis.

Companies that are currently active in developing countries or plan to do so in the future, can take advantage of Swisscontact's know-how, services and networks in the fields of corporate social responsibility.