




Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

September 2014

Dear reader

The First Geneva Convention was signed 150 years ago, marking the birth of international humanitarian law. The rules it established help to reduce the damages caused by armed conflicts and preserve a certain degree of humanity. Yet they are often not respected. Today as even, Switzerland seeks to protect and assist the victims of armed conflicts, working for the respect, strengthening and promotion of international humanitarian law.

The editorial team




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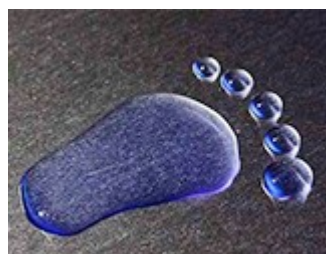
**Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC**



International humanitarian law: Swiss commitment to its application

Switzerland works at the political and diplomatic levels, in projects on the ground and in emergency situations. For instance, it supports radio stations in conflict zones which broadcast the principles of international humanitarian law in layman's terms in order to promote peace and security. Switzerland is a partner of the ICRC and deploys members of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit where their help is needed.

-   [Dossier: 150 years of Swiss humanitarian commitment](#)
-   [Brochure: ABCs of International Humanitarian Law](#)



ISO standard for the water footprint: helping to better manage this scarce commodity


The water footprint makes it possible to calculate the amount of water used for the production of goods, commodities or services. Methods of calculation vary. The new ISO standard, the development of which was led by Switzerland, provides a common framework for using water

Exhibition



Mongolia and Switzerland in images

Mongolia and Switzerland both have mountains, an affinity with nature and share a respect for tradition and culture. But life is hard in Mongolia. Switzerland is engaged in fighting poverty and in helping establish democracy in the country.

-   ["Aaruul and Justistaler" exhibition, Bern](#)



War from the Victims' Perspective

sparingly.

- 🌐 [An ISO standard to measure the water footprint](#)
- 🌐 [Press release](#)
- 🌐 [Films on the topic of water \(fr\)](#)



## Benin: literacy campaign for adults

Literacy programmes for adults are in high demand among the inhabitants of Benin's poorest regions. Nevertheless, the municipalities lack the resources and skills required to implement good-quality programmes. The SDC is committed to making the literacy sector in Benin able to operate autonomously.

- 🌐 [Skills transfer in municipalities of Benin](#)
- 🌐 [Eyewitness account from one staff member on the ground](#)
- 🌐 [Country page: Benin](#)



## Asia Brief: development in Laos strewn with mines

It is impossible to cultivate the soil or build infrastructure on land that is mined. 80 million pieces of unexploded ordnance still pose a serious danger to the population of Laos and greatly hamper the country's economic development. Switzerland supports the Laotian national demining agency with equipment and in its work to prevent accidents.

- 🌐 [Asia Brief: Uncovering the UXO problem in Laos](#)
- 🌐 [Previous issues](#)



## Myanmar: good-quality professional training

Although the hotel sector in Myanmar shows great potential, the skills are still somewhat lacking. In conjunction with specialists from the Swiss hotel industry, the SDC is developing good-quality training for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. It also provides training for technical professions in various sectors including agriculture, textiles industry, construction and the technical professions.

- 🌐 [Apprenticeships for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds](#)
- 🌐 [Visit by Myanmar's president to Switzerland](#)
- 🌐 [Country page: Myanmar](#)



## Iraq: Protection and basic provisions for internally displaced civilians

1.4 million people have taken flight since civil war broke out in Iraq in December 2013. The SDC funds two community centres in Baghdad where displaced persons are given essential items and

Pensive expression, laughing faces and searching eyes give the viewer a taste of what it is like to be caught up in a war.

- 🌐 [War from the Victims' Perspective – Photographs by Jean Mohr, Zurich](#)

### Event



## The SDC represented at "La Foire de Bienne"

The SDC will give the public the opportunity to find out more about its activities throughout the world in an interactive way.

- 🌐 [Street action, Biel/Bienne](#)

### The SDC in pictures



## Education and literacy campaign in West Africa

The SDC's strategy for basic education and acquiring literacy skills is adapted to each context, as portrayed in the following three films.

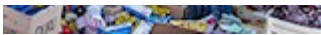
- 🌐 [Back to school in post-conflict Mali](#)
- 🌐 [Evening classes in Ouagadougou](#)
- 🌐 [Basic education for nomadic populations in West Africa](#)

### Conference



## Retrospective on the Annual Development Cooperation Conference





where they can also obtain advice. The younger ones can sign up for courses in reading and writing, information technology and English.

- [Aid for internally displaced Iraqis](#)
- [Country page: Iraq](#)



### Albinfo.ch: a platform of exchange and information for the diaspora

Albinfo.ch connects the members of the Albanian-speaking diaspora in Switzerland and enables them to keep in touch with their country of origin. The professional and cultural "savoir faire" of this community can be a useful resource in the social, economic and cultural development of Albania.

- [A website for the Albanian-speaking diaspora in Switzerland](#)
- [Country page: Albania](#)



### Poland: exchanging of experience and expertise with Switzerland

The promotion of tourism, the environment and energy, public transport, land use and the economy were some of the themes of the various partnerships between Switzerland and Poland that were completed this summer. Participants were able to exchange knowledge and experience, and forge contacts at the international level.

- [21 partnership projects nearing completion](#)
- [Switzerland's EU enlargement contribution](#)



### L'Accent multilateral: UN agencies united in action

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women seek to unite their efforts for greater efficiency. Switzerland actively promotes better coordination between the various multilateral agencies within the United Nations.

- [Multilateral Accent \(de, fr\)](#)
- [Previous issues](#)

## Publications / Films



### SDC magazine "One World"

Dossier on climate change, which disproportionately affects disadvantaged population groups. This issue also includes a focus on Cambodia, where there have been vocal protests against the lack of agrarian reform, as well as an article on the growing importance of disaster prevention. In addition, the director-general of the SDC looks back

This year in Geneva, several speakers highlighted the threat that climate change poses to the fight against poverty and sustainable development.

- [Dossier: videos, articles, photos](#)
- [Theme: climate change](#)

## New



### Democracy Without Borders initiative

Former politicians, artists, journalists and entrepreneurs commit themselves to becoming ambassadors for a Swiss development cooperation project.

- [Democracy Without Borders](#)

## International Year



### 2014: International Year of Family Farming

The UN wants to make the international community more aware of the crucial role for food security that is played by smallholder farmers.

- [Dossier](#)

## Agenda



18 September – 25 October 2014  
 "Aaruul and Justistaler",  
[Mongolia and Switzerland in images, Bern](#)

Until 26 October 2014  
 "War from the Victims'  
[Perspective](#)" – [Photographs by Jean Mohr, Zurich](#)

1 – 5 October 2014



at the six years he has spent at the head of the institution.

-  [Order/download \(fr, de, it\)](#)
-  [Subscribe \(fr, de, it\)](#)



### Films from the South and the East


Each year, Chhanabhai and his family spend the dry season extracting salt left by the sea in a vast salt marsh in the north-west of India. Right up until the next rains wash away their work.

-  ["My name is salt," Trigon film, Farida Pacha, India, 2013](#)




### Films for educational purposes

The film "La Pirogue" accompanies African boat-people on their arduous journey across the sea from Senegal to Europe. It portrays the tragic reality behind the statistics.


-  ["La Pirogue", Films pour un seul monde, Moussa Touré, Senegal/Germany/France, 2012 \(fr\)](#)

-  [SDC Street action, Biel](#)


Until 11 November 2014

-  [Exhibition "The Fates behind the Numbers", Testimonials on property rights in Kosovo, Biel/Bern](#)


14 October 2014

-  [FDFA annual conference, Human Security Division: "Youth and Human Security: perspectives", Bern](#)

11 November 2014

-  [Panel discussion, Sexual violence in conflict, Bern](#)

Until 30 November 2014

-  [Exhibition "Water: the best use of a scarce resource", Frutigen](#)

-  [Other cultural events supported by the SDC](#)

-  [Other SDC events](#)

[Previous newsletters](#)

[SDC website](#)

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