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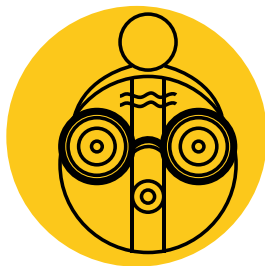
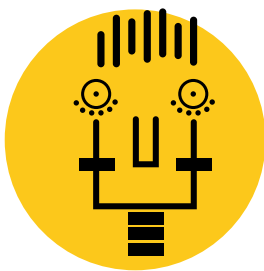
2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SDC Guidance

Leave

No One

Behind



FOREWORD

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises “that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development”. In adopting this Agenda, the international community pledged to leave no one behind, to see to it that the Goals and targets are met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society, and to endeavour to reach those first who are furthest behind.¹

Leaving no one behind is a universal and an aspirational challenge, affecting every society. It is a new paradigm in development, recognising that trickle-down economics have not kept their promises. Concrete measures are needed to ensure populations left behind or at risk of being left behind are identified, understood and fully able to participate in economic, social, and political activities in their societies. The SDC is committed to give more attention to the excluded and poorest of the poor, seeks

to catalyse social transformation to overcome existing inequalities and contributes to disaggregated data production revealing the challenges of those left behind.

Switzerland has adopted the 2030 Agenda and is committed to its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Achieving these Goals and implementing the *leave no one behind* imperative are tangible contributions to peace and stability in the world, and critical to Switzerland’s security and prosperity. As is declared in the Swiss Constitution, “the strength of a people is measured by the well-being of its weakest members.”²

Sustainable and equitable development is not possible if certain groups of society are excluded from economic well-being. We will continue to build our engagement on the respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination.



Manuel Sager

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INTRODUCTION

This SDC guidance on *leaving no one behind* is a normative document for all SDC staff and replaces the SDC guiding note on poverty (2000)³. Part I clarifies the SDC's position on leaving no one behind in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and Part II provides support to the SDC staff and its partners on how to ensure implementation. This guidance elaborates on the first principle of mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda in Swiss International Cooperation: "Leave no one behind and reach the nations, peoples and segments of society furthest behind first."⁴

Leave **No One** Behind



PART

01

CONCEPT & COMMITMENT

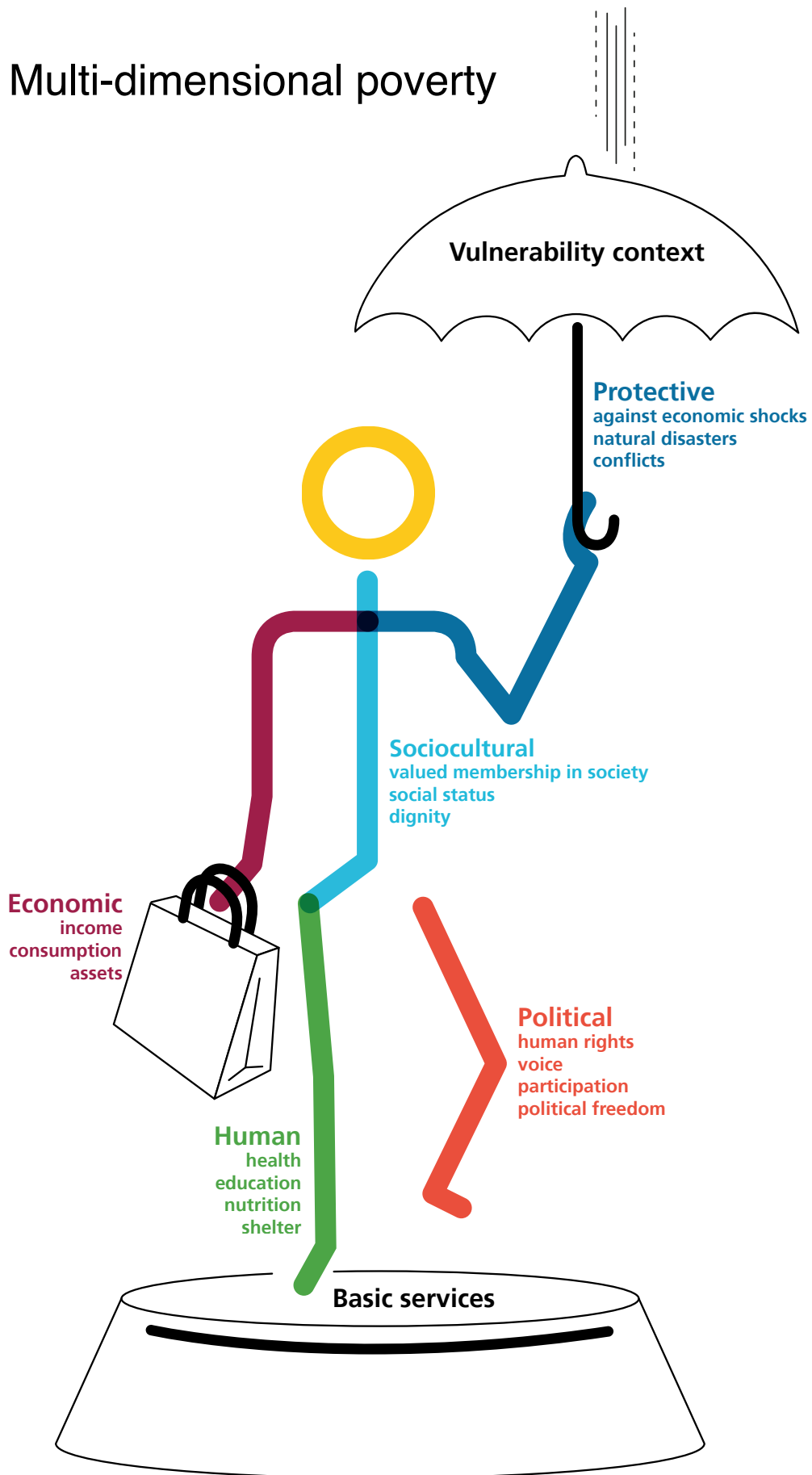
Definitions

The SDC considers as “left behind” those individuals or groups who are excluded from sustainable development or who do not enjoy minimum standards of living. Two conditions guide the SDC in the identification of individuals and groups left behind or at risk of being left behind – poverty and exclusion.

The SDC applies the OECD-DAC framework of **multidimensional poverty** (see illustration p.7). This framework covers five interrelated aspects of human capabilities: Economic (income, consumption, assets); Human (health, education, nutrition, shelter); Political (human rights, voice, participation, political freedom); Socio-cultural (valued membership of society, social status, dignity); Protective (withstand economic shocks, natural disasters, conflicts). Fighting the multiple dimensions of poverty is key for sustainable development, since the prevailing economic perspective with its focus on the income-poor might overlook some of the most excluded populations.

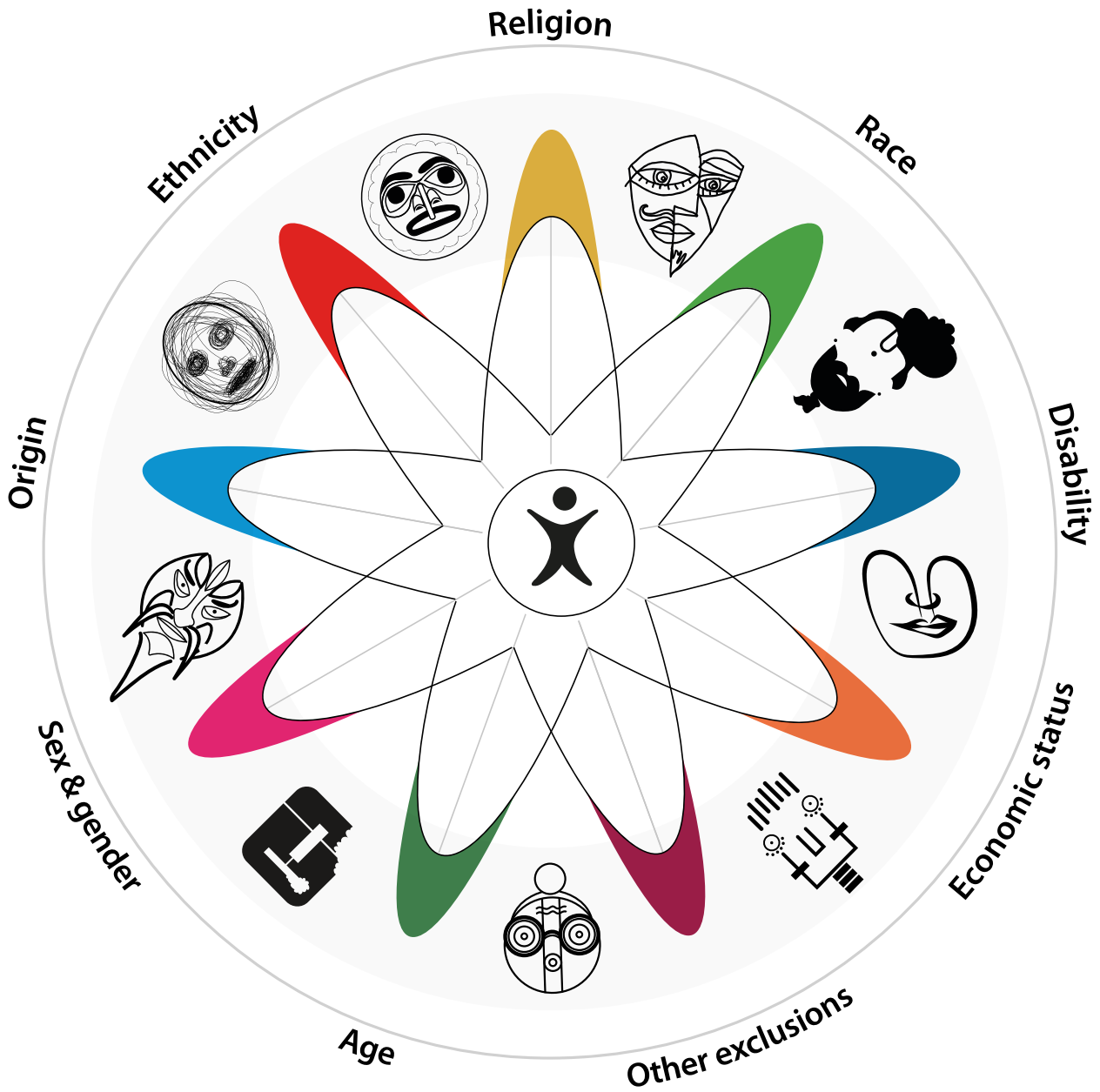
Inclusion means improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of individuals and groups excluded on the basis of their identity to take part in society (see p.12). SDG 10 calls for the “social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status.” Identifying those left behind is a matter of context: from a global perspective, the population left behind may encompass the poorest 20% in terms of income, but in a specific programme, those left behind are the people excluded from the specific service, market, space or intervention.

Multi-dimensional poverty



(Source: OECD, The DAC Guidelines Poverty Reduction, 2001)

Drivers of exclusion and poverty



Minimum standards of living as defined in the UN Declaration of Human Rights include in particular adequate health care, education, nutrition, access to water and shelter.⁵

Vulnerability describes the likelihood of falling into poverty or into greater poverty. It describes the degree of exposure to risks and the capacity to respond to and to cope with risks. Therefore, women and men **at risk of** being left behind also need to be considered.

In the context of sustainable development, non-discrimination means that all people have equal rights, equal opportunities and access to services. **Equality** aims to ensure that everyone enjoys the same rights and treatments (e.g. human rights; access to services) whereas **equity** involves trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full lives (e.g. medical treatment adapted to the need of the person).

Commitments

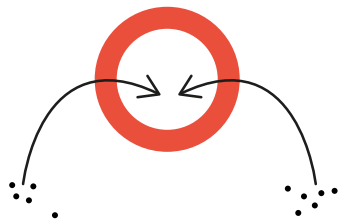
The SDC management is committed to *leave no one behind*. It recognises that the agenda is ambitious, that its commitment is essential and that resource reallocation over the long term is necessary to achieve and sustain systemic change. The SDC management supports its staff in implementing *leave no one behind* as an integral part of the SDC's Results-Based Management (RBM). In particular, the SDC is committed to:

1 Focusing on people living in poverty, giving special consideration to the poorest of the poor, and recognizing the multiple dimensions of poverty



The SDC is committed to addressing poverty and will give more attention to the poorest of the poor, those who are living in extremely difficult conditions (below the minimum standards of living) and who are especially vulnerable to shocks and stress.

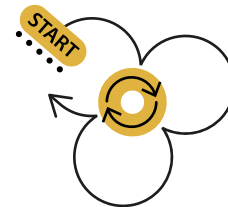
2 Aiming for transformative change by tackling exclusion, discrimination and inequality



The SDC seeks to catalyse social transformation and to bring about sociocultural, economic and political changes. Exclusion and discrimination are the result of deeply rooted power structures and mind-sets resulting in policies and behaviours that tend to entrench existing inequalities. The commitment to leaving no one behind demands critical measures to facilitate the conversion of human rights into equitable opportunities and well-being at the lowest end of the social ladder. This equity perspective ensures that through its programmes, the SDC aims at balancing power, interests and participation in decision-making.

Specific attention is required to address **gender inequality** within the invisible hierarchies of a given society. Gendered structures may exacerbate existing inequalities and patterns of exclusion based on gender roles and gendered division of labour and decision-making. These patterns are particularly difficult to challenge as they shape private relationships at the household level, but they play out in policymaking areas – such as labour markets, access to resources, family law and inclusive leadership – where the results may be detrimental to women.

3 Ensuring that populations left behind or at risk of being left behind are considered in all new SDC cooperation and thematic strategies



A spotlight will be cast on the people who may be hard to reach, but most urgently need support to participate in sustainable development. *Leave no one behind* must systematically and explicitly inform the SDC process from the very beginning of the development of strategies and programmes.

4 Enhancing information systems and the production of disaggregated data that reveal the challenges of those left behind and strengthen the relationship between duty bearers and rights holders



While national statistics systems need to be strengthened and supplemented with other sources of data, the information generated and the way access is provided to data should contribute to strengthening the relationship between duty bearers and rights holders.

PART

02.

ACTION

The SDC integrates *leaving no one behind* into its results-based programme and project cycle management and makes it an integral part of its systemic approach. Application of the SDC's instruments, including policy dialogue, will put specific attention on those left behind. This applies to all the SDC departments: South Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid, Cooperation with Eastern Europe, and Global Cooperation.



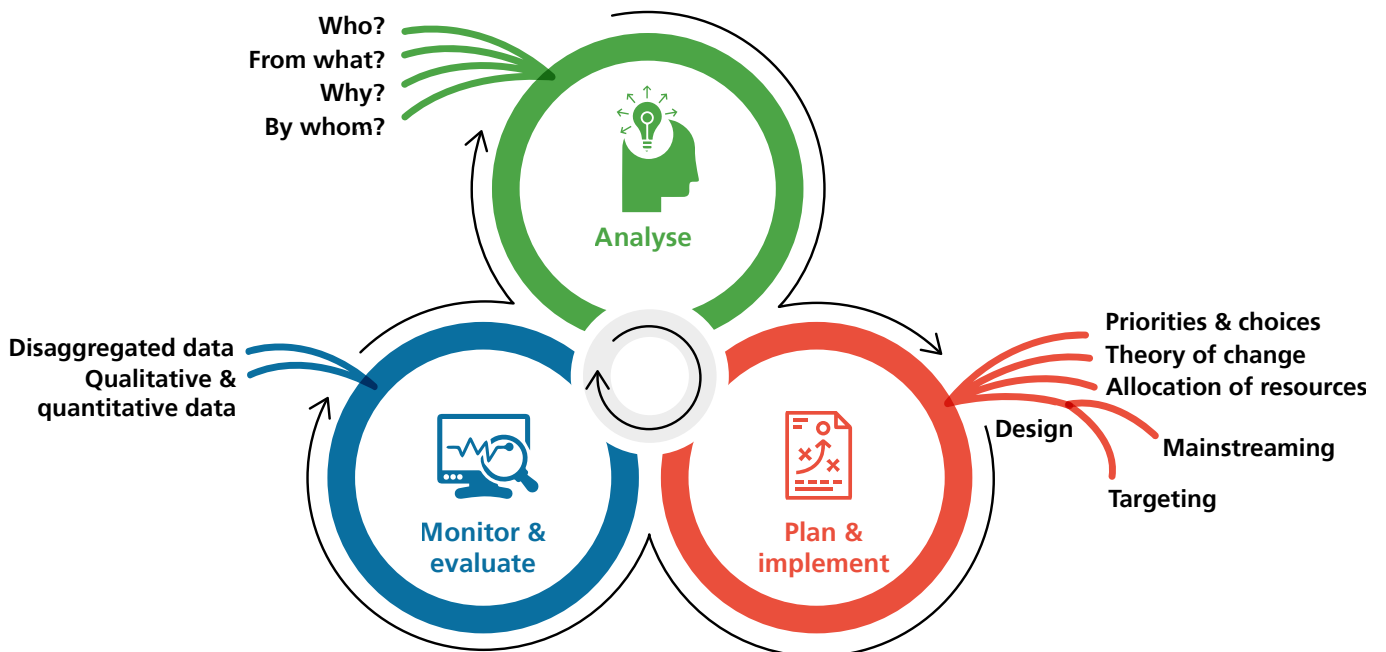


Anchoring

The SDC anchors *leave no one behind* in all its strategic documents, programmes and partnerships including multilateral organisations. The expected outcomes for the groups left behind are developed in the results frameworks of the strategies and programmes. The strategic documents define whom the SDC reaches and the approaches it uses. The Annual Reports present information on progress, including on changes for the groups left behind and on changes at the institutional and policy level.

Switzerland engages in **policy dialogue** on *leave no one behind* at different levels. Policy dialogue

for inclusion, supported by the experience of programmes and projects, is an important component in the systems approach and has impacts at the local, national and global levels. The SDC supports governments, institutions, civil society and the private sector in their efforts to achieve an inclusive society, searches for partnerships with other donors and stakeholders, intensifies its role as a promoter and facilitator of bilateral and multilateral coalitions that work to leave no one behind, and commits to greater policy coherence for development. Furthermore, SDC supports the empowerment and the participation in decision-making of those left behind.



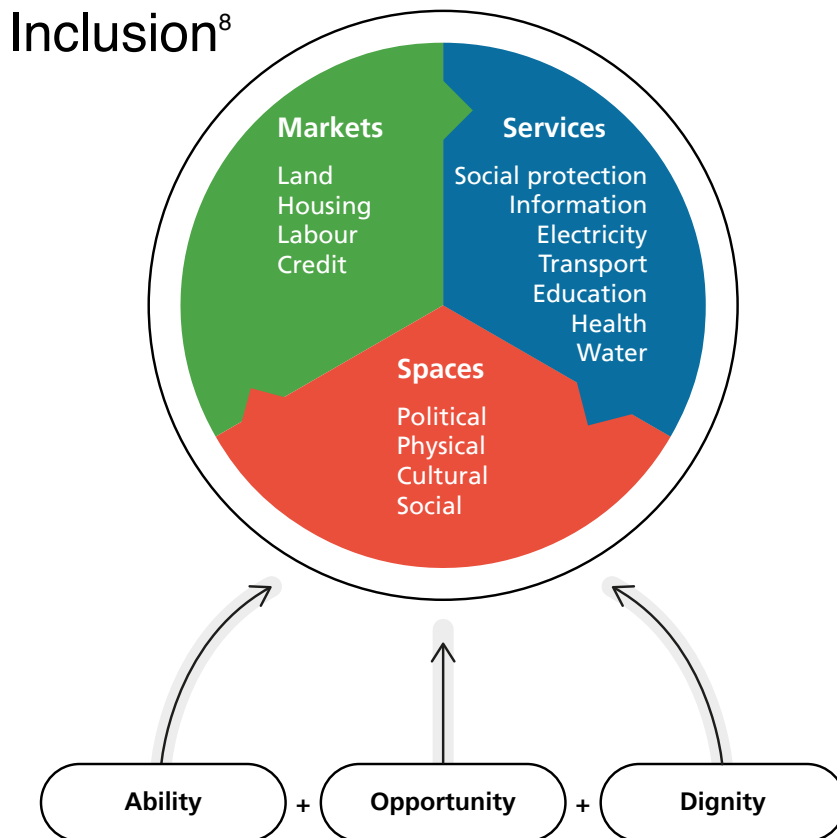
Analysis

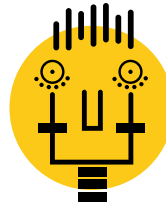
There are four basic questions to be answered in a good analysis: **Who is excluded? From what? Why? By whom?** The SDC actively supports efforts to identify those who are (or are at risk of) being left behind by way of multidimensional measures that include the perspective of the poor. It considers intersecting inequalities, such as social identity combined with other exclusion mechanisms. Disaggregated data are crucial in developing an evidence-based diagnostic.

Determining whether the exclusion is from a market, space, service or something else requires an understanding of the functioning of the systems related to land, labour, policy development, law, services, and politics. Effective intervention requires an understanding of when and where exclusion occurs. Exclusion from markets, for example, raises questions related to the nature of the market structure, operation and dynamics, of how these factors affect excluded people, of the formal and informal barriers and of how the exclusion contributes to poverty. Effective intervention also requires an analysis of the specific risks that may confront those left behind, as well as a good understanding of why the poor and excluded groups do not

benefit from development and why the system is not inclusive.

The question of exclusion by whom leads to many more questions: Who holds the power? What is the relationship of the poor and excluded groups with the other groups, the government, markets and civil society? What needs to be changed? What does the government concretely do (or fail to do) for the left-behind segments of the population in its country or in global political dialogues, international norms and initiatives? What reform actors could be mobilised to facilitate access to excluded groups, to enhance the representation of their interests and to co-design actual initiatives? What scope for action does the SDC have for influencing the political will of the government and the political economy conditions that need to be changed for effective and sustained results? Looking at these questions through a gender lens will help the SDC come up with the differentiated answers it needs. Poverty assessments, power analysis, gender analysis⁶, fragile context analysis and political economy analysis⁷ are appropriate instruments for mapping areas of exclusion and for analysing power relations.





Planning & implementation

The planning and implementation of the *leaving no one behind* commitment calls for prioritising and formulating appropriate objectives. This depends on the context and on the strategic choices. The following considerations are important in all interventions.

Priorities and informed choices

One programme may not tackle all exclusion mechanisms. Therefore, after the analysis identifies all groups that are left behind or that are at risk of being left behind, the SDC has to make informed choices and set priorities. In each domain of intervention, the SDC should name one or two groups as explicit target groups and explain why it selected these groups. At this stage, it may be necessary to collect baseline data. The domains of intervention should reflect the priorities not only of the governments, but also of the groups themselves, relying on their knowledge of their complex and often invisible realities. Policies to improve returns (e.g. land productivity, labour market access) to key assets (land, labour) for the poor, tackle inequalities or increase redistribution by the state are well documented and can inform the strategic choice of the domains of intervention.

Theory of change

The theory of change should explicitly outline the expected results for the individuals and groups left behind, with the targeted groups explicitly identified, named and monitored. A shared vision with the SDC partners and allies is needed and should be integrated in the theories of change. The expected changes and contributions to the transformative change should be described both at the policy and institutional level and at people's level. The theory of change anticipates the expected impact at the policy and institutional level for different excluded population groups by, for example, describing how a new law or policy will influence the peoples' lives, or how the changes give them a voice in political decision-making. At the people's level, the theory of change describes the expected results and how interventions work to improve the living conditions and voice or influence of those left behind.

Allocation of resources

Assessing the implications of the strategic focus on leaving no one behind calls for planning the allocation or reallocation of human and financial resources.

Programme design

At the operational level, two options are possible and can be combined – integrating the *leave no one behind* into programmes and/or developing specific programmes for the left-behind groups.

Integration into programmes

Mainstreaming

Integrating *leave no one behind* into a programme entails making a thorough examination of how the intervention affects the most excluded by identifying groups left behind without exacerbating risks, understanding the drivers of their exclusion, taking these factors into account in intervention design (particularly in developing the theory of change), monitoring progress and adapting if necessary. The theory of change must anticipate the expected indirect effects for the groups left behind. In a government water supply programme for the whole population, for example, specific groups may be excluded for reasons of income poverty. With the mainstreaming of *leave no one behind* into the programme, the design of the programme integrates a policy dialogue for subsidising (or otherwise supporting) groups left behind in order to guarantee their access to and use of drinking water. For other programmes, repercussions for the excluded groups can be difficult to assess, for example in a programme influencing global processes, or in activities that address issues of governance, policy change or sector reforms. These programmes have, however, an indirect impact on the people left behind. Social Impact Assessment has proven to be an appropriate method in this area.⁹

Specific programmes

Targeting

Wherever it is unlikely that a specific group will benefit significantly from an intervention or that aspirational transformational change will not be achieved by integration alone, the SDC designs interventions that specifically target the groups left behind on the basis of their specific needs, and takes a long-term perspective on the institutionalisation of the interventions. Specific actions are particularly recommended when addressing gender-specific exclusions, exacerbated with other layers

of discrimination. Champions of change often belong to difficult-to-reach groups and can provide access or build alliances for inclusion. But a transformative approach also requires engaging with the groups that hold the power and can influence development as change makers. For example, an employment programme, based on sound competition, may exclude discriminated groups. Targeted action could include training, mentoring or anti-discrimination measures. Focusing on the poorest and the most excluded people with special programmes is most effective as a complementary approach to mainstreamed actions, and may imply reviewing the strategic priorities and allocation of the SDC funds.

Entry points need to be conducive to the goal of social inclusion and specific to theme and context. Transformative change is a political process and barriers and mechanisms leading to exclusion must be taken into account in project design. Starting with an area that is politically less sensitive – access to water and sanitation or education, for example, rather than political representation – may be appropriate. Achievements in these less politically charged sectors can build trust for opening up intervention pathways to more sensitive areas. Social protection¹⁰ is also gaining importance as a way to address the specific risks of exclusion, to support the poorest of the poor and to ensure inclusive development progress.¹¹

Integrated approach

The complexity of tackling *leave no one behind* calls for an integrated approach to addressing the dynamics of multidimensional poverty and the mechanisms of exclusion. In operational terms, the integrated approach brings together a range of actors – national and local authorities; specialists in humanitarian aid, development, human rights, and peace and security; civil society; and the private sector – who contribute to collective achievements. For the SDC, the integrated approach starts by using its instruments for bilateral, multilateral and global cooperation and humanitarian aid towards the same objectives.

The following sections discuss elements to be considered in planning and implementation in specific areas.



Global themes

In a globalised world, global rules, commitments, constraints and influences increasingly determine in-country capacities to tackle exclusion. In order to integrate *leave no one behind* into the global themes where the SDC is engaging, the programmes need to identify strategies for inclusive policies and systems change to build enabling environments and frameworks in their respective fields:



- Advocating for access to water, health and food security for all and putting special focus on the poorest and most excluded groups
- Addressing the needs of vulnerable people most exposed to climate risks: Mitigating climate change effects on and ensuring adaptation to climate change by the poorest and most excluded groups

The analysis of migration must differentiate between exclusion as the reason for migration and exclusion as the result of migration. Some people choose migration as a response to their exclusion. Others face conditions such as conflicts and natural disasters that force their migration and that make them even more vulnerable than those who choose to migrate due to their exclusion. Finally, some people are excluded from migration itself. They are left behind as others leave. Establishing the international conditions that enable safe, regular and ordinary migration is crucial in all cases.

Multilateral organisations have an important role in setting the normative reference frame for sustainable development. They have strong voices for leaving no one behind through advice and support to governments, and they make important contributions to eradicating poverty and supporting inclusive policy. Multilateral organisations are important players for leaving no one behind, and the SDC should consider:

- Introducing *leave no one behind* in the SDC strategy for multilateral cooperation and in powerful multilateral partnerships and alliances
- Using the Core Contribution Management tool, the participation in governing bodies and policy dialogues and statements at meetings to explicitly address the roles and responsibilities of multilateral organisations for leaving no one behind
- Reporting in the Annual Multilateral Performance Assessment on results in leaving no one behind

The Humanitarian Aid mandate is universal and needs-based. In line with *leave no one behind*, humanitarian aid focuses on those people affected by crises who are most in need and most vulnerable. Typically, the people left behind are also hit the hardest when natural disaster strikes or a conflict evolves. The principles of humanitarian action (humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence) are at the core of assisting and protecting people most in need, including advocating for compliance with the International Humanitarian Law, which provides for unrestricted access to the affected population. Operationally, leaving no one behind means for Humanitarian Aid:

- Identifying the people left behind or at risk of being left behind in a participatory way that considers the different dimensions of poverty
- Looking at how the political, sociocultural and economic dimensions of poverty play a crucial role in identifying the most vulnerable in a specific situation
- Including the voices of the affected population in the assessment
- Differentiating between the different groups left behind and assessing existing power relations among these groups
- Outlining strategic pathways for a transformative approach by empowering the poorest and most excluded

The main challenges include time pressures, incomplete information and access constraints in the aftermath of a shock. These situations call for adaptive loops in analysis, planning and implementation.



Civil Society actors play a key role for the implementation of *leave no one behind*. Swiss NGOs are important partners of the SDC with long experience working with local partners at the grass-roots level, often in challenging environments. In implementing *leave no one behind*, the SDC should consider:

- Introducing *leave no one behind* in its negotiations with the partners of the civil society and making *leave no one behind* a key principle in the contribution agreements
- Requesting NGOs to report systematically on leave no one behind results in their annual reports

Monitoring and evaluation

The thorough monitoring of progress on *leave no one behind* depends on reliable baseline data on the excluded groups and individuals and on the defining of indicators that can be used to track progress. To determine if and how the theory of change is realised, the monitoring system and the indicators must allow the close tracking of the progress of the defined group of people left behind. This section discusses the key aspects to consider in determining whether an indicator is relevant to measuring poverty and inclusion.

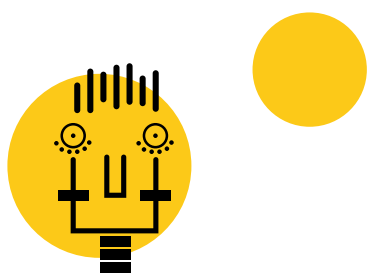
Disaggregated data

The disaggregation of data by sex, wealth, ethnicity or caste, religion, age and place of residence or other identity criteria such as disability enables the monitoring to identify who has benefited from development programmes and who has not. Context determines the criteria for disaggregation. Data collection is highly political and disaggregated data often are unavailable

in contexts where they would be most relevant. This issue is of special importance for leaving no one behind, and the SDC should address it in its policy dialogue. At the country level and in line with Switzerland's 2030 Agenda implementation concept, the SDC could consider allocating resources to enhance availability of disaggregated data to monitor *leave no one behind*. Available data often are older than the current analysis period. The preferred approach is to look for the most recent available data from different sources – sometimes data is more accessible at the provincial level than at the national level – and to interpret them carefully.

Qualitative data

Indicators should also report on qualitative aspects of the results. Qualitative data collection methods such as focus groups, interviews or observations can capture transformative change and empowerment, help the SDC understand the motivations and opinion of the people, and provide insights. Beneficiary assessment is an excellent tool for integrating excluded people's knowledge and views into the planning and prioritising of interventions. Excluded people's realities are highly complex, and information on what excludes them is often invisible. A beneficiary assessment that captures their knowledge is both a key source of information and an important contribution to their empowerment. In addition, gender and social inclusion analysis of a programme or portfolio and its projects will help the SDC understand any changes in the circumstances of the excluded people and their relationships with duty-bearers and markets. Indicators should also provide qualitative information at the systems level. Reporting on policies and measures of local governments to address gender-based violence or discrimination, for example, or on the nature of policies promoting inclusion of certain groups, can prompt reporting on these policies, and can provide a qualitative element in the review of the theory of change.



Examples of indicators

Tables 1 and 2 provide examples of reference indicators for use in monitoring and as the basis for the evaluation of results achieved in *leaving no one behind*. The people-centred indicators are intended to monitor the

results of programmes on people's lives, and focus on the groups left behind. The system-level indicators consider institutions and policies, and are intended to monitor the progress of systems in promoting equity and inclusion.

Table 1: People-centred indicators

Thematic Network	Narrative/Rationale	Reference indicator
Agriculture & Food security; Gender	Women and men from all population groups, with a focus on the target groups, have equal access, ownership and rights to natural resources such as land, water, etc. to improve their income and livelihood. (Protective and economic dimensions of well-being)	Number of people (women/men; socioeconomic strata) that have established secure rights (individual, collective, customary) to agricultural land and water as a result of Swiss contributions.
Education	All people have equitable access to quality basic education and to expanded VSD (Vocational Skills Development) options, with special attention to the excluded groups (including those affected by crisis). (Human and economic dimensions of well-being)	Number of children, youth and adults with access to basic education (formal and informal) and training, disaggregated by gender, caste/ethnicity, age and geographic location.
Governance	All people participate and have equal influence in local governance and politics, with special focus on excluded groups. (Political dimension of well-being)	Percentage of the population satisfied that their interests are represented by parliament (national and subnational levels), disaggregated by gender, wealth quintile, caste/ethnicity, age.

Table 2: System-level indicators

Thematic Network	Narrative/Rationale	Reference indicator
Conflict & Human Rights	State institutions supported by Swiss funded programmes are meeting their expectations in a manner that is generally seen as fair and just.	People's perceptions (disaggregated by gender, region and social group) on the accountability of State institutions.
Health	Health systems include social protection mechanisms that reduce households' out-of-pocket expenditures on health, and therefore contribute to reducing inequity in access to quality health services and to preventing impoverishment. (Human and economic dimensions of well-being)	Catastrophic out-of-pocket health spending (SDG Indicator 3.8.2).
Gender; Governance	People can equally participate in public budget planning and decision-making with respect to gender and social issues, with special attention to women and excluded groups.	Number of municipalities that conducted and approved a social and gender responsive budgeting process (due to the SDC interventions).



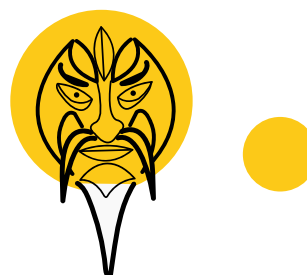
Evaluation questions

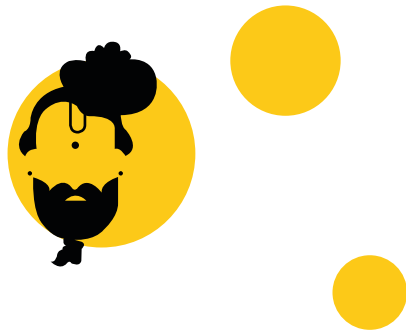
The evaluation of results should rely on the baseline developed in the results framework and on monitoring data. Evaluators must listen to distinct viewpoints and voices including those of excluded groups assessing the changes that occurred (or did not). The opinions of better-off groups are also relevant for how they see changes in living standards and systemic changes resulting in better integration and

more inclusion. Together with external expert views, beneficiary assessments ensure that the excluded groups' perspectives are part of the evaluation. The Beneficiary assessment principles are crucial for leaving no one behind as they include the quality of participation or ownership, inclusion, representativeness, differentiation, critical reflectivity, and responsiveness.¹²

Table 3: Evaluation questions

	Integration / Mainstreaming	Specific programme / Targeting
Relevance	<p>Is the policy dialogue for inclusion in the domain of intervention regular and of quality?</p> <p>To what extent does the policy dialogue tackle structural causes of exclusion?</p>	<p>Is the selected left-behind group the most vulnerable? Are there other groups more in need?</p> <p>To what extent does the specific programme address the policy, sector or region promoting inclusion of the most excluded?</p>
Effectiveness	<p>Are concrete measures (subsidies, social protection, other) taken with strong support from the government?</p>	<p>What changes occurred in terms of living standards or of the specific needs for the target groups addressed by the programme?</p> <p>What are the changes at the institutional or policy level in the specific domain addressed by the programme to tackle exclusion?</p>
Efficiency	<p>Mainstreaming leaving no one behind necessitates additional investments:</p> <p>Did the additional costs produce the expected benefits?</p> <p>Were the additional resources adequate for improving the inclusion of the targeted groups?</p>	<p>What have been the investments (time, finance, capacity, reflection) of a programme for reaching out to the excluded groups? Were they sufficient?</p> <p>Does the management of the programme with the specific focus on excluded groups consume more resources (finances, time) compared to other programmes, and are they justified?</p>
Sustainability	<p>Are the institutional or policy changes for better inclusion sustainable?</p> <p>Are the specific measures taken to include excluded groups institutionalised (or in the process of being institutionalised)?</p>	<p>Are the changes at people's level or in the institutional or policy levels sustainable?</p> <p>Are there risks of falling back into poverty and exclusion?</p>





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Further **information** can be found on the Poverty-Wellbeing Shareweb:

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