



Terms of reference – Invitation procedure

‘Adaptive and results-based management’ trainings for the period 01.02.2026 to 30.11.2029 in Switzerland and/or Swiss Representations.

This procedure is based on the Federal Act of 21 June 2019 on Public Procurement (PPA, SR 172.056.1) and the Ordinance of 12 February 2020 on Public Procurement (PPO, SR 172.056.11).

16.10.2025

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1 Abbreviations

AC	Award criteria
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AR	Annual Reporting
CHF	Swiss Franc
EC	Eligibility criteria
FDFA	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
FPC	Federal Procurement Conference
GTC	General Terms and Conditions of Business
HDP	Humanitarian development peace
IC	International Cooperation
LLC	Locally Led Cooperation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MERV	Monitoring System for Development-Relevant Changes
MYR	Mid-Year Reviews
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PCMi	Project Cycle Management interactive platform
PPA	Federal Act on Public Procurement
PPO	Federal Ordinance on Public Procurement
PSE	Private sector engagement
RBM	Result-Based Management
RM	Risk Management
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SPOC	Single Point of Contact
ToRs	Terms of references
TWP	Thinking and Working Politically
VAT	Value added tax
WOGA	Whole-Of-Government

2 Purpose of this document

These specifications describe the objectives that are to be pursued and achieved with this object of procurement. It regulates the procedure and form of the submission of tenders and, together with the General Terms and Conditions of the FDFA, the Federal Act of 21 June 2019 on Public Procurement ([PPA, SR 172.056.1](#)) and the Ordinance of 12 February 2020 on Public Procurement ([PPO, SR 172.056.11](#)) serves as the basis for the present procedure.

In the case of an invitation procedure, at least three bids shall be collected, if possible, and the Terms of Reference must also be placed on the [FDFA mandates platform](#). The contract is awarded to the most advantageous tender.

3 Goal and content of the mandate

3.1 Background

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is committed to strengthening internal capacities in **adaptive and results-based management**. These competencies are critical to ensure effective planning, implementation, monitoring, and learning for long-term projects in dynamic, uncertain and complex development contexts.

This mandate aims to institutionalize high-quality training in these areas through structured sessions over a four-year period (2026–2029).

3.2 Prior involvement

No potential tenderers were involved in preparing the invitation procedure or drafting the Terms of Reference. All tenderers that meet the criteria set are invited to submit a bid.

3.3 Objectives

The overall aim of the mandate is to provide high quality training to FDFA staff working in international cooperation in order to strengthen adaptive and results-based management knowledge and skills and its application within the institution. The training will contribute to fulfilling the Quality and Digitalisation section's (QD) mission of ensuring quality project and programme cycle management. Learning and exchange of experience is a key concern of SDC. Strengthening steering and monitoring capabilities and further report on results within the Dispatch on Switzerland's international cooperation (2025-2028 and following) and the Agenda 2030 and beyond are key objectives. In particular, the **adaptive and results-based management (RBM)** training aims at improving SDC's capabilities to deliver results, as outlined in the IC Strategy, also in complex and uncertain contexts.

The training under this mandate encompasses interactive virtual and face-to-face, practice-oriented trainings based on real case SDC projects examples (see further details below).

Two separate training modules are requested:

Module 1: Adaptive and results-based management at SDC

- To develop and deliver a comprehensive, practical training programme on adaptive and results-based management tailored to SDC's needs.
- To equip SDC staff with up-to-date theoretical and practical knowledge on RBM, adaptive programme management, and related tools, approaches and processes.
- To support SDC's effectiveness through strengthened internal capacity for political economy analysis, pathways of change approach, theory of change refinement, and results-oriented operational planning.

This module builds on and must be designed in a complementary way to the e-learning **Project Cycle Management interactive (PCMi)** and the separate face-to-face or virtual version of the SDC **Project Cycle Management (PCM), Finance and Risk Management (RM)** training.

Module 2: Adaptive and results-based management introduction for young professionals

- To develop and deliver annually a comprehensive, practical (most likely online) introduction training on adaptive and results-based management, including key elements of project cycle management for the newly recruited young professionals of the international cooperation career.

This module builds on and must be designed in a complementary way to the e-learning [PCMi](#).

3.4 Content of the mandate

Profile of the tenderer(s)

The tenderer(s) must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum 10 years of professional experience in adaptive and results-based management, PCM, political economy approach, development effectiveness, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and/or quality standards in international cooperation.
- In-depth knowledge of the SDC, its processes and instruments, particularly adaptive and results-based management systems and related tools.
- Proven experience working in diverse contexts of international cooperation (development, humanitarian, peace) and solid understanding of international cooperation and the role of a governmental agency.
- At least 5 years of experience designing and delivering training, both in-person and online.
- Solid experience in methodology, didactics and technological aspects in training (including Artificial Intelligence AI).
- Excellent moderation and facilitation skills.
- Ability to adapt training programmes based on real SDC case studies and examples provided by SDC.
- Motivating and gaining personality.
- A high degree of flexibility regarding training schedules and location.
- Field experience from project implementation in partner countries is an important asset.
- Fluency in English and French is required.

For **module 1) Adaptive and results-based management at SDC** the consultant will:

- Develop a training concept and detailed modules in year 1.
- Deliver one to three training sessions per year (face-to-face and/or virtual, as appropriate).
- Update and adapt the training content annually based on feedback and evolving needs.
- Provide all necessary materials and support the facilitation of the sessions.

Key content areas include:

- Core RBM concepts and systems at SDC.
- Overview of SDC support modalities and RBM considerations (opportunities, limitations, risks, project governance considerations of the different modalities) *.

- Political economy approaches and thinking and working politically (TWP)
 - Core concepts and tools for political economy approach/TWP.
 - Context analyses and monitoring/stakeholder assessments, integration of the compulsory transversal themes (conflict sensitivity, gender, governance), use of Monitoring of development-relevant changes (MERV).
- Theory of change and working with assumptions
 - effect of outdated/wrong assumptions in theories of change, in particular on higher-level results and importance to regularly check adequacy of assumptions.
- Adaptive programme management practices
 - Working for scale and sustainability, definition and use of short-/medium-term results (outputs, outcomes) vs. higher-level results (impacts, change) in SDC.
 - Role of Mid-Year Reviews (MYR), Annual Reporting (AR), Operational Planning in adaptive programme management and related specific challenges in project governance depending on implementation or contract modality.
- Nexus-approach
 - Understanding of relevance of Nexus-approaches for adaptive programming and results achievement. Whereby the Nexus shall refer to Humanitarian, Development, Peace-Nexus but also other “Nexus” such as Whole-Of-Government (WOGA), diplomatic/political engagement, etc.
- Advocacy, policy dialogue, and higher-level results
 - Thinking and working politically, pathways of change approach, importance of higher-level results-oriented advocacy work and political dialogue to complement operational interventions.

* Modalities include:

- Implementation modalities:
 - Multilateral cooperation (joint financing, donor coordination, development partner alliances, etc.)
 - Locally-led cooperation (LLC) (with national or local governments and institutions, civil society, local business sector, local research and learning institutions, etc.)
 - Swiss expertise (peer-to-peer exchanges, twin town and institutional relations, technical assistance, knowledge and technology transfer, secondments, etc.)
 - Private sector engagement (PSE)
 - Results-based financing
 - Budget support / Sector-wide Approaches

and

- Contract modalities:
 - Mandates
 - Project contributions
 - Core contributions
 - Cohesion modality

It should be noted that different modalities are a fundamental element of adaptive and results-based management as a whole. That is why they are mentioned in these Terms of references (ToRs). However, the related content for this training must be developed on the basis of internal SDC expertise, i.e. in close collaboration with the SDC colleagues concerned.

For **module on 2) Adaptive and results-based management introduction for young professionals** the consultant will:

- Develop a training concept and detailed modules in year 1.
- Deliver approximately 15 to 20 hours training every year.
- Update and adapt the training content annually based on feedback and evolving needs.
- Provide all necessary materials and support the facilitation of the sessions.

Key content areas include:

1. Concepts and theory:
 - Results Based Management (RBM) concepts and theory.
2. Planning for results (both programme and project)
 - Context analysis, tools and scenarios, including the Monitoring System for Development-Relevant Changes (MERV), risk assessment.
 - SDC tools for planning: IC strategy, Cooperation Programmes and projects (Entry Proposals, Credit Proposals, Decision Notes, Results Framework of the Cooperation Programme, Logical Frameworks of projects).
 - Pathways of changes approach, concept of Theory of Change and importance of assumptions and Humanitarian, development and peace (HDP)-Nexus thinking.
 - Use of evidence, economic and financial analyses, risk assessment (Partner Risk Assessment).
3. Managing for results: steering, learning and adaptation
 - Programme and project level steering, learning and adaptation.
 - Monitoring and reporting results, including the Results Data Management (RDM) system.

Deliverables

- Training concept note (initial and annually updated).
- Training materials to be made available through an online learning community platform (Claned or others) (slides, exercises, case studies, learning videos, webcasts, etc.).
- Delivery of up to three training sessions annually (can be face-to-face in Switzerland or virtual).
- Brief report after each session summarizing feedback and recommendations.

Duration of the Mandate

- Start date: 01.02.2026
- End date: 30.11.2029
- Total duration: 4 years

Reporting and Supervision

The consultant will report to SDC Quality and Digitalisation Section and will coordinate closely with other concerned SDC's internal units.

3.5 Estimated amount

A total number of 100-110 working days (1 day = 8 hours) may be allocated. These working days should also include the allocation for working visits to Bern/Zollikofen. The costs of the working visits have to be listed separately (see Budget forms, Annex 4 ; costs for one travel to Bern, fly or train, accommodation and per diem shall be included in the offer). The exact number of working visits will be defined at the beginning of the mandate.

In case of different functions within the different team members, the rate price per unit must be specified.

All the price details must be indicated in CHF excl. VAT. The price excl. VAT includes in particular insurance, allowances, social costs, transport, customs etc.

The tenderer will not be reimbursed for any costs arising from the preparation or submission of bid.

Module 1) Adaptive and results-based management at SDC

	Description	Days per activity	Days per year	Days for 4 years
1	Develop and adapt concept for the training	10	Year 1: 6 days Year 2: 2 days Year 3: 1 days Year 4: 1 days	10
2	Operationalize the training	9	Year 1: 6 days Year 2: 1 days Year 3: 1 days Year 4: 1 days	9
3	Training delivery	32	Year 1: 8 days Year 2: 8 days Year 3: 8 days Year 4: 8 days	32
4	Training material: slides, exercises, case studies, learning videos, webcasts, etc.)	6	Year 1: 3 days Year 2: 1 days Year 3: 1 days Year 4: 1 days	6
5	Briefings and collaboration with Section QD	9	Year 1: 3 days Year 2: 2 days Year 3: 2 days Year 4: 2 days	9

Total Level of Effort: Maximum of 66 working days over four years

Module 2) Adaptive and results-based management introduction for young professionals:

	Description	Days per activity	Days per year	Days for 4 years
1	Develop and adapt concept for the training	8	Year 1: 5 days Year 2: 1 days Year 3: 1 days Year 4: 1days	8
2	Operationalize the training	7	Year 1: 4 days Year 2: 1 days Year 3: 1 days Year 4: 1days	7
3	Training delivery	10	Year 1: 2.5 days Year 2: 2.5 days Year 3: 2.5 days Year 4: 2.5 days	10
4	Training material: slides, exercises, case studies, learning videos, webcasts, etc.)	5	Year 1: 2 days Year 2: 1 days Year 3: 1 days Year 4: 1 days	5
5	Briefings and collaboration with Section QD	10	Year 1: 4 days Year 2: 2 days Year 3: 2 days Year 4: 2 days	10

Total Level of Effort: Maximum of 40 working days over four years

A detailed financial offer shall be submitted according to the template above.

Costs for one travel (fly or train, accommodation and per diem) to Berne shall be included in the offer.

3.6 Timetable of the invitation procedure

Date / Deadline	Activity
16.10.2025	Invitation of at least 3 tenderers and publication of the mandate on the FDFA mandates platform
23.10.2025	Expression of interest in submitting a tender by email: deza.qualitaetssicherung@eda.admin.ch
29.10. 2025	Deadline for submitting questions by email: deza.qualitaetssicherung@eda.admin.ch
05.11.2025	Sharing of the questions and answers with all the interested tenderers
20.11.2025	Deadline for submission of tenders
End of November	Evaluation of submitted bids
04.12.2025	Online presentation by the 3 highest-ranked tenderers (see 6.1)
Approx. 10.12.2025	Information of the tenderers by means of individual dispositions: Awarding of the contract and notification of the not considered tenderers
20.01.2026	Signing of contract
01.02.2026	Contract start date

4 Eligibility criteria

The tenderer must duly fulfil without limitation or modification the eligibility criteria listed in annex EC. The tenderer must also provide, where indicated, the necessary evidence with the submission of the bid. **Confirmation of the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria must be given in 'Annex EC: Confirmation of Eligibility Criteria and documents to be submitted'.**

Only those tenderers that fulfil all formal requirements and eligibility criteria will be evaluated on the basis of the award criteria. The other tenderers will be excluded from the further procedure.

5 Award criteria

The following table shows the award criteria (AC) and the corresponding weightings, on the basis of which the bids will be evaluated.

AC	Award Criteria	Weighting
AC 1	Understanding of the mandate and general approach	40 %
AC 1.1	Appreciation of the expectations and requirements	30%
AC 1.2	Clarity and quality of the technical offer	40%
AC 1.3	Proposed methodology and timeline	30%
AC 2	Qualifications, experience and expertise of the organisation and of the personnel to be deployed (CVs)	40 %

AC 2.1	Thematic knowledge of each individual staff involved to be deployed of RBM, in particular of the training topics listed in section 3.4. – A university degree in international development or similar studies. – Long-standing practical experience and a solid foundation in PCM, quality standards and results-based management in international cooperation. – Professional training experience and skills in training methodologies and technologies. – Competency on the training core issues. – CV of the team leader and its staff, years of experience – References from trainings of bilateral or multilateral actors and NGOs. – Demonstrate the ability to adapt training programmes based on real SDC case-studies. – A good understanding of international cooperation and the role of a bilateral governmental agent. Field experience from project implementation in partner countries East or South is an important asset.	Sub weighting 30%
AC 2.2	Experience and methodological skills in designing and facilitating courses in a subject, using participative and practice-oriented learning approaches and tools (included AI). – Skills in training methodologies of the team leader and its staff. – Number of years of experience of the team leader and its staff. – Ability to provide training in an interactive manner, 70% practical and interactive work, max 30% training presentations. Excellent presentation and moderation skills with ability to include participants. – Three references of each individual trainer involved by deployed personnel of previous training implementation and relevance for SDCs needs. – Innovative ideas in training methodologies and technological support (incl. AI).	Sub weighting 30%
AC 2.3	Knowledge of SDC, its instruments and processes.	Sub weighting 10%
AC 2.4	Language skills: level C1-C2 in English and French for the team leader and staffs and proven communication and teaching skills are demonstrated.	Sub weighting 10%
AC 2.5	Institutional capacities and personnel resources: the bidder's proposed institutional capacities and demonstrated flexibility and availability of personnel as well as sustainability in case of personnel rotation.	Sub weighting 20%
AC 3	Financial offer – overall price The overall price is to be submitted in CHF (excl. VAT) only together with the budget form as per Annex 4.2 (type B) of the tender document and to include the following: • Costs of <u>one</u> working visits to Bern/Zollikofen (tbc at the beginning of the mandate) • Per diem • Hotel	20%

	• Training material • Other expenses Evaluation of the price: The overall amount (excl. VAT) for the awarding of points is evaluated for each offer. The overall amount for evaluation = costs of the procurement volume tendered (core services + option). This is calculated as follows: $\text{Score} = M \times \left(\frac{P_{\min}}{P} \right)^2$ P = Price of the bid being assessed P min = Price of the cheapest bid M = Max. points (= score 5) Exponent = Exponent in formula (=2)	
	Total	100%

Each further award criterion will be evaluated according to the following score table:

Score	Fulfilment and quality of the criteria	
0	Cannot be established	• Not possible to assess • No information
1	Very poor fulfilment	• Very limited achievement of the criteria • Insufficient, incomplete information
2	Poor fulfilment	• Limited achievement of the criteria • Information without sufficient relevance
3	Average fulfilment	• Normal achievement • Average quality, minimum requirement fulfilled
4	Good fulfilment	• Good achievement • Very good quality
5	Very good fulfilment	• Very good achievement • Outstanding quality

6 Structure and content of the bid

The tenderer must adhere to the following structure in the interests of fairness and in order to expedite the evaluation process.

Nr.	Contents	Max. No. Pages	EC/AC
00	Cover letter with signature(s) and documents evidencing organisational capability	1	EC 1
01	'Annex EC: Confirmation of Eligibility criteria and documents to be submitted'		EC1 – EC 8
02	Self-declaration form ' Proof of Compliance with the conditions of participation' of the Federal Procurement Conference FPC AND		EC 2

	Self-declaration form 'pursuant to Article 29c of the Ordinance on measures in connection with the situation in Ukraine' of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)		
03	'Tenderer Information' form		EC 3
04	Acceptance of GTC and Code of Conduct		EC 4
05	Legal documents		EC 5
06	Written confirmation of human resources for the mandate		EC 6
07	Written confirmation of contact partner (SPOC)		EC 7
08	Documentary evidence of the language skills of the key individuals		EC 8
09	Understanding of the mandate and general approach	4 (Arial 11)	AC1 (1.1 - 1.3)
10	Qualifications, experience and expertise of the organisation and of the personnel to be deployed (CVs)	4 (Arial 11)	AC 2 (2.1 – 2.5)
11	Financial offer according to the budget form annex 4.2 (type B) in CHF (excl. VAT)		AC 3

6.1 Presentation of the tenderer and the bid

The contracting authority reserves the right to invite the best-ranked tenderers to an online presentation on their company and bid.

The content of this presentation will take the following form:

Agenda:

Welcome	2 min.
Presentation of the tenderer	3 min.
Presentation of the bid, included a brief training sequence on an Adaptive and results-based management relevant aspect (up to the bidder's choice) showing methodological aspects and course leading and presentation skills	10 min.
Questions on the presentations	15 min.

The Single Point of Contact (SPOC) specified and an employee authorised to legally represent the tenderer must be present at the presentation.

7 Administrative Aspects

7.1 Official name and address of the contracting authority

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Division Foundations and Quality / Section Quality and Digitalisation
Eichenweg 5
3003 Bern

is in charge of the awarding procedure and also acts as direct contracting authority towards the tenderer.

7.2 Deadline and address for submitting bids

The bids (format pdf) must be submitted to deza.qualitaetssicherung@eda.admin.ch by **20.11.2025, 23:00 (Swiss time)** at the latest. Bids received late cannot be taken into consideration. They will be returned to the tenderer.

The email must mention **SDC Adaptive and results-based management trainings from 2026 to 2029** in the reference line. It is possible to submit a bid in more than one email in clearly labelled batches. Tenderers must confirm in the email the binding force of the bid. The receipt of the bids submitted via email will be acknowledged via email at the latest until 25.11.2025.

In all cases the tenderer must retain proof of the timely submission of the bid.

7.3 Expression of interest in submitting an offer and receiving documents

Interested tenderers can express their interest by email until **23.10.2025** and will receive the annexes to these terms of reference.

7.4 Answering questions

No individual information is given to the tenderers. Any questions must be submitted by **29.10.2025** to deza.qualitaetssicherung@eda.admin.ch. Questions submitted late cannot be answered. The document with all questions received and their answers will be sent to all tenderers by **05.11.2025**.

7.5 Type of procedure

Procurement is carried out by invitation o tender in accordance with the Federal Act on Public Procurement of 21 June 2019, PPA, SR 172.056.1.

It is **not** possible to appeal the award.

7.6 In accordance with GATT / WTO agreement or treaty (as applicable)

7.7 Evaluation and adjustment of bids

Tenders are evaluated in accordance with Art. 38 PPA. Tenders may only be adjusted at the contracting authority's specific request. Adjustments must be undertaken in accordance with Art. 39 PPA and subject to the conditions set out therein.

7.8 Bidding consortia

Consortia of tenderers are permitted (**consortium of maximum two bidders, including lead organisation**). If the SDC concludes the contract with several contractors (consortium), all parties must sign, having first designated a person to represent the consortium vis-à-vis the SDC. The representative is expressly authorised to act for and on behalf of the consortium members. The consortium members shall be jointly and severally liable. The tenderer lists all members and their roles.

7.9 Subcontractors

Subcontractors are permitted, subject to the prior approval of the awarding entity. If the tenderer engages subcontractors in order to carry out the work, the tenderer will assume overall responsibility. It must list all the subcontractors involved, together with the roles allocated to them.

Any contractual delegation by the contractor of performance of all or part of the present contract to subcontractors shall be subject to the prior written consent of the contracting authority. Subcontractors and their personnel must satisfy all conditions stipulated in the present contract and the appendices thereto. The contracting authority shall be liable solely to the contractor. In the event that the contractor delegates performance of all or part of the contract, the contractor shall bear sole liability for the acts of any subcontractors. As a general rule the tenderer is required to make the characteristic supply.

7.10 Multiple tenders by single tenderers, consortia and subcontractors

Consortia members are allowed to participate exclusively in one bid. The tender lists all members and their roles.

Single tenderers are allowed to participate exclusively in one bid.

Subcontractors are allowed to participate in different bids.

7.11 Validity of bids

180 days after the deadline for receipt of bids.

7.12 Languages of invitation document

The invitation document are available in: English language.

7.13 Language of the procedure

The present procurement procedure is conducted in English language. This means that all statements on the part of the awarding authority are made at least in this language.

7.14 General Terms and Conditions of Business (GTC)

The General Conditions of Business (GTC) of the FDFA for mandates (type A and type B) – version May 2021 shall be deemed to have been accepted by the contractor on submission of the bid.

7.15 Conclusion of contract

The contract is concluded subject to the prior approval of credits by the FDFA.

8 Further information

8.1 Confidentiality

The parties shall keep confidential any facts and information that are not generally known or in the public domain. In case of doubt, all facts and information shall be treated as strictly confidential. The parties shall take all measures, to the extent that they are commercially reasonable and practicable in technical and organisational terms, to ensure that confidential facts and information are properly protected against access by, or disclosure to, unauthorised third parties.

Any transfer of confidential information by the contracting authority within its own organisation (or within the Federal Administration), or to any third parties appointed, is not deemed to constitute a breach of the obligation of confidentiality. The foregoing also applies to tenderers to the extent that the disclosure of confidential information is required for the performance of the contract, or provisions of the contract are disclosed within the organisation.

The tenderer may not, without the contracting authority's written consent, publicise the fact that a cooperation arrangement with the contracting authority is or was in effect or cite the contracting authority as a reference.

The parties shall ensure that their employees, subcontractors, suppliers and any other third parties appointed comply with the foregoing obligations of confidentiality.

8.2 Integrity clause

Tenderers undertake to take all necessary measures to avoid corruption and, in particular, agree not to offer or accept payments or other advantages.

Tenderers who breach this integrity clause are required to pay a contractual penalty to the contracting authority amounting to 10% of the value of the contract or at least CHF 3,000 for each instance of breach.

The tenderer notes that any breach of the integrity clause will generally result in cancellation of the award or early termination of the contract for good cause by the contracting authority.

The parties shall inform each other of any well-founded suspicions of corruption.

8.3 Property rights

All industrial property rights which arise in the course of the performance of the mandate shall pass to the contracting authority

9 Annexes

No.	Annex
Annex EC	Annex EC: Confirmation of Eligibility criteria and documents to be submitted
1a	Proof of Compliance with the condition of participation
1b	Self-declaration form 'pursuant to Article 29c of the Ordinance on measures in connection with the situation in Ukraine' of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
2	'Tenderer Information, with and without consortium' forms
3a	General Terms and Conditions (GTC) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) for mandates (type A and B) – version May 2021
3b	Code of conduct for contractual partners of the FDFA
4a	Budget forms 4.2 Budget form type B – for legal entities, organisations and self-employed persons