

# **Monitoring and Reporting on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD)**

## **Methodology paper**

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# 1. Purpose and aim of this document

Debates over official development aid tend to focus on the size of the aid flow from donor countries. Typically, they call for meeting the aid target of 0.7% of GDP to which the Swiss government has committed itself towards the international community. However, equally if not more important are two other topics: the quality and effectiveness of foreign aid on one hand and the contribution of non-aid policies to development in the Global South. This document focuses on the latter. From a development perspective, what really matters is the combined effect of policies on processes that enable or disable development. Better coherence between donors' aid and non-aid policies could have a greater impact on developing countries than simply increasing aid budgets (Brown 2015; Siitonen 2016).

The challenge of policy coherence is fundamental: The Swiss constitution in article 2.2 and 2.4 defines as strategic goals "promote[ing] the common welfare ... of the country" as well as "a just and peaceful international order". Meeting both objectives at the same time can create tensions at least in the short term: electoral cycle dynamics at the political level and quarterly profit goals at the economic level tend to undermine decision making with a long-term view.

The tension between aid and non-aid policies is further implicated in the 1976 Law on Development Cooperation, which defines mutual respect of the rights and interests of the partners (article 2.1) as one of the tenets of development cooperation.

For example, Switzerland's economic development cooperation, which is implemented by the State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO), is not only guided by its development strategy. It is equally guided by the Federal Council's 2004 Foreign Trade Strategy (Aussenwirtschaftsstrategie des Bundesrates) and the New Growth Strategy (Neue Wachstumspolitik 2015) among others (Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft 2016, 2533-2534).

The importance of coherence between aid and non-aid policies to promote development has increasingly been recognized. At the international level, the international community – including Switzerland – has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in December 2015. The SDGs put coherence between sectors center stage and recognize greater policy coherence as an issue of systemic relevance to the successful implementation of the Agenda 2030 (Goal 17, target 17.13 and 17.14). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) is one of the key policy bodies promoting PCD since the 1990s and has established a dedicated PDC-Unit<sup>1</sup>. OECD recommends systematic monitoring and analysis of non-aid policies regarding their effect on developing countries.<sup>2</sup>

At the national level, Switzerland has well-established instruments and platforms to balance competing interests and solving institutional conflicts, including interdepartmental platforms, consultation processes within the administration (Ämterkonsultation) and with affected stakeholders (Vernehmlassung). These mechanisms are part of the policy making process. Yet, there is not mechanism to systematically monitor policy coherence. The Swiss government has acknowledged this deficit and announced to report on PCD in its future Foreign Policy Reports; it confirmed this intention in later statements.<sup>3</sup> Promoting policy

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<sup>1</sup> [www.oecd.org/development/pcd](http://www.oecd.org/development/pcd)

<sup>2</sup> In its 2013 report on Switzerland's development cooperation, OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) recommends: "Switzerland should undertake systematic monitoring and analysis of its national policies, and the international policies, that affect developing countries." [www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/Switzerland\\_PR\\_2013.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/Switzerland_PR_2013.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefft?AffairId=20154165](http://www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefft?AffairId=20154165)

coherence for development has also become an important pillar in the Dispatch of International Cooperation 2017 – 2020 (Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft 2016, 2394, 2462).

Beyond its effect on development, coherence between aid and non-aid policies is also desirable and required from a government and citizens perspective: Coherent policies avoid wasting scarce public resources through contradicting measures<sup>4</sup>. The effective use of development aid funds as stipulated in the Law on International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (art. 9.3) indirectly requires improving coherence to improve effectiveness. Coherent policies further avoid being seen as inconsistent by political competitors or by citizens; they equally avoid undermining a country's credibility as an actor in international politics and in international development.

At the level of the Swiss administration, the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) is mandated with advancing monitoring and reporting on PCD.

Against this background, SDC has commissioned from ECDPM conceptual work towards monitoring PCD, resulting in the background report "Monitoring and Reporting on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD): the example of Switzerland. Case studies on Food Security, Illicit Financial Flows and Migration & Development", published in November 2015.<sup>5</sup>

As the classification as 'case study' in title suggests, the ECDPM report is taking stock of the current work related to PCD monitoring in Switzerland. The ECDPM report gives a valuable overview over the 'status quo' and provides numerous elements to build upon, particularly the proposed list of indicators. Yet, it is not within the scope of the ECDPM document to present a coherent methodology that can be applied for the systematic assessment of potential coherence gaps, identifying related indicators and instructions how to design indicators. For example, it remains unclear how the indicators presented were identified. Given its stock taking character, the document also mirrors the diverse terminology around PCD 'in use' but refrains from introducing a coherent terminology that ideally would be aligned with standard terms (e.g. between the different causal chains presented and between those and the indicators).

The present document takes the process one step further: It proposes a methodology a) to identify coherence gaps from a development policy reference framework perspective; b) to systematically monitor how policy decisions affect coherence and c) to report on how policy coherence evolves over time.

The paper is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 discusses some conceptual issues of PCSD in order to clarify the scope, challenges and limitations of what this instrument can deliver;

Chapter 3 looks at the policy process from a monitoring perspective;

Chapters 4 and 5 describe the methodology for PCSD monitoring;

Chapter 6 proposes an approach to reporting on PCS D.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, support to strengthen tax authorities in developing countries would be way more effective when at the same time financial policies would curb the erosion of the tax base in these countries through shifting profits to low-tax jurisdictions.

<sup>5</sup> <http://ecdpm.org/wp-content/uploads/ECDPM-Discussion-Paper-SDC-Monitoring-Reporting-Policy-Coherence-Sustainable-Development-PCSD-Example-Switzerland-2016.pdf>

## 2. Conceptual issues of PCD and PCSD

### a) Scope of PCD

In the report, *Policy Coherence: Vital for Global Development*, OECD describes PCD as follows: “PCD means taking into account the needs and interests of developing countries in the evolution of the global economy” (OECD 2003, 2). Although this definition is widely accepted as broader framework, the more specific focus and definition of PCD varies in terms of scope as well as terminology across the literature and institutions (Brown 2015; Sianes 2013). To avoid ambiguity, a more specific definition of PCD as it is used in this methodology paper is presented below.

Sianes (2013) has performed a systematic review of the literature on Policy Coherence for Development and shows how the concept of PCD currently is understood as a challenge at many different levels: One way to look at PCD is to focus on the relation between aid and non-aid policies within a single country; others also include coherence with other donor countries, with multilateral institutions or with recipient countries. *Figure 1* maps the various approaches.

	Aid policy	Foreign policy	Other national policies	Policies of other donor countries	Policies of supranational institutions	Policies of recipient countries
Aid policy	Internal	Internal	External	Inter-country	Vertical	Donor - recipient
Foreign policy		Intra-country / horizontal				
Other national policies						
Policies of other donor countries						
Policies of supranational institutions					Multilateral	
Policies of recipient countries						

Figure 1: Conceptual map on PCD (based on Sianes 2013)

Coordination is required between those levels and they all involve coherence issues. However, many of them are discussed under different ‘labels’: The *aid effectiveness* debate addresses issues of internal coherence of aid policies, the *harmonization* debate deals with coherence between donor policies, and the *alignment* debate calls for coherence between donor policies and the policies of recipient countries. Following this logic, the scope of the PCD debate is confined to coherence between a country’s aid and non-aid policies. This also includes the country’s position in the negotiation of international policies (*Figure 2*).

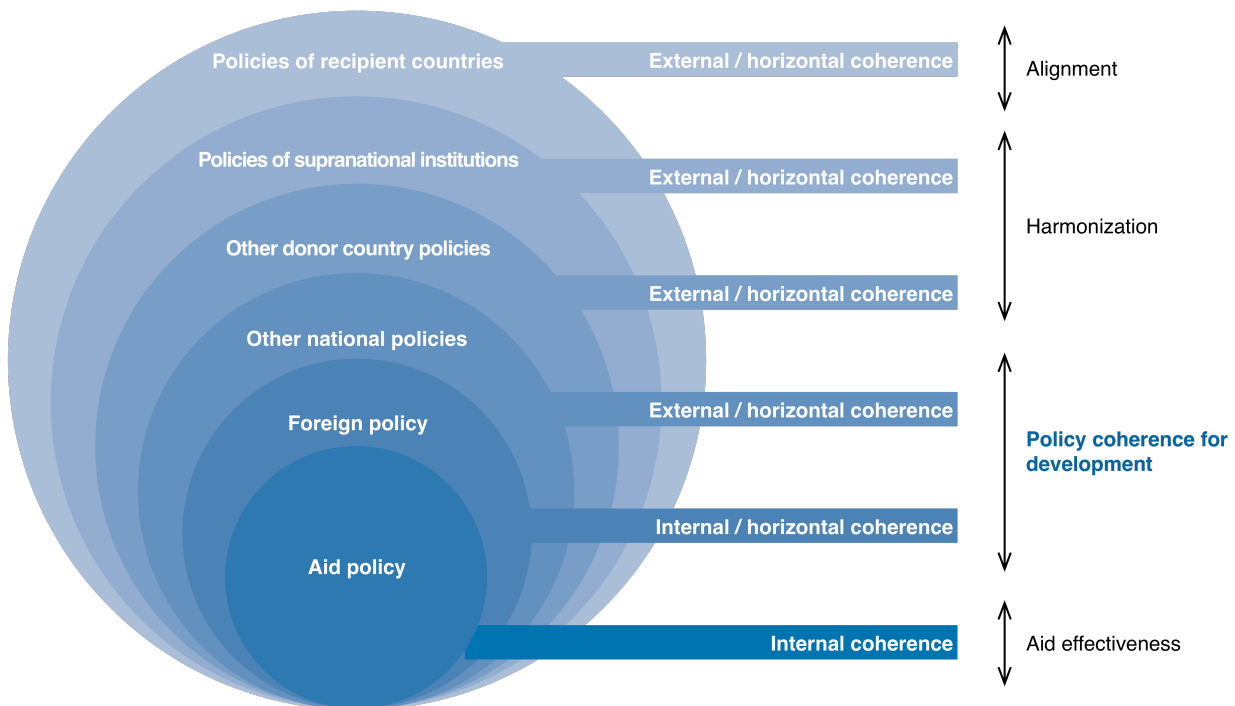


Figure 2: Place of Policy Coherence for Development among main aid debates (Sianes 2013)

In this methodology paper we use the term ‘policy coherence for development’ (PCD) to mean the coherence between a donor country’s aid and non-aid policies.

## b) Ambition

Policy coherence for development can have different levels of ambition: It can be defined as the absence of inconsistency between the development cooperation policy of a country and its other policies. Hence, PCD is achieved when inconsistencies are corrected and policies across domains do not undermine development objectives, i.e. when they ‘do no harm’ in the aid jargon. This understanding seems to prevail in institutions and legislation.

In a more ambitious understanding, promoting PCD would seek that different public policies interact to achieve shared goals leading to enhancing complementarities between the various policies of a donor country. This is often framed as a win-win scenario where policies can deliver progress towards development goals whilst securing other objectives too.

Clarifying the ambition and ultimate goal of PCD for a given policy is important as it influences the monitoring concept through the definition of coherence goals and related indicators. We will make explicit which level of coherence is targeted for a particular coherence issue.

## c) Limits

It is widely accepted in the literature that full policy coherence cannot be achieved in practice for different reasons:

First, the context keeps changing and the level of knowledge and understanding increases over time. As a consequence what ‘coherence’ means in a given issue area may change over

time as well. What is deemed coherent today may be revealed as non-coherent tomorrow and call for further correction.

Second, the coexistence of legitimate interests requires balancing the interests of both domestic and international stakeholders. Situations where competing groups cannot be simultaneously be satisfied put clear limits to the level of coherence that can be achieved.

This discussion illustrates that, in reality, efforts towards policy coherence, typically take place in a political context where multiple actors with competing interests and ideas battle to get their views represented in policy decisions (Nilsson et al. 2012).

Looking at the possible sources of inconsistent policies may inform strategies to address incoherence. Hoebink has provided a useful systematization that illustrates the diverse sources (summarized in Sianes 2013).

Source of inconsistency:

<i>Intentional</i>	The decision maker, faced with conflicting interests, deliberately chooses a particular benefit.
<i>Unintentional</i>	The results of one policy defeats another, without anyone being aware of it because they belong to different policy areas.
<i>Structural</i>	Competing interest groups exist and benefitting some inevitably leads to damaging others.
<i>Temporary</i>	It is a matter of time for conflicts of interest to be rebalanced.
<i>Fictitious</i>	There is no actual conflict, but ideas or ideologies affect the decision-making body.
<i>Institutional</i>	Cultural differences in the performance of each bureaucratic institution, mainly due to a lack of coordination (vertical or horizontal) between different administrative areas.
<i>Political-Economic</i>	Due to substantive issues on how to address the problems of society, including the fight against poverty, where more or less orthodox approaches may conflict with each other.

#### d) The relation between PCD and PCSD

With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the international community shifts the focus from policy coherence for development (PCD) to policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD): Under the section on systemic issues, policy and institutional coherence, SDG 17.14 explicitly calls to “Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development”.

While PCD strives to ensure that a country’s domestic and foreign (non-aid) policies are consistent with, and support, development efforts, a PCD assessment evaluates the extent to which domestic sectoral policies are aligned with development objectives.

In contrast, PCSD is “an approach and policy tool to integrate the economic, social, environmental and governance dimensions of sustainable development at all stages of domestic and international policy making” (OECD 2016, 83). This means that PCSD is much more complex than PCD. A PCSD analysis requires to not only look at aid and non-aid policy coherence but to also pay attention to coherence across multiple and sometimes conflicting development objectives (internal coherence), coherent actions at the local, regional and global levels (vertical coherence), coherence on the role of key actors (government, the pri-

vate sector, civil society) across developed and developing countries (transnational cooperation).

At the operational level, moving from PCD to PCSD monitoring does not alter the overall framework. Rather, it requires topical experts to include additional indicators that capture critical interactions (synergies and trade-offs) across development objectives, actor groups, long-term impacts and transboundary effects.

The increase in complexity is obvious. To remain manageable, a pragmatic approach is required, particularly in a situation where PCD monitoring is not yet institutionalized. Hence, it is suggested to a) consider PCSD issues in the analysis of incoherencies (see step 4 below) and b) to develop a robust set of PCD indicators first (see step 5 below) and to add PCSD indicators for eminent issues only.

### **3. Monitoring PCSD**

a) Monitoring process, output or outcome?

According to the mandate, this monitoring concept shall focus on monitoring the coherence of policy outputs (i.e. decisions by the Federal Government and the Swiss Parliament) in regard of their impact on development.

However, it is worth discussing briefly the policy cycle<sup>6</sup> in order to clarify the broader framework in which PCSD monitoring is situated as well as the terminology used. Regarding the latter, we follow the definitions used by OECD<sup>7</sup>, which are also used by SDC's evaluation department. Although the OECD glossary is focusing on project and program evaluations, it can be equally applied to policy (coherence) analysis since policymaking shares the key logic of project interventions, which is an underlying theory of change. The terminology used also corresponds with the terminology used in public policy analysis (see e.g. glossary in John 2012). This discussion shall further be used to reflect on how the various phases of the policy cycle relate to the monitoring task at hand.

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<sup>6</sup> We use the policy cycle as a heuristic tool. It suggests a linear sequential process that simplifies the messiness of policy making with its reality of bargaining, its twists and turns of decisions, the reverses and rapidly changing, flexible and chaotic nature of decision making (John 2012).

<sup>7</sup> OECD-DAC Evaluation Network, 2002, Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, available at [www.oecd.org/development/peer-reviews/2754804.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/development/peer-reviews/2754804.pdf)



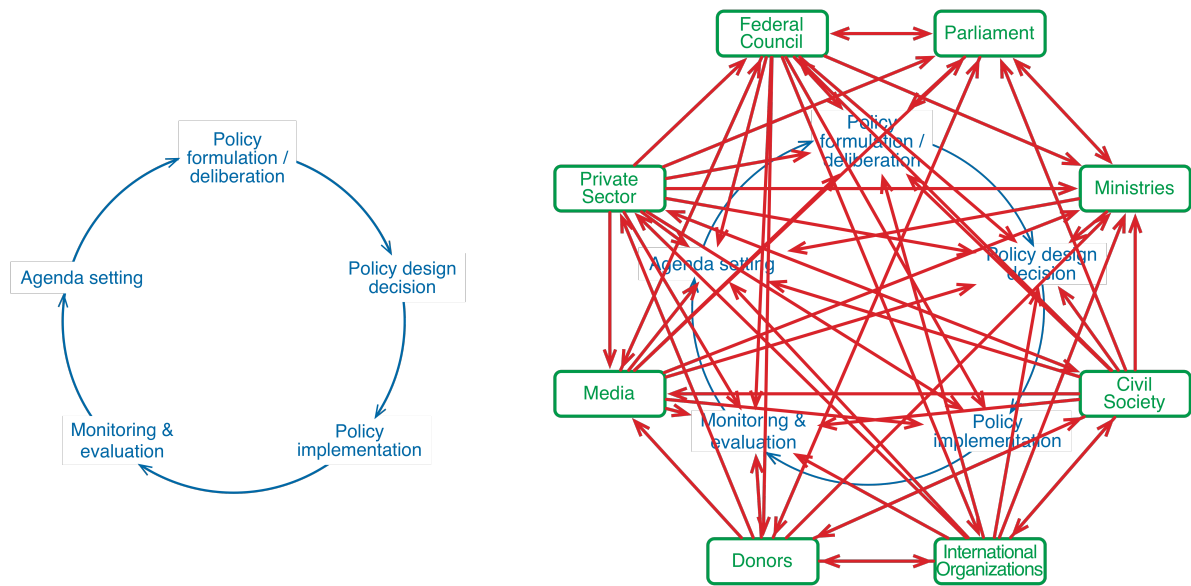


Figure 3: The policy process as being driven by "an interplay of institutions, ideas and interests" (John 2012)

The policy cycle can be split in distinct phases:

1. **Policy formulation.** Policy formulation covers agenda setting, the identification of policy options and the evaluation and deliberation of the options. It includes a) all inputs such as knowledge, resources and activities that feed into the agenda setting and deliberation around a policy issue, and b) the formal policy process, i.e. the procedures and institutional arrangements that shape the elaboration of a new policy.

Policy formulation is a highly contested process. Typically, policy formulation is not (or not exclusively) an evidence-based and rationalistic process in pursuit of common goals, which is often implicitly assumed when talking about coherence, but a political and contested process of balancing out interests and power politics (Nilsson et al. 2012).

While the successful agenda setting signals that actors acknowledge a collective problem in need of regulatory action, a process of 'exfiltration' sets in during the transformation of acknowledging the collective problem into collective action: Typically, the definition of the part of the collective problem which requires public regulation is increasingly narrowed down for various reasons (e.g. a better understanding of the role and/or capability of the state to regulate), as well as the range of addressees of a policy, often as a result of their political (lobbying) power (Knoepfel et al. 2004).

During this process of policy formulation, the *theory of change* that informs the concrete design of the policy is politically negotiated. A theory of change consists of two elements:

- a) The *causal hypothesis* or *chain of causality*, i.e. assumptions about the various causes and their interplay that lead to the problem. The answer to the questions about 'who' and/or 'what' causes the problem leads to the identification of addressees of a potential policy intervention. Obviously, when the causes are ill-defined, the resulting policy will not target the real causes/addressees and be ineffective from the outset.

The formulation of the causal hypothesis not only depends from objective /scientific evidence (where available) but as much from political position and subjective perception of the problem.

- b) The *intervention hypothesis* or *results chain* defines the policy goal (i.e. strategic targets defined by policy actors, typically at a general level; sometimes also called 'overarching objective') that shall be achieved, and through which leverage points and measures potential regulatory interventions shall transform the mechanism that caused the problem in order to achieve the stipulated policy goal.

The discussion of the policy formulation process reveals its impact on monitoring policy coherence: While the theory of change underlying a particular policy design reflects the political settlement, interest groups are likely to maintain their differing causal hypothesis and related intervention hypothesis as well as their view on how this impacts development. This may subsequently lead to different assessments of whether or not progress has made in achieving greater policy coherence.

This has important consequences for the methodology: when reporting on policy coherence we will have to clearly separate the presentation of data and their interpretation.

2. *Policy Design*. The policy formulation process results in a specific policy design which includes the policy objective as well as the measures and instruments to implement the policy. These are the 'tangible', i.e. formalized products of a policy design incorporated in laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities. Typically, a policy design consists of five complementary elements (Knoepfel et al. 2004):
  - a) One or more specific *objectives* (often in rather abstract language) which specify to some extent the overall goal (e.g. curbing illicit financial flows).
  - b) *Instruments* (operative elements): measures that are taken to reach the goals of a given objective. From these instruments follow rights and obligations of different target groups.
  - c) *Actors and resources*, i.e. the definition of who is responsible for what and the resources made available.
  - d) *Rules of procedure* formalizes the execution, define internal and external communication, and limits discretion in implementation.
  - e) *Evaluative elements*: Information in the policy that defines which data have to be collected, when and with which method in order to measure progress towards the objective defined in a).

When monitoring policy coherence it is important to consider all five levels as they all interact and have an impact on coherence and subsequently on policy outcome and impact (see *Figure 4*). In reality, not all policies are completely defined and contain only some of the five elements leading to uncertainty and discretion in the implementation.

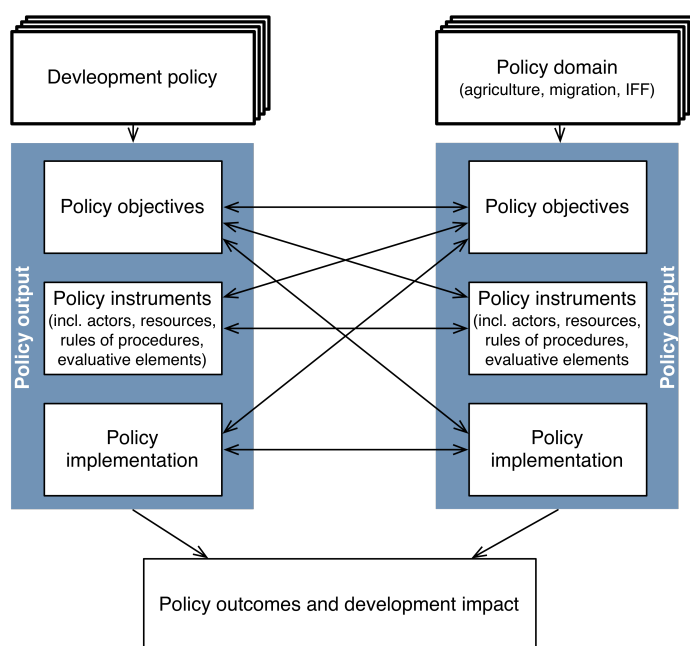


Figure 4: Interacting layers of policy of policy output elements (adapted from Nilsson et al. 2012)

3. *Policy implementation* covers the execution of the policy (e.g. DTAs concluded) and transfers the regulatory intention into tangible ‘real world’ results. Therefore, policy implementation is an output and has to be seen as integral part of monitoring policy coherence at output level. Policy implementation is under control and responsibility of the regulatory body but can be affected over time through changing contextual factors such as preconditions or unforeseen events.
4. *Policy outcomes* are the intended and unintended short-term (immediate outcome) and medium-term (intermediate outcome) effects of a policy output, typically behavioral changes and responses of actors in society (such as industry sectors or individual companies), households or – in the case of policies targeting international relations – other governments. Policy outcomes are not anymore under control of the policy implementation body but depend on the response of the target audience which is exposed to a number of different internal and external dynamics, incentives and policy regimes. Therefore, attribution of outcomes to a particular policy output is not straightforward.
5. *Policy impacts* are the lasting positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a policy, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Given the longer-term nature of impacts the number of intervening factors shaping results increases exponentially and makes attribution even more challenging.

## 4. Methodological approach

The methodology outlined in this chapter proposes a systematic approach to assessing policy coherence through five theory-informed steps:

- Step 1: Delimiting the policy fields
- Step 2: Establishing an inventory of policy elements
- Step 3: Developing a coherence matrix / a coherence gap map
- Step 4: Analyzing key policy coherence issues
- Step 5: Developing indicators to monitor coherence

To illustrate the scope of the proposed methodology, we compare it with the methodology used by ECDPM. The ECDPM paper (pages 20-25) lists goals for policy coherence and intermediate objectives. They are formulated through a development lens but it is not clear on what the goals are exactly based. From there, the ECDPM methodology directly moves to defining indicators. The ECDPM approach equals part of step 4 and step 5 in our methodology. Yet, the ECDPM paper does not properly define the boundaries of the policy domains nor analyze the competing policy goals and interacting policy elements; hence, the proposed indicators in the ECDPM paper rely on implicit assumptions. As a result, it remains unclear whether the goals and indicators defined are adequate or comprehensive to monitor progress on policy coherence for development. For example, it could be that the proposed set of indicators covers only issues that are currently on the political agenda such as the automatic exchange of tax information (AIA) to reduce IFFs. However, topics that are on the agenda today do not necessarily cover the full scope of the coherence challenge in a given domain. Further, it remains unclear in the ECDPM methodology how the proposed objectives to increase coherence relate to the competing domain policies and the legitimacy of those goals although this is at the core of the coherence debate. Omitting this dimension renders the PCSD monitoring effort vulnerable.

In contrast, the approach proposed in this paper engages in thorough “upstream” work to ground the coherence objectives and related indicators on a solid understanding of the coherence challenges:

In Step 1, we define the policy domains. Particularly the crosscutting nature of policy domains such as IFF, migration and agriculture requires a strategic overview over the topic and policies involved at the national and international level.

In step 2, we engage in a systematic analysis of the policy objectives and policy instruments of the domain and – in step 3 – assess how they interact with development policies.

The order of step 2 and step 3 can also be reversed so that first a coherence matrix is developed and then a more detailed assessment of the interacting policies is carried out. The advantage of this would be that based on expert knowledge a prioritization can be made so that the more detailed assessment of policy objectives and instruments is only carried out for policies with strong interaction.

The work carried out up to this point allows us in step 4 to establish potential conflicts and/or synergies<sup>8</sup>, which in turn allow us to identify opportunities for improving synergies and/or mitigating conflicts are identified, i.e. formulate coherence goals. Here, we refer wherever possible to international agreements such as the SDGs or international conventions and to commitments Switzerland has made. Finally, in step 5 we establish indicators to measure progress in realizing the respective coherence goals.<sup>9</sup>

The proposed five-step process leading to the definition of indicators promotes a deeper understanding of complex policy environments and instills a level of objectivity in the PCSD monitoring process but also in the policy-making process itself.

The methodology is based on work done by the OECD-DAC Evaluation Network, scholarly literature among others from Nilsson (2012), Sianes (2013) and Knoepfel (2004), the Pro-

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<sup>8</sup> The most recent Framework for Policy Coherence that OECD has published on 13 May 2016 for several thematic domains including IFF and food security go in the same direction but take a less systematic approach (OECD 2016a; OECD 2016b).

<sup>9</sup> The policy indicators can also be used at the policy design phase as inputs into ex-ante evaluations of policy options.

ject Cycle Management Manual ([www.elearningpcm.ch](http://www.elearningpcm.ch)) developed at ETH-NADEL as well as the ECDPM study commissioned by SDC (van Seters et al. 2015). It should be noted that the framework proposed applies an admittedly simplistic view on governance; it accounts for the political dynamics only to a limited extent.

In order to simplify the application of the methodology to different policy domains and its use by different research teams, the description of the methodology takes an instructional or recipe-like format. As we will discuss in chapter 5, a structured process also supports the effective communication of PCSD monitoring results.

## 5. Application of the methodology

This chapter provides guidance for the application of each step of the methodology by detailing the goal, rationale, procedure, and expected result.

### Step 1: Delimiting the policy domains

**Goal:** The system boundaries of the scope of PCSD monitoring for each issue area – agriculture, migration, IFF – and the respective development policies are defined.

**Rationale:** The first complication when assessing policy coherence is identifying the policies that in principle should cohere and therefore need to be included in the respective policy domain of IFF, agriculture and migration on one hand, and how they relate to development policies (May et al. 2006).

*Policy domains* migration, agriculture, illicit financial flows: While policy domains are more or less established areas of policy that give meaning to common problems (see May et al. 2006), it is worthwhile to start with putting together an overview of the different policies that relate to the respective policy domain (and to update this overview) for two reasons:

- It accounts for the fact that boundaries around policies and policy domains or policy fields are often malleable and keep changing.
- It requires to carefully consider all national and international sector- and sub-sector policies that are involved and to give a comprehensive overview over the related policy objectives. As such it avoids focusing too soon on the topics that are currently on the political agenda and missing those that receive less attention.<sup>10</sup>

*Development policies:* The term ‘policy coherence for sustainable development’ (PCSD) clarifies that the coherence analysis must emanate from a development policy reference framework. The strategic goals listed in the Dispatch of International Cooperation 2017 – 2020 (Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft 2016)<sup>11</sup>, which is the authoritative policy document for Swiss development cooperation,

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<sup>10</sup> For the policy domain of illicit financial flows, the publication from Betz and Pieth (2016) provides a first attempt at delineating the policy domain.

<sup>11</sup> The seven strategic goals are formulated in a very generic way: (1) Beitrag zur Entwicklung eines internationalen Rahmens, der die Bewältigung der globalen Herausforderungen ermöglicht; (2) Prävention und Bewältigung von Krisen, Katastrophen und Fragilität sowie Förderung der Konflikttransformation; (3) Gewährleistung eines nachhaltigen Zugangs zu Ressourcen und Dienstleistungen für alle; (4) Förderung eines nachhaltigen Wirtschaftswachstums; (5) Stärkung des Rechtsstaats und der demokratischen Mitsprache, Unterstützung von Institutionen, die der Gesellschaft und der Wirtschaft dienen; (6) Achtung und Förderung der Menschenrechte und der Grundfreiheiten; (7) Stärkung der Geschlechtergleichstellung und der Rechte von Frauen und Mädchen.

indicate that many specific policies are deployed to achieve this broad range of goals. Similarly, the SDGs as the most recent global development policy document makes clear that a deeper analysis is required to identify those development policy goals that interact with the policy domains of food agriculture, migration and IFF respectively.<sup>12</sup> We therefore suggest putting together a list that contains only those development goals and policies that interact with the topical policy domain directly or indirectly.

**Procedure:** This step is mainly descriptive and based on expert input.

At the national level, we include only policy decisions by the executive and the legislative level of the government. This includes strategy papers such as the "Positionspapier und Aktionsplan 2015-2019 des Bundesrates zur gesellschaftlichen Verantwortung der Unternehmen (Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR)" but also relevant laws such as the "FATCA-Umsetzungsgesetz" and the related regulations (Verordnung).

We do not include policy processes or ongoing initiatives (such as e.g. the "Konzernverantwortungsinitiative").

At the international level, we include relevant agreements and policy instruments that have been adopted or are in force.

**Product:** A comprehensive list of a) policies involved in the respective policy domain and b) the related development policies.

Annex 2 provides an illustrative – but not complete – list for the policy domain 'illicit financial flows' and the related development policies

## **Step 2: Establishing an inventory of policy elements**

**Goal:** Get an overview over the different policy elements in the policy domain as well as in the relevant development policies.

**Rationale:** Since incoherence results from a conflict between one or more elements (goals, objectives, instruments, resources, procedures) of at least two policies (see *Figure 4*), this inventory is the basis to detect and analyze incoherencies and synergies.

**Procedure:** This step is mainly descriptive and based on the policies identified in step 1. The description is mainly done through a compilation of the goals and the more specific objectives as they are stated in the relevant policy documents.

The same needs to be done for the development policy goals. Documents to establish those goals include but are not limited to the Dispatch of International Cooperation 2017 – 2020 (Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft 2016), international policy documents, which Switzerland has adopted officially, as for example the SDGs<sup>13</sup> or the "Strategie für nachhaltige Entwicklung 2016-2019".

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<sup>12</sup> The OECD policy framework provides a first analysis of the interaction between the SDGs and IFF (OECD 2016b).

<sup>13</sup> [www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org](http://www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org)

The key challenge in this step is to get the level of detail right in order to capture the key coherence issues.

**Product:** A table listing the relevant policy elements of both the policies policy domain and the related development policies. A useful template for the list is provided in *Figure 5*<sup>14</sup>.

Annex 3 illustrates the use of the table in for one policy aspect of domestic resource mobilization.

	Policy output			
Goal (overarching objective)	Objectives	Instruments (incl. actors & resources, rules of procedure, evaluative elements)	Implementation	References
Goal 1	Objective 1	Instrument 1		
		Instrument 2		
		Instrument 3		
	Objective 2	Instrument 3		
	Objective 3	Instrument 4		
Goal 2				

*Figure 5: Template for the inventory of policy objectives*

### Step 3: Developing a coherence matrix / a coherence gap map

**Goal:** Make the conflicts/synergies between policy elements transparent

**Rationale:** Putting the policies in a matrix allows a juxtaposition of the policy elements involved. This allows a first overview over the conflicts between policy elements. The matrix further provides the starting point for analyzing initiatives to improve coherence and the baseline for assessing progress in increasing coherence.

**Procedure:** The objectives of the topical policy domain are put in the y-axis of a matrix while the development goals are put in the x-axis.

The resulting matrix now allows for a first expert assessment of the interaction between policy goals, i.e. the different cells of the matrix. Guiding questions for the description are:

- What components within the policy domains do interact – directly or indirectly – and at which level – objectives, instruments, implementation?
- What is the level of coherence (form strong synergy to weak synergy, neutral, weak and strong conflict)?

At this point, only a first rapid assessment (through expert input) of the interaction regarding a) the strength of the interaction and the level of coherence is

<sup>14</sup> This is a modified version of the list of objectives used by Nilsson (2012, 400) to perform a rapid coherence assessment of different EU sector policies with the EU environmental policy.

done (the full description of the level of interaction and level of coherence will be done in the next step).

Nilsson (2012) proposes the following coding for the different cells:

- Strength of interaction (I): coding from 0 to 2, 0 meaning no interaction, 1 meaning weak or indirect interaction, 2 meaning strong direct interaction.
- Level of coherence (C): coding from -2 to +2, -2 meaning strong conflict, 0 meaning neutral, +2 meaning strong synergy.

This rapid assessment and coding gives a first overview and allows prioritizing and focusing on the most important coherence issues.

**Product:** A matrix that shows the goal of the policies in the headers of the rows (domain policy) and columns (development policy) and gives basic information on intensity of the interaction and conflict/synergy in the cells.

Development policy Policy domain	Development policy													
	Effective publ. institutions A	DRM B	Strengthen fin. sector C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Illicit financial flows														
Tax information exchange	1	-2/2	-1/	0										
DBAs / TIEAs	2													
...	3													
Corporate taxation	4													
USR III	5													
...	6													
Trade and investment	7													
Corporate liability law	8													
...	9													
International corruption	10													
GwG	11													

Figure 6: Template policy coherence map (based on Nilsson 2012)

#### Step 4: Analyzing key policy coherence issues

**Goal:** Identifying the nature of incoherencies and identifying defined goals to improve coherence and (ongoing or potential) measures to mitigate inconsistencies / strengthen synergies. Incoherence includes PCSD dimensions as well as salient PCSD issues.

**Rationale:** This step serves three purposes:

- Identify all coherence issues, not only those that are currently on the political agenda.
- Link conflicts between policy elements with measures to improve coherence.
- Lay ground to develop a set of indicators and against which current initiatives can be assessed and to evaluate/refine those indicators proposed in the ECDPM paper.

*(Many initiatives addressing PCSD work with a Results Chain when identifying measures to improve coherence between a policy domain and development. The same approach is taken in the ECDPM paper. In this particular case, we do not use Results Chains at the level of policy domains for conceptual reasons. For more details see the box "Results Chains").*



Procedure: In order to assess policy coherence and progress on policy coherence, it is necessary to look at each cell of the matrix that shows an interaction (i.e. value ≠0) to understand the nature of the specific interactions. Helpful questions might be:

- What are the key policy interactions, at the level of objectives, instruments and implementation, where are synergies or conflicts?
- What is the nature of these interactions compared with the various sources of inconsistencies discussed above (intentional, unintentional, structural, temporary, fictitious, institutional, political-economic inconsistencies)?
- What is the strength and conditionality of these interactions?
- What are the different underlying causal hypotheses that lead to different intervention hypotheses that cause the coherence conflict?

Based on this, opportunities for synergy enhancement and conflict mitigation can be identified:

- What are ongoing policy initiatives to address incoherencies?
- Where are the opportunities for mitigation to reduce policy conflict and develop a more synergetic interaction?
- Where are the opportunities to enhance, develop and achieve stronger policy coherence?

To the extent possible, we ground our coherence assessment and coherence goals in international agreements and initiatives to which Switzerland has made some commitment (e.g. the SDGs) or which have a broad support in the international community.

Product: A table that lists for each cell of the coherence matrix that shows a significant interaction:

- Coherence issues
- Related initiatives / options to improve interactions
- Coherence goals

The template for step 4 is integrated together with the template for step 5.

## Results chains

The ECDPM paper refers to causal chains (in the OECD terminology, these would be results chains or intervention hypotheses) to conceptualize the interactions in each of the three policy domains, which are also graphically represented in the report (van Seters et al. 2015, 16-18). In our view, the causal chains presented have technical flaws, which render them unsuitable for the purpose.<sup>15</sup> Beyond these technical shortcomings, we have more conceptual concerns about the value of using result chains to improve coherence at the level of policy domains.

<sup>15</sup> The main technical shortcomings are: First, the terminology and logic of the causal chains is not consistent nor logic in itself. Second, none of the causal chains uses the standard-terminology and structure (activities → output → (immediate and intermediate) outcome → impact) and it is also not possible to reconstruct the chains along this logic. Third, the different policy areas are treated as silos: they only contribute to the overarching goal and do not have any synergies at the level of outcomes (although e.g. measures in the field of taxation and trading do contribute to improved transparency which is an immediate outcome).

Results chains were developed to understand through which measures and steps concrete and tangible project-level interventions (such as e.g. water projects or women empowerment groups) achieve their goal. Hence, they require some level of detail to be meaningful. When they are applied at a more aggregate level such as complex policy domains, a results chain loses its explanatory power. It cannot show the chain through which change is achieved because of the higher level of aggregation that has to be used.

We therefore refrain from using results chains at the level of policy domains. Instead, we focus the analysis of the interactions between specific policy goals, instruments and implementation as they emerge from the coherence matrix. At that level, we identify concrete options to address incoherence between policies and derive possible indicators.

### **Step 5: Developing indicators to monitor coherence**

**Goal:** Having the tools in place to monitor progress on policy coherence issues (PCD and PCSD) detected in step 4.

**Rationale:** In general terms, an indicator is a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor. Policy indicators can also be used during the policy design phase as inputs into ex-ante evaluations of policy options (Knoepfel et al. 2004), but that would be a (welcome) secondary use resulting from this project.

Indicators can be developed for different levels or categories. In the case of policy, it is useful to distinguish the following categories:

- *Input indicators:* measures inputs such as donor expenditure on a particular policy area or policy process. This might be a proxy where it is difficult to measure output. However, while such indicators reflect commitment to a policy area, they are to be treated with caution because of the effectiveness of expenditure in meeting development goals.
- *Output indicators:* examine outputs from the policy process. A policy output can be defined as the existence of a policy instrument.
- *Outcome indicators:* measure real trends or results of both policy and societal changes. However, they may not accurately measure policy effort.
- *Position/stance indicator:* can be used to measure the actual negotiating position of policy actors. In this case, this might be useful to monitor the policy effort of Switzerland during multilateral negotiation processes or to capture a country's position where it may differ from the final agreement. Position indicators could also be used to monitor domestic policy processes but this is outside the scope of this mandate.

For the policy coherence monitoring system, wherever possible, output indicators should be used. Where useful, position/stance indicators may be considered as well. Input indicators should only be used as last resort.

**Process:** There are well-established criteria for constructing a technically sound and reliable indicator. A complete indicator for an input, output, outcome or stance statement is composed of several elements (as used by SDC for monitoring and evaluation):

Criterion:	Which measurable characteristic of the situation described in the specific policy output, outcome or impact do we observe and analyze?
Measure:	How can we measure the criterion? What is the measuring unit?
Baseline:	What is the status quo at time $t_1$ regarding policy coherence in this specific case? This is important to give context when assessing data.
Target value:	What is the quantitative target to be achieved until time $t_2$ ? One can dispute whether it makes sense to set a target for policy coherence processes in cases where no official target was defined (which is often the case). Yet, without any reference point it is difficult to give meaning to a measurement results. Therefore, we propose to give in such a situation at least a reference number (e.g. max. nr. of countries with which a DTA could be concluded). If this is done it has to be indicated that it is a reference value, not a set target.
Means of Verification:	Where do we get the data? What methods do we use for collecting data? When and at what frequency do we collect which data?
Analysis, presentation:	How are data analyzed? How is the information presented?
Duty:	Who is responsible for collecting this specific data? Since all data for a given policy domain will be collected by one dedicated institution <sup>16</sup> , there is no need to fill in this criterion.

In addition to these technical elements, there is a set of criteria to be observed for assessing the quality of indicators.

Relevant:	The indicator covers a significant aspect of the result. There is a plausible and valid link between the indicator and the objective (causality; this what in the SDC proposed indicators in the column 'Policy impact hypothesis' is mentioned).
Reliable:	The indicator is precise and can be measured with minimal bias. If two persons use the same indicator independently from each other they will get the same result.
Realistic:	With the given resources the target values of the indicator are achievable in the defined time frame.

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<sup>16</sup> According to the ToR of this mandate

In addition, each set of indicators related to a policy domain should meet the following criteria:

- Doable: The data can be collected reliably, timely and at reasonable cost
- Sufficient: The set of indicators related to the objective is adequate to measure the intended result.

While the categories and technicalities discussed are valid for any type of indicators, indicators to measure policy coherence have an important characteristic that sets them apart and requires particular attention: A policy indicator is never a value-free description of the policy it is intended to measure. Each policy indicator implies a normative decision in the definition of the target value. What means 'improved coherence'? What means an ideal policy output (or outcome)?

Where the evaluative elements are defined as part of a policy to improve coherence, defining an indicator is straightforward. In all other cases, constructing an indicator involves defining the ideal policy output. Yet, the complexity of the interrelationships between developed and developing countries makes a decision challenging: data are typically lacking and political interests, perceptions and value judgments play a role, as discussed earlier.

Despite this difficulty, it would be premature to abandon indicators. They are still useful in many ways: They can focus public awareness and raise quality of public debate. Also, their construction leads to an improved understanding of complex policy environments; they can support a culture of evaluation of public policy choices and can be inputs to ex-ante evaluation of policy options.

To maintain the benefits resulting from indicators, it is important to make value judgments transparent. This is required at different stages:

- *Setting targets*: Where it is disputed what a reasonable target would be when improving coherence, it is best to mention the two most opposing positions regarding the target.
- *Causality*: Explicitly mention the assumed impact hypothesis for a given indicator (as it is done in the proposed SDC indicators on pages 20-25 in the ECDPM paper).
- *Data*: Always present the data collected without interpretation.
- *Data interpretation*: To give meaning to the data presented, it might be helpful to mention the most differing positions/interpretation of the results.

This way, the monitoring data can inform the policy coherence discussion without taking position and being partial.

- Product: List of indicators linked to each issue identified in step 5.
- Template for step 4 and 5:

Policy domain	Illicit Financial Flows	
Policy Interaction		A:
Interaction/Coherence	/	1:
<b>Coherence issues</b> (discussion of conflicts/synergies)		
Goal Describe concrete conflicts/synergies between the policy goals (if any)	•	
Objectives Describe concrete conflicts/synergies between specific objectives of the two policies (if any)	•	
Instruments Describe concrete conflicts/synergies between the policy instruments (if any)	•	
Implementation Describe concrete conflicts/synergies arising from the way the instruments are implemented (if any)	•	
<b>Strengthening PCSD</b>		
Opportunities (describe political decisions / measures/criteria that strengthen PCSD)	•	
Risks (describe political decisions / measures/criteria that weaken PCSD)	•	
Target (describes what coherence ideally looks like.)	•	
<b>Indicator 1</b>		
Criterion (what do we measure?)		
Measuring unit (how can we measure the criterion?)		
Target (what is the ideal status of the criterion?)		
Baseline (2014) (what is the status quo regarding the criterion in year $t_0$ ?)		
2015 (what is the status in year $t_1$ ?)		
2016		
Means of Verification (Where do we get the data, which methods should be used?)		
Analysis		

(How are data analyzed / presented?)	
Causality (hypothesis)	

Figure 7: Template Indicator List

## 6. Reporting: The Swiss PCD Observatory

The goal of monitoring PCD is contribute to the quality of the PCD discourse and to inform the policymaking process. Therefore, the full value of monitoring PCD only materializes with effective communication of the monitoring results. For communication to be effective, it is important that the reader gets first an overview over the coherence dynamics in a policy field and can easily find more detailed information from this starting point.

Therefore, it is important to consider the communication of results at the outset and together with the design of the monitoring concept. This allows designing a lean but effective process, covering monitoring and communication. For the communication part, this includes not only how readers access information but also that data are efficiently processed, stored and updated.

### 1. Online Observatory platform

Our proposal to communicate the results builds on an Internet-based platform – the Swiss PCD Observatory ([www.policycoherence.ch](http://www.policycoherence.ch)) – that will be updated annually. We further assume that there is one Internet address that serves as entry-point to all PCD monitoring results with a dedicated page for each policy domain. This allows for a structured data repository and way to process, present and update information.

For each dedicated policy domain (agriculture, migration, IFF to start with), we propose two complementary access options:

#### a) Thematic access

The thematic access uses the coherence matrix developed as entry point. It gives an overview over the policy domain and the coherence challenges:

##### Overview:

- The matrix provides a synopsis of the interacting policies (on the x and y axes) as well as the coherence dynamics (in the cells)
- Each cells provides the following high-level information: a) the interaction dynamics; b) and level of coherence; c) trend, i.e. whether coherence has improved or worsened over the last year(s).

##### Access to details

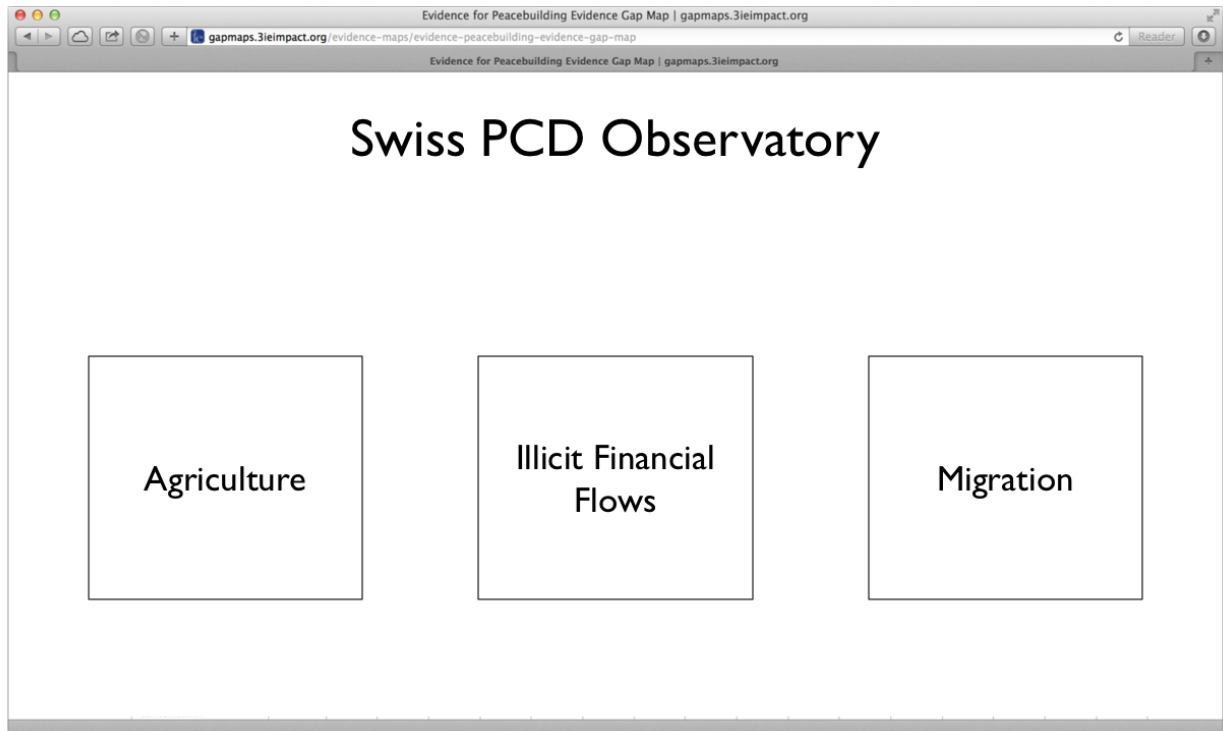
- When hovering over or clicking on the header of a row or a column, the reader gets detailed information over the respective policy goal and the policy instruments.
- When hovering over a cell in the matrix, the reader gets information over a) the details of the interaction / policy coherence; b) description of a coherence goal; c) indicators that measure policy coherence.

**b) 'Political decisions' access**

Users interested in the impact of particular political decisions can select the decision from a list containing all relevant decisions and explore how this has changed policy coherence.

Each political decision is linked to the “cells” of the matrix on which it has an influence.

*Figure 8-10* provide a conceptual illustration of the online observatory.



*Figure 8: Swiss PCD Observatory entry portal*

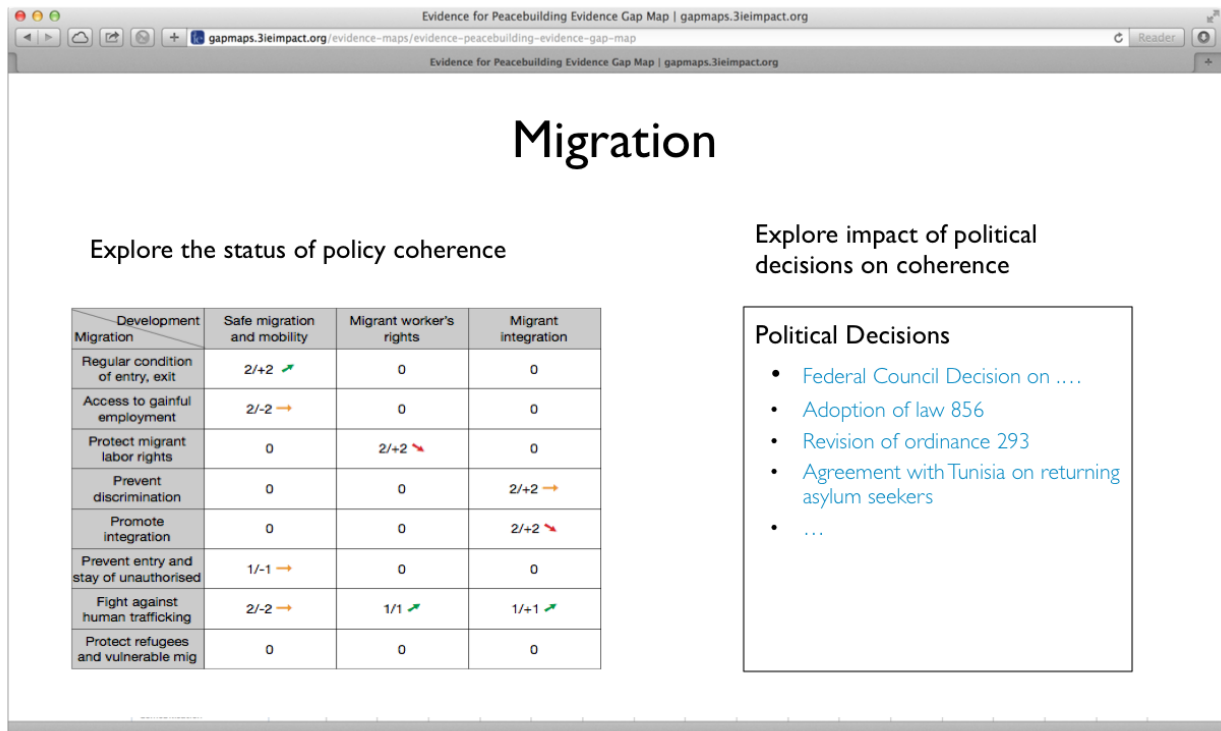


Figure 9: Coherence in a policy domain can be accessed either through thematic coherence issues or through political decisions (mock-up content displayed in the graph)

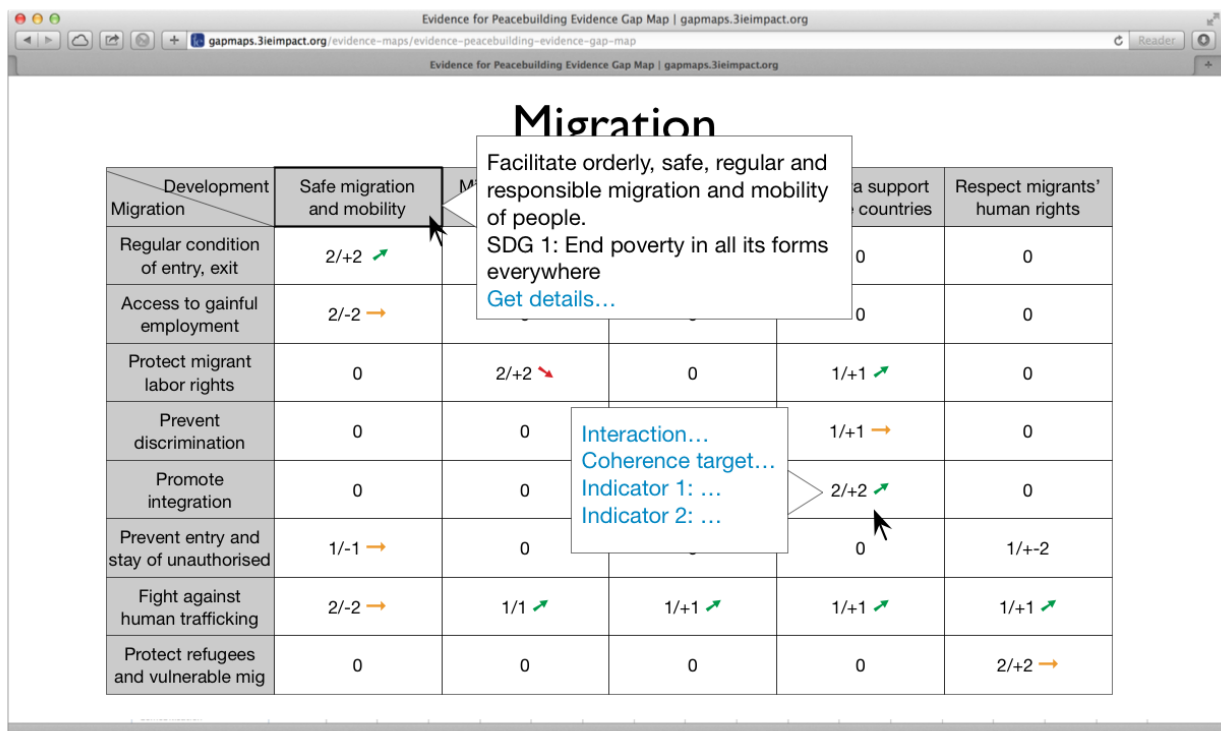


Figure 10: The thematic access gives an overview over the coherence status and challenges. Access to detailed information is facilitated in an intuitive manner through the coherence matrix. (mock-up content displayed in the graph)



## 2. Online Observatory monitoring process

Once the methodology is defined and agreed upon, carrying out the PCD monitoring over time basically means

- screening all political decisions within a policy domain (as defined in the methodology)
- linking them to the relevant policy interaction (i.e. “cell” within the matrix)
- assess their impact on PCD against the indicators defined
- update policy coherence statuses based on the assessment.

This process is straight forward and the online observatory supports this process from collecting political decisions to presenting the results.

**Error! Reference source not found.** illustrates the monitoring process and how it is integrated into the online Observatory.

The Online Observatory is designed so that the person responsible for monitoring a policy domain is able to carry out all necessary CRUD (Create, Read, Update, Delete)-manipulations of the data like adding political decision, updating or adding coherence issues etc. This approach optimizes consistency and reduces cost. There is no ongoing IT-cost for updating the platform beyond the cost for hosting.

In addition to the regular monitoring and updating, monitoring also requires observing the policy domain to capture changes in the policy domain. However, such changes have a low frequency. Nevertheless, the monitoring team has to keep an eye on it in order to

- add or update the policy domain so that it accurately represents the policy discourse.
- remove or add new indicators as required. This should be done with particular caution since an effective monitoring system exactly builds on indicators that remain constant over time. However, when major changes alter the policy domain this has to be reflected in the indicators as well.

Where required, such additions can also be made by the user responsible for monitoring a particular policy domain.

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## 8. Annex 1: Glossary

The terms of the glossary are taken from the OECD “Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management”<sup>17</sup> and the literature analyzing public policy.

Impact	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. (OECD)
Indicator	Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor. (OECD)
Institutional Development Impact	The extent to which an intervention improves or weakens the ability of a country or region to make more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of its human, financial, and natural resources, for example through: (a) better definition, stability, transparency, enforceability and predictability of institutional arrangements and/or (b) better alignment of the mission and capacity of an organization with its mandate, which derives from these institutional arrangements. Such impacts can include intended and unintended effects of an action. (OECD)
Goal	The higher-order objective to which a development intervention is intended to contribute. (OECD)
Monitoring	A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. (OECD)
Outcome	The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention’s outputs. (OECD)
Outputs	The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes. (OECD)
Policy design	Public decision-making leading to (or appearing to lead to) actions outside the political system. A policy consist of a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives. (John 2012; Knoepfel et al. 2004)
Policy domain	A more or less established area of policy that gives meaning to a common problems and has integrative properties. (May et al. 2006)
Policy formulation	The setting of objectives to implement public decisions. (John 2012)
Policy implementation	The stage in the policy process concerned with turning policy intentions into action. (John 2012)
Policy	A tool governments use to implement public decisions. (John 2012)

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<sup>17</sup> [www.oecd.org/development/peer-reviews/2754804.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/development/peer-reviews/2754804.pdf)

instrument

Policy outcome	Action or non-action, occurring outside the political system, intentionally or unintentionally produced by public decision making. (John 2012)
Policy output	A discrete decision or set of decision that produces or aims to produce a policy outcome. (John 2012)
Results Chain	The causal sequence for a development intervention that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes, impacts, and feedback. In some agencies, reach is part of the results chain. (OECD)
Results framework	The program logic that explains how the development objective is to be achieved, including causal relationships and underlying assumptions. (OECD)
Project or program objective	The intended physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other development results to which a project or program is expected to contribute. (OECD)

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