

# Photovoltaics in Co-operation with Developing Countries

Government - Industry Platform in Switzerland  
to Enhance Photovoltaic Development in Developing Countries

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**PV DC - PHOTOVOLTAICS IN CO-OPERATION WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**  
**GOVERNMENT-INDUSTRY PLATFORM IN SWITZERLAND TO ENHANCE PV DEPLOYMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

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**ABSTRACT:** Swiss professionals and institutions involved in the field of co-operation with developing countries and in the PV industry are provided with an information and coordination platform. The Government-Industry platform has been created in order to establish and reinforce the Swiss network interested in the co-operation and the increase of the deployment of RE (in particular photovoltaics) in developing countries. The creation of this platform should allow different Swiss players to harmonize their efforts and permit the exchange of information between professionals and institutions from Switzerland and from developing countries. The principal purposes of this platform are the promotion of the photovoltaic technology in development countries in relation with co-operation, the creation of experience and know-how in Switzerland and in developing countries and, last but not least, the improvement of the relationship among Swiss institutions and the developing countries.

**Keywords:** Developing Countries-1, Strategy-2, National Programme-3

## 1. STARTING POINT AND MOTIVATION

From the Swiss government prospective, the image of photovoltaics in technology cooperation activities was rather critical. Failure and bad experiences were better known than good examples. For that reason the Swiss government wanted to know whether photovoltaics is a realistic option for energy needs in developing countries. The motivation for the creation of an inter-departmental platform emerged principally from the IEA PVPS Task 9 initiative. The need for knowledge, guidelines with a global view and the exchange of experience and lessons learned played also a significant role in the conception of the platform.

## 2. CONCEPT AND APPROACH

The PV DC information and co-ordination platform constitutes a new concept of projects and activities related to the promotion of photovoltaics (and other RE as it is explained below) in developing countries. Different competences are brought together through the coalition of different groups of actors (governmental institutions, private sector and NGO's). A stronger international presence emphasized by an interdisciplinary multi-departmental co-operation will be the main advantage of this approach.

The platform **PVDC** will achieve its objectives through a dynamic approach :

- Interlinking knowledge and experiences.
- Networking with stakeholders: bridging authorities - industry – NGO's involved in the promotion of RE in developing countries.
- Involvement of different technologies: from specific (photovoltaics) to generic (renewables).
- From technology to end-use(r) oriented solutions and vice versa.

## 3. WHAT IS THE PV DC PLATFORM

The PV DC platform is a project which connects Swiss stakeholders in order to create a users pool interested in the increase of the deployment of photovoltaics (other RE are considered as well) in developing countries.

### 3.1 Government institutions

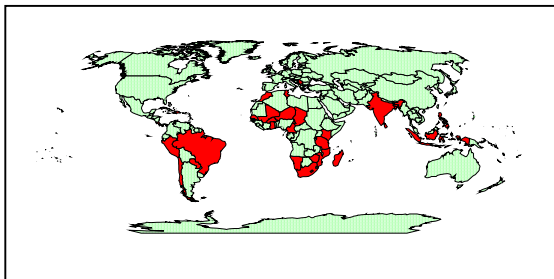
Within the platform government institutions carry a broad range of political competences and responsibilities. Their specific responsibilities include :

- **State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco)**
  - Support (Platform, PVPS Task 9)
  - International representation for the SDG ( Solar Development Group)

- Project financing through the JI / CDM (Joint Implementation / Clean Development Mechanism)
- **Swiss Federal Office of Energy (SFOE)**
    - Technical development and evolution
  - **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**
    - Capacity building
    - Technical assistance
    - Dialogue strategy
    - Pilot project financing
  - **Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL)**
    - Negotiating mandates
    - International representation for the GEF (Global Environmental Facility) and the CDM.

### 3.2 Private sector

The **private sector** completes the government bodies knowledge with technology-specific capabilities as project deployment, engineering, expertise, infrastructure formation and education. The private sector plays an important role creating the infrastructure, an essential condition needed for a sustainable PV market in developing countries.



**Figure 1:** Swiss experience in developing countries

### 3.3 NGO's

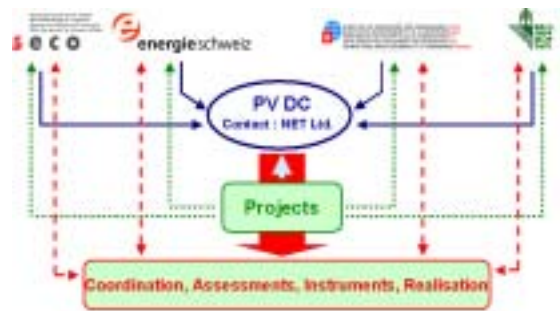
Some **NGO's** work actively in the research of opportunities for PV deployment in developing countries and in the information dissemination. NGO's are also important for their field experience (in particular concerning education and awareness) and the promotion of projects.

### 3.4 Organisation

The expertise of different actors with different competences is brought together and used for national and international workshops, support and follow-up of projects and promotion of instruments. Within the platform framework governmental institutions, the private sector and NGO's concentrate their efforts and permit information exchange between professionals and institutions from Switzerland and from developing countries. In this way, Switzerland will increase its

international presence through this interdisciplinary multi-departmental approach.

The added value of such an organisation is the coordination of Swiss activities in relationship with the cooperation with developing countries. Efforts can be coordinated and supported through the establishment of a common strategy to handle opportunities and problems. There is, in fact, a real need coming from developing countries, but also from promoters, of a global approach and recommended practice.



**Figure 2:** Platform organisation

## 4. OBJECTIVES

Platform objectives will be achieved through a common strategy/coordination within the network (Government, industry, NGO's).

The **ultimate objective** of the PV DC platform is the promotion of photovoltaic technology in developing countries in relation to co-operation. However, the dynamical approach allows the taking into account of other RE (in particular solar thermal, small hydro and wind). Other consequent but still significant objectives are listed as follows :

- Creation of experience and know-how in Switzerland and in developing countries.
- Creation of a network for information and know-how exchange.
- Co-ordination and strategy within the platform network.
- Increase of projects and activities in international field with the participation of Swiss partners.
- Information about project financing and financial instruments.
- Improvement of the relationship among Swiss institutions and the developing countries.

## 5 ACTIVITIES

The PV DC platform comprises many different activities e.g. conferences organisation and follow-up of projects.



**Figure 3:** RE Business Promotion Seminar in Jakarta (Picture courtesy of IT Power).

The most significant activity supported by the PV DC platform is the financing and support of IEA PVPS Task 9 Deployment of photovoltaic technology: Co-operation with developing countries.

Other significant activities are listed below:

- Promotion of instruments related to the support of projects in developing countries (GEF; SDG, SOFI start-up, etc.)
- Interaction (meetings and workshops) and creation of a *users pool* and an information network (<http://www.photovoltaic.ch>).
- Mobilization of the private sector and NGO's involved in the promotion of RE in developing countries.
- Financing of present pilot projects related to the deployment of solar energy in developing countries through the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) instrument.
- Realisation of a project line with a strategy for future activities.
- Standardisation of criteria for the support of projects and activities in relation to the promotion of photovoltaics in developing countries.
- Stimulation of new project initiatives.

## 5. REFERENCES AND RELATED PUBLICATION

Further project information and updates are provided by internet website: <http://www.photovoltaic.ch>

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