



NCCR  
north  
south

Research Partnerships for Sustainable Development



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In 2001, the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) set up a series of long-term research projects in areas of vital strategic importance for the science, economy and society of Switzerland. They were named National Centres of Competence in Research (NCCRs); among them was the NCCR North-South.

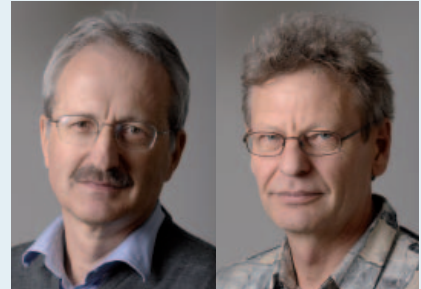
Now, entering its ninth year, the NCCR North-South has reached significant milestones in pursuit of its overall goal: contributing to sustainable development through partnership-based research, capacity development and societal empowerment in developing and transition countries. In these countries as well as in Switzerland, it is also well on the way to developing a formal institutional network.





## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

**H**umankind in 2010 is still far from finding equitable and lasting solutions to the problems and consequences of development. Food security for a growing world population is at stake. The planet's biological diversity and natural resource base are threatened more than ever. Climate change can hardly be slowed down any more. Urban areas are not developing in an equitable way for all their inhabitants and the surrounding periphery. Intra- and interstate conflicts continue to threaten millions of people who are forced to move away and look for other places to find new livelihoods.



Hans Hurni (l) and Urs Wiesmann (r)  
Directors NCCR North-South

But there are bright spots. The NCCR North-South is persistently trying to find solutions to negative processes, by carrying out research in partnership with 190 institutions in 40 developing and transition countries. Human development at the academic level is the programme's main achievement. Post-graduate researchers are being trained to address problems and recognise potentials of their own countries. In addition, they generate and enhance scientific knowledge, and learn to apply research findings in concrete contexts, empower societies to take destiny into their own hands, and assist institutions in the global South to become more self-reliant.

From a global perspective, the NCCR North-South's activities may appear like a drop in the ocean. However, a visit to any one of the programme's nine Regional Coordination Offices – in Abidjan, Addis Abeba, Bangkok, Bern, Bishkek, Kathmandu, La Paz, Nanyuki or San José – will make it clear that competent teams are working together in far-reaching international networks. They are well interlinked with countries facing similar challenges, and they partner with institutions at Swiss universities by using inter- and transdisciplinary approaches and up-to-date research technologies. Their PhD students can now also join the International Graduate School North-South, which was set up as a spin-off of the programme in 2009.

This brochure is a guide to the programme's third phase, 2009-2013. You are encouraged to use the information to contact and possibly join the network. Every contribution towards overcoming the negative impacts of global change is welcome, and a further step in the right direction.

Hans Hurni and Urs Wiesmann on behalf of the NCCR North-South and its international Board of Directors



- A Sunar (low-caste) woman is negotiating her daily wage for agricultural labour with a Chhetri (high-caste) man in the village of Meltadi/Far West Nepal. Photo: Mathias Junginger



## The NCCR North-South

Sending a Togolese researcher based in Côte d'Ivoire to remote pastures in the Central Asian Republic of Kyrgyzstan is not unusual within the NCCR North-South research programme. It is part of an ongoing effort to increase collaboration between researchers and institutions in the northern and southern hemispheres as well as between those based in developing and transition countries themselves. In this way, researchers in Costa Rica working on sanitation issues may well be in regular contact with researchers in Thailand, thanks to their mutual links to a research network originating in Switzerland.

The NCCR North-South has been a part of the Swiss research landscape for eight years. During this time, it has built a robust network of over 400 researchers worldwide. Though what works in one place may not work the same way in another, efforts to transfer knowledge and experience from one region to another are often rewarded. Thus, the Togolese researcher from Côte d'Ivoire helped to develop a successful mass vaccination strategy to combat brucellosis among livestock in Kyrgyzstan, a disease affecting the livelihood of nomadic herders in both West Africa and Central Asia.

The aim of this brochure is to present a brief overview of the programme – its achievements so far, and its goals for the new phase.

As of July 2009, the programme is organised as follows: there are a total of 15 research projects, each of which is assigned to a thematic node supported by two Swiss partner institutions.

### **Thematic Node 1: Institutions, livelihoods, conflicts**

Development Study Group Zurich (DSGZ), swisspeace

### **Thematic Node 2: Health, services, planning**

Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH), Department of Water and Sanitation in Developing Countries (Sandec) at Eawag (Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology)

### **Thematic Node 3: Natural resources, economy, governance**

Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

Each research project is led by a North-South or South-South team of post-doctoral scientists, and consists of post-doctoral and senior researchers as well as PhD and master's students from both the South and the North.

There is also an **Integrative Node**, in which similar themes in the different regions are compared, allowing for a generalisation of themes at the global level.



- Rubber plantations in Laos satisfy the demand of Chinese and Vietnamese markets, but represent a major threat to livelihoods of local people and the environment. Photo: Kaspar Hurni



Instead of focusing solely on research, the NCCR North-South strives to test its findings in real-world settings. Under its **PAMS** component (Partnership Actions for Mitigating Syndromes), researchers together with implementers (e.g. local NGOs) can apply for a grant to test recently completed research results.

- In Kyrgyzstan, the results of research being done on brucellosis are now disseminated directly to the herders most in need of such information, through a newspaper aimed specifically at this audience. The newspaper was set up by the Kyrgyz Sheep Breeders' Association, with PAMS funding.
- In Bolivia, a PAMS project developed a toolbox for risk management in communities exposed to natural disaster risks. One of the project highlights was the reformulation of the municipal development plan in the community of San Javier, mainstreaming the topic of risk management.
- In Nepal, a PAMS project succeeded in anchoring the rights of landless Dalit people (a marginalised group formerly categorised as 'untouchable') in the interim constitution of the country. The project was linked to a PhD study on the access of the Dalit people to land resources, and aimed at mobilising Dalit people, providing capacity building and leadership formation as well as increasing awareness in society. Its long-term goal was to establish a dialogue between Dalit and government representatives, with a view to enacting changes in land-related policies.

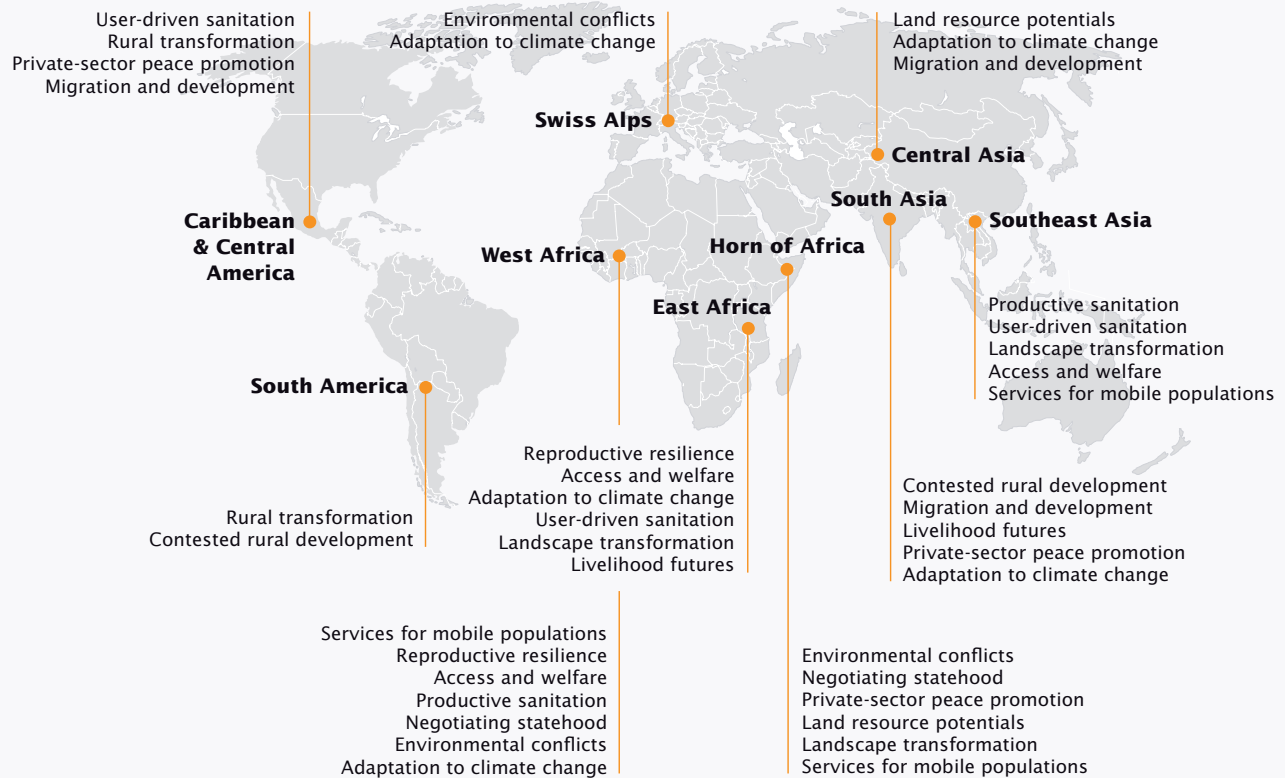
The NCCR North-South also provides interdisciplinary **Education and Training** courses tailored to the needs of PhD students and to the programme. The regional training courses (RTCs) group together students from different regions of a continent – the

Asian RTC, for example, brought together students from Nepal, India, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Thailand. The intercontinental training courses (ITCs) see students meeting and exchanging ideas from all NCCR North-South partnership regions. The courses aim to strengthen scientific foundations as well as to develop social and communication skills, and include fieldwork where researchers meet other actors. Before the NCCR North-South programme officially ends in its current form in 2013, a final ITC will be held in order to capitalise on experiences gained in the past 12 years. It will help to collect all research results in a synthesis of the programme and make them accessible to the scientific community and the public.

- Students from Nepal, India and Switzerland attending a regional training course in Tajikistan. Photo: Anne Zimmermann



## Overview of Research Projects



### Thematic Node 1: Institutions, livelihoods, conflicts

Development Study Group Zurich and swisspeace, Bern

RP1	Contested rural development	Urs Geiser	m	N	R. Ramakumar	m	S	SAS, SAM
RP2	Livelihood futures	Babar Shahbaz	m	S	Sagar Raj Sharma	m	S	SAS, EAF
RP3	Migration and development	Susan Thieme	f	N	Anita Ghimire	f	S	SAS, CAS, CCA
RP4	Environmental conflicts	Gilbert Fokou	m	S	Allemmaya Mulugeta	f	S	HOA, WAF, ALP
RP5	Negotiating statehood	Didier Péclard	m	N	Francis Akindès	m	S	HOA, WAF
RP6	Private-sector peace promotion	Andrea Iff	f	N	Bishnu Raj Upreti	m	S	SAS, HOA, CCA

### Thematic Node 2: Health, services, planning

Eawag/Sandec and Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH)

RP7	Reproductive resilience	Constanze Pfeiffer	f	N	Collins Ahorlu	m	S	EAF, WAF
RP8	Productive sanitation	Hung Nguyen Viet	m	S	Ives M. Kengne Noumsi	m	S	SEA, WAF
RP9	User-driven sanitation	Christoph Lüthi	m	N	Thammarat Koottatep	m	S	SEA, CCA, EAF
RP10	Services for mobile populations	Esther Schelling	f	N	Bassirou Bonfoh	m	S	WAF, HOA, SEA

### Thematic Node 3: Natural resources, economy, governance

Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) and Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

RP11	Land resource potentials	Bettina Wolfram	f	N	Birru Yitaferu	m	S	CAS, HOA
RP12	Landscape transformation	Andreas Heinimann	m	N	Gete Zeleke	m	S	SEA, HOA, EAF
RP13	Rural transformation	Stephan Rist	m	N	Elizabeth Jimenez Nelson Tapia	f m	S	SAM, CCA
RP14	Access and welfare	Boniface Kiteme	m	S	Michael Epprecht Ibrahima Sy	m m	N S	SEA, EAF, WAF
RP15	Adaptation to climate change	Chinwe Ifejika	f	S	Brama Koné Inam Ur-Rahim	m m	S S	EAF, WAF, CAS, SAS, ALP

Tables: Research Projects (RPs) within the three Thematic Nodes, with postdoctoral project leaders' names, sex and origin (North/South) ALP: Swiss Alps; CAS: Central Asia; CCA: Caribbean and Central America; EAF: East Africa; HOA: Horn of Africa; SAM: South America; SAS: South Asia; SEA: Southeast Asia; WAF: West Africa

## Swiss Partner Institutions



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### Thematic Node 2: Health, services, planning

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### Thematic Node 3: Natural resources, economy, governance

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# Thematic Node 1: Institutions, livelihoods, conflicts

Development Study Group Zurich (DSGZ), swisspeace

Institutions regulate access to natural and political resources and frame the political and social contexts in which people strive to make a living. The ability of institutions to correct power imbalances or provide channels for expressing and negotiating various grievances is a crucial factor in preventing conflict. Research in this category examines the dynamic role of institutions – political, social, economic and cultural – in providing or denying access to means of livelihood, peace and security. The six research projects build on the premise that properly functioning, socially accepted and legitimate institutions are central to achieving sustainable development.

- Private fishing areas in the Lake Chad Basin, north Cameroon.
- Increasingly, common land is being privatised as resources are
- depleted due to climate change. This can lead to resource use
- conflicts. Photo: Gilbert Fokou



## RP1 – Contested rural development

### New perspectives on ‘non-state actors and movements’ and the politics of livelihood-centred policies

This research project examines alternative visions of development as suggested by various grassroots movements that critique state-sanctioned development models and claim to offer solutions for improving rural people’s access to livelihood means. Case studies in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka focus on such protest movements, while those in Nepal and Bolivia address groups that have already gained considerable policy influence.

#### Co-Leaders

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## RP2 – Livelihood futures

### The quest for inclusion of marginal groups

Studying resource-scarce areas in South Asia and East Africa, this research project seeks to identify new livelihood strategies for groups vulnerable to exclusion, particularly strategies that diminish reliance on natural resources. Special attention is given to the governing institutional context in order to reveal ways of supporting equity-effective institutions.

#### Co-Leaders

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## RP3 – Migration and development

### The role of knowledge and skills in the migration process in South and Central Asia

Drawing on various case studies that reflect the heterogeneity of migration – in South Asia, Central Asia and Switzerland – this research project aims to achieve a more differentiated understanding of the relationship between migration and development, particularly regarding circulation of knowledge and skills, as well as to generate evidence-based recommendations for supporting migrants’ ability to effect positive change.

#### Co-Leaders

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- Mediation and dialogue between actors for sustainable forest governance in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan.
- Photo: Siddhi Manandhar



#### **RP4 – Environmental conflicts**

##### **Natural resources, institutions and conflict in the Horn of Africa and in West Africa**

Focusing on pastoral groups in the West African Sahel and the Ethiopian lowlands, this research project aims to pinpoint the mechanisms of environmental conflicts and determine institutional policies that could ease or eliminate such tensions.

##### **Co-Leaders**

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#### **RP5 – Negotiating statehood**

##### **Dynamics of state (re)construction in societies after civil war**

Drawing on case studies of post-conflict settings in West Africa and in the Horn of Africa, this research project intends to produce a “political ethnography” describing how various African states actually work and how statehood emerges from negotiation processes between diverse local, national and international actors. A special emphasis on secondary cities will provide new insights into the way peripheral areas are involved in and affected by state (re)construction.

##### **Co-Leaders**

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#### **RP6 – Private-sector peace promotion**

##### **An assessment of the benefits, limitations and determinants of corporate engagement in peace**

Through comparison of case studies in South Asia, Central America and the Horn of Africa, this research project seeks to improve our understanding of the advantages, disadvantages and determinants of corporate engagement in peace promotion, and to generate evidence-based recommendations for peace practitioners considering partnerships with the private sector.

##### **Co-Leaders**

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## Thematic Node 2: Health, services, planning

Sandec/Eawag (Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology), Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH)

In this research category, Sandec/Eawag and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute join forces to produce scientific evidence aimed at contributing to the improvement of water supply, sanitation and health in developing countries. Special attention is given to finding ways of promoting health and sanitation strategies through participatory planning, involving non-scientific stakeholders and communities. The four research projects seek to aid the creation of interventions, health services and social programmes that are sustainable, equitable, reflect local conditions, meet the needs of local populations and reinforce their resilience.

• Nala, Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. Photo: Christoph Lüthi



### RP7 – Reproductive resilience

**Sexual and reproductive resilience of adolescents in East and West Africa**

Over half of the world's population is under 25. Children and adolescents hold the key to our future yet many of them must overcome numerous challenges to lead healthy lives. One crucial concern is sexual and reproductive health: Adolescent pregnancy, for example, exposes young women to medical, social and economic risks. This research project looks at female and male adolescents in Ghana and Tanzania, in an effort to understand how they handle reproductive health challenges and to identify ways of fostering supportive environments that contribute to building adolescents' sexual and reproductive resilience.

#### Co-Leaders

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### RP8 – Productive sanitation

**Balancing between health risk, livelihood opportunities and environmental impacts**

Worldwide, 2.6 billion people lack appropriate sanitation facilities and services. Targeting specific areas in West Africa and Southeast Asia, this research project aims to develop a practical assessment tool for use in planning sustainable sanitation strategies, a comprehensive tool capable of evaluating risks to human health and the environment and identifying appropriate measures that reconcile technical, economic and social requirements.

#### Co-Leaders

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### RP9 – User-driven sanitation

#### Gender and the challenge for sanitation demand

Studying communities in Central America, Southeast Asia and East Africa, this interdisciplinary research project seeks to develop sanitation interventions by addressing the following questions: What determines the success or failure of community-based versus household-based participatory planning processes? What factors and incentives influence users' choice of sanitation technology and lead to improved hygiene behaviour? What design features and technologies should be considered when planning gender-specific sanitation facilities?

#### Co-Leaders

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### RP10 – Services for mobile populations

#### Social services and control of infectious diseases in mobile populations of Africa and Asia

This research project combines epidemiological, geographic, economic and social analyses to assess the demographics and service needs of mobile populations – such as mobile pastoralists or migrant vendors – and develop generic interventions that can be adapted according to local requirements. Research is based on comparative studies of mobile communities in West Africa, the Horn of Africa and Southeast Asia.

#### Co-Leaders

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## Thematic Node 3: Natural resources, economy, governance

Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

For vulnerable groups such as rural communities in the developing world, the consequences of environmental degradation, unsustainable patterns of natural resource use and climate change are already acutely felt. Research in this category focuses on improving management and use of natural resources, in particular soil, water and biological resources. A key goal for regional development is to bridge the gap between local conditions and global dynamics and provide sound evidence for decision-making.

- In the Tajik Pamir region, the teresken shrub is uprooted for fuel. This practice contributes more to degradation than overgrazing. Photo: Inam Ur-Rahim
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### RP11 – Land resource potentials

**Sustainable land use systems for enhancing food security and mitigating climate change in semi-arid to sub-humid agricultural environments**

Carbon content is key to the health of the earth's soils, and hence their agricultural productivity. Soils' ability to retain carbon, preventing its transformation into a greenhouse gas, can play an important role in counteracting climate change. With case studies in Tajikistan, Ethiopia and Kenya, this research project aims to develop a comprehensive methodology for assessing the impact of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) strategies including carbon sequestration, leading to informed decision-making and win-win solutions that harmonise human needs and environmental protection.

#### Co-Leaders

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### RP12 – Landscape transformation

**Landscape transformation in Southeast Asia, the Horn of Africa and East Africa and its impact on environmental services in relation to markets and accessibility**

In many developing countries, rapid changes in land use and land cover are impacting biodiversity and the land's suitability for agriculture or carbon sequestration. A lack of meso-level data (i.e. data on a regional to national level) makes evidence-based policy-making difficult. Focusing on regions in Laos, Ethiopia and Kenya, this research project aims to provide an assessment of landscape transformation and generate spatial data and maps that policymakers may use to protect environmental services and the communities that depend on them.

#### Co-Leaders

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### RP13 – Rural transformation

**The governance of natural resources and bio-cultural diversity in the context of the transformation of multifunctional rural systems at the regional level in Latin America. Case studies from Bolivia and Mexico**

Building on case studies in Latin America, this research project seeks to improve existing concepts and methodologies regarding the transformation of multifunc-



• Walking to the market near Harer, eastern Ethiopia.  
• Photo: Brigitte Portner



tional rural systems, assisting policymakers in managing agricultural transformation sustainably, mindful of the environment's multifunctional character and the demands of safeguarding its rich diversity.

#### Co-Leaders

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### RP14 – Access and welfare

**Spatio-temporal variability in access to services and natural resources at meso-scale, and their impact on household welfare and poverty in Africa and Southeast Asia**

While it is clear that management of natural resources and alleviation of poverty among rural populations should be considered together, developing regional strategies that effectively tackle both issues can prove challenging. This research project seeks to identify the key factors limiting rural populations' access to services and natural resources in Africa and Southeast Asia. It also examines how this impacts their household welfare and use of natural resources, thereby aiding the design of targeted poverty alleviation strategies.

#### Co-Leaders

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### RP15 – Adaptation to climate change

**Dynamic socio-ecological conditions, resource scarcity and adaptation to climate change – Actors, resources and livelihoods in Africa and Asia**

Globally, the consequences of climate change are intensifying strains on ecological and social systems and threatening hard-won achievements in sustainable development. This research project synthesises the findings of three studies – on livelihoods in transition, sustainable natural resource use and the health of vulnerable populations – to provide sound evidence and tools for adapting to climate change.

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## Integrative Node

Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), University of Bern, on behalf of the Board of Directors

The Integrative Node is the main vehicle for integration and synthesis of all NCCR North-South programme activities. It comprises three key projects.

In the Special Project on Global Issues, senior researchers examine the large-scale relevance of the programme's accumulated findings, in particular concerning global debates on topics like food security, poverty, natural resource management, migration and climate change. By surveying the results of many studies from inside and outside the programme, the researchers aim to identify patterns of change or recurring contexts that may be used to determine suitable policy responses at the global level.

In the Transversal Project, all programme partners are encouraged to build bridges and exchange knowledge by initiating joint projects or events that complement, synthesise or cut across their lines of research. It enables geographically distant research groups – in, say, Switzerland, Bolivia and Nepal – to organise conferences and produce books or special journal editions on shared topics like decentralisation or gender.

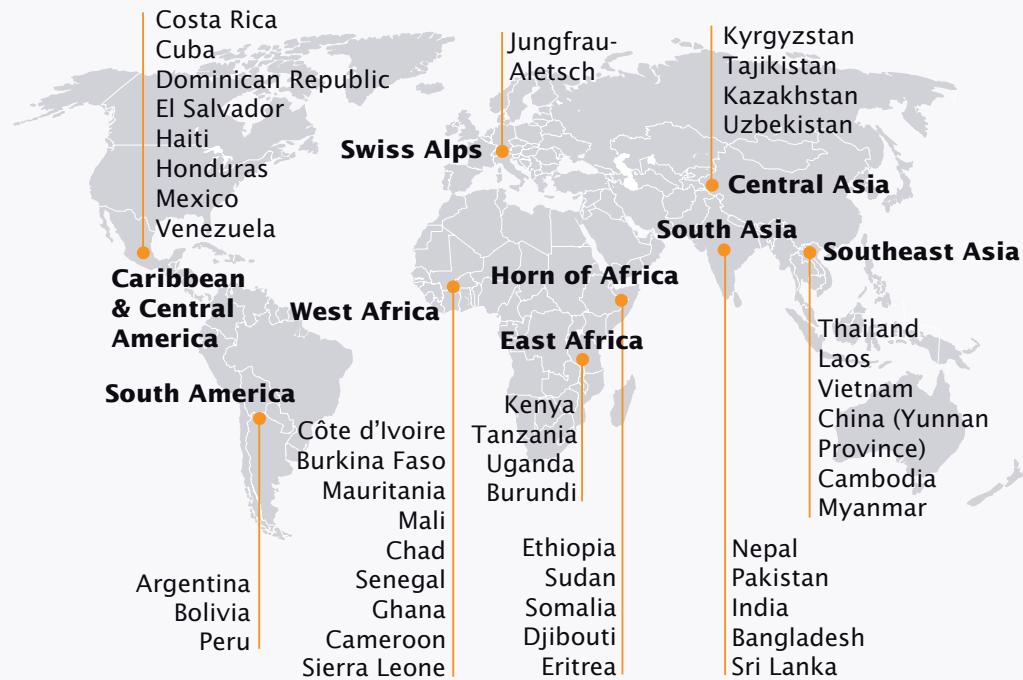
Efforts in the Partnership Regions Project aim to reinforce the Regional Coordination Offices in launching new research projects in their regions and contributing to solutions for sustainable development well into the future. This entails forging promising new paths of sustainability research, anchoring such research in the local academic landscape, establishing lasting institutional structures (e.g. university institutes), testing findings in local settings (e.g. PAMS) and cultivating communication with policymakers.

• A potato field in the Pamir mountain range, Tajikistan.  
• Photo: Daniel Maselli





## The North-South Partnership Network (2001–2013)



### Regional Coordination Offices

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## West Africa

- The 'Sorbonne Plateau' in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where a social movement called 'young patriots' meets every day. Photo: Koné Gnangadjomon



**Research topics:** health, adaptation to climate change, water and sanitation, environment, institutions, conflict, vulnerable groups and mobile populations. **Countries:** Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo, Sierra Leone

**Regional Coordination Office:** hosted by the Swiss Centre for Scientific Research (CSRS) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, whose mission is to initiate, encourage, support and implement partnership-based research.

**Upcoming Research:** The overall objective in West Africa is to support local institutional and societal efforts towards sustainable development, particularly on behalf of vulnerable populations. Health is one key ongoing focus of research projects in the region, especially among adolescents and mobile groups. Identifying appropriate health services for mobile communities, for example, requires a better understanding of their priorities and disease-transmission patterns. Comparative studies of mobile communities within West Africa and the Horn of Africa, and between Africa and Asia, will aid the validation of systems knowledge and the design of generic tools and interventions that may be tailored according to local requirements. Other key research topics include: struggles regarding natural resources, the construction of states, sustainable sanitation strategies, rural populations' access to services and natural resources, and tools for adapting to climate change. Finally, the efforts in diverse areas also seek to enhance South-South exchange regarding policy recommendations.

### Highlights 2001-2009

- The NCCR North-South interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach has been integrated into the curricula of various universities and advanced engineering schools in Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Senegal.
- Chad's government acknowledged NCCR North-South findings on the health of mobile groups, adopting a national programme of social services for them.
- The EU began funding a large-scale "One Health" project in eastern Chad, applying NCCR North-South results that explore the potential of closer cooperation between human and animal health programmes in Africa, such as joint vaccination campaigns.
- In Mali, a collaborative effort between Swiss researchers, NGOs and pastoralists increased milk production by a factor of four within three years, thanks to niche market creation, credit schemes and simple sanitation techniques that keep milk fresh long enough to bring it to market.
- The local authorities in Ouahigouya, Burkina Faso, asked team members involved in a PAMS on faecal sludge management to provide assistance and guidance to the ministry in charge of sanitation in the national government.



Photo: Jakob Zinsstag

“ We've examined different incentives for pastoralists in the Horn of Africa, West Africa as well as Central Asia. During the project we developed the One Medicine into the One Health concept, which has been adopted by the World Health Organisation and is being introduced into the curricula of universities in West Africa. As a result of this work, we've been granted a Wellcome Trust Fund to build up capacity for post-doctoral researchers in African universities and research institutes. It's allowing us to link Francophone and Anglophone countries, and animal, human and environmental health.”

*Bassirou Bonfoh, Regional Coordinator West Africa, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire*



## East Africa

- Weather extremes in Kenya. Weeks without rainfall have depleted the grass cover in this area near Nakuru, north of Nairobi (l); flooding in Kisumu, western Kenya (r). Photos: Albrecht Ehrensperger (l), Edward Bikketi (r)



**Research topics:** natural resource management, livelihoods, governance, integrative knowledge for syndrome assessment and mitigation **Countries:** Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi

**Regional Coordination Office:** hosted by CETRAD (Centre for Training and Integrated Research in Arid and Semi-arid Lands Development) in Nanyuki, Kenya.

**Upcoming Research:** The research projects in East Africa are focused on rural development, poverty reduction, sanitation and climate change. For example, researchers aim to generate spatial data, creating biophysical and socio-economic maps to aid policy decisions on landscape transformation. Similar research efforts seek to support the development of joint strategies that combine natural resource management and poverty alleviation goals. Since East Africa is particularly susceptible to climate change effects, such as droughts or flooding, other activities in the region are undertaken to identify tools for adapting to such extremes. Still other research examines the medical, social and economic risks of adolescent pregnancy.

### Highlights 2001-2009

– An atlas was created mapping the exact borders of the indigenous Ogiek peoples' ancestral territories in western Kenya. It formalised and visually depicted their traditional knowledge, helping to secure their territorial rights despite contemporary forces of tenure dispossession and cultural erosion.

- In Kenya, an assessment of information needs regarding water management and the potential of grassroots institutions for conflict management made an important contribution to the implementation of water sector reforms.
- Based on NCCR North-South research, Kenyan policymakers adopted a differentiated classification of arid and semi-arid areas in draft policy documents, rather than grouping them together as was previously done.
- Research into the socio-ecological factors exposing semi-arid smallholder farmers to food insecurity led to the creation of appropriate training and dissemination interventions designed to help build capacity at the farmer and institutional levels.
- In Tanzania, analysis of how the Rufiji people managed common property resources in pre-colonial times proved useful in developing modern instruments to help people to collaborate on the sustainable management of these resources in the Rufiji floodplains.
- The Nakuru Local Urban Observatory Project in Kenya successfully channelled information on urban development and planning into the discussions of community-based organisations and local public institutions. A comprehensive digital spatial database was created using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and satellite images.

“ Long-term solutions to managing drought must combine indigenous knowledge with modern knowledge systems that generate data. It is vital that we reconsider the kind of crops that are grown. In the past, we have abandoned indigenous crops like millet and sorghum, that were suitable to the given climate conditions, in favour of commercial crops, such as maize, which require more moisture to grow. ”

*Boniface Kiteme, Regional Coordinator East Africa, Nanyuki, Kenya*



Photo: Peter Mosmann

# Horn of Africa

- Farmers near Kombolcha, Ethiopia, using camels to transport
- khat leaves for sale on the market. Khat leaves are chewed as
- a stimulant. Photo: Brigitte Portner



**Research topics:** statehood, conflict, sustainable land management, health **Countries:** Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea

**Regional Coordination Office:** located in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia. It also functions as the official liaison office for Swiss-Ethiopian bilateral research activities.

**Upcoming Research:** A history of conflict as well as the degradation of natural resources characterise the Horn of Africa. Further, the effects of climate change, such as rising temperatures and increased droughts, present growing challenges to farmers in the region. When low-lying areas become unsuitable for coffee cultivation, and production moves upwards into the mountains, how will affected farmers continue to make a living? NCCR North-South research projects in the region strive to find solutions to such challenges. In one project, researchers aim to identify sustainable land management systems that reduce degradation of soils and improve their carbon storage properties, benefiting farmers and the environment.

Competition for scarce resources can trigger violent conflict, but what is more to blame: human interaction or environmental change? NCCR North-South findings suggest that the human element plays a bigger role than previously thought – studies in the region also aim to uncover the implications of this insight.

## Highlights 2001-2009

- NCCR North-South research into conflicts and co-operation regarding water in the Nile Basin was supplemented by concrete action: three dialogue workshops were organised, where stakeholders from Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia met to analyse the issues at hand and develop joint activities, such as the “Nile Capacity Building Forum”.
- In Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, an agreement was signed between Swiss and Ethiopian institutions (November 2008) regarding capacity building and research partnerships in the fields of science and technology. Cooperation with Ethiopia is primarily conducted through the activities of the NCCR North-South and the Eastern and Southern Africa Partnership Programme (ESAPP).
- Thanks to an NCCR North-South project on HIV prevention in Ethiopia, 4637 people participated in a consensus-building forum, hundreds were counselled and tested for HIV and over 10,000 condoms were distributed.



Photo: Peter Mosimann

“ The fact that a Swiss-Ethiopian agreement on capacity building and research partnerships was signed can, to a significant extent, be attributed to the work of the NCCR North-South and ESAPP. ”

*Berhanu Debele, Regional Coordinator Horn of Africa, Addis Abeba, Ethiopia*



## Central Asia

- Villagers in Tolok, Kyrgyzstan, gather to receive the latest issue of *Aiyl Ajary*, a newspaper aimed at herders.
- Photos: Tina Hirschbuehl



**Research topics:** water management and agriculture, pasture management and livestock, livelihoods and institutional development **Countries:** Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

**Regional Coordination Office:** now hosted by the University of Central Asia (UCA) in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. UCA is a member of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and is currently developing three university campuses in remote mountain regions of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In 2008, a small NCCR North-South branch office was opened at CAMP Kuhiston in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

**Upcoming Research:** Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan face a number of challenges to ensure that water, energy and food resources are effectively managed. Highly dynamic socio-economic processes are underway, still related to the collapse of the Soviet Union two decades ago. Formerly Soviet-managed services and monitoring networks are no longer functional, and where land ownership is unclear, erosion is rife and there is little incentive or money available to effect changes. In addition, climate change is affecting glaciers, which are a main source of water for irrigation. PhD and MSc studies centre on issues such as agricultural productivity, sustainable land management, climate change and its impact on livelihoods. Research in Kyrgyzstan on pasture and livestock management will be expanded on in Tajikistan. Other activities focus on developing a herder's manual.

### Highlights 2001-2009

- Kyrgyz veterinary services adopted a strategy of mass livestock vaccination against brucellosis, a disease affecting cattle, goats and sheep, but also capable of transmission to humans. NCCR North-South research supported this process by conducting a representative serological study in Kyrgyzstan, and by organising stakeholder workshops.
- A monthly newspaper, *Aiyl Ajary*, was launched for herders in Kyrgyzstan. It contains a mix of news and features aimed at people working in agriculture and livestock breeding, enabling research results to reach more people.
- Research findings on the challenges of sustainable development in the high mountain region of the Tajik Pamirs provided the basis for a long-term project by the Global Environment Facility.
- Inhabitants of the Sokuluk valley and the Suusamyr high altitude plain produced a video, *Voices from the Hills and Valleys*, in an effort to raise awareness of pasture use and management.
- A film on migration, *The Other Silk Road*, was produced with the NGO PANOS.
- UCA and CDE signed an agreement, allowing UCA students to pursue their studies in Bern, in preparation for a teaching post at one of the UCA campuses.



Photo: Peter Mosimann

“ We've received positive feedback from local herders saying that the newspaper is really valuable, as it gives them information about animal and human health issues, about winter fodder and about the veterinary services available. ”

Mira Arynova, Regional Coordinator Central Asia, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

## South Asia

- Members of the Dalit community in Far West Nepal. The Dalit people are a marginalised group formerly categorised as 'untouchable' and systematically discriminated against. Photo: Annika Salmi



**Research topics:** conflict and security, politics and governance, livelihood and environmental issues  
**Countries:** Nepal, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka

**Regional Coordination Office:** Kathmandu, Nepal. The RCO is a regional research institute under agreement between the NCCR North-South and the government of Nepal. It aims to make research contributions that address the challenges of achieving sustainable development in the region. A key focus in the coming years will be the 'research-development' interface, ensuring that research results reach development practitioners.

**Upcoming Research:** Peace promotion, the livelihood strategies of poor and marginalised groups, and migration are among the issues addressed in South Asia. The benefits and limitations of private-sector involvement in peace promotion are studied in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, with Nepal and Sri Lanka in particular marked by the consequences of recent civil wars. Further research focuses on the rural poor as well as on the livelihoods of marginalised groups in resource-scarce areas. Research questions include: what ways of making a living do the rural poor have, between market pressures, state ambitions and the emergence of religious and orthodox-political movements in India, Nepal and Pakistan? As migration is a common occurrence in the area (Nepalese to Delhi, for example), researchers examine the potential of mi-

grants as agents of development in the production and circulation of knowledge. Still another research project examines unconventional security challenges such as water, food, environmental and energy insecurities and their relations with peace and conflict in the region.

### Highlights 2001-2009

- Regional PAMS successfully linked research with policy and practice. Policy debates and changes were facilitated in the following areas:
  - land issues, by contributing to the scientific land reform work of the high-level Land Reform Commission in Nepal;
  - forest issues, by contributing to a new forest policy in North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan;
  - migration, by developing the Pourakhi Radio programme, which broadcasts news and practical information on labour migration to listeners in Nepal, India and other countries.
- Local partners aided the creation and implementation of structural platforms for policy debate, such as the Consortium for Land Research and Policy Dialogue in Nepal.
- Senior researchers from the NCCR North-South network are regularly invited to discuss their findings with policymakers in South Asia.



Photo: Peter Mosimann

“ A book we published on land issues generated a lot of interest in Nepal. Various contributors to the book were invited to speak with high-level government officials and the Land Reform Commission. The public media requested that the book be translated into Nepali and distributed widely. In this way, research, dissemination and policy influence are coming together. ”

*Bishnu Raj Upreti, Regional Coordinator South Asia, Kathmandu, Nepal*



## Southeast Asia

- AIT researchers in Klong Luang, Thailand, conduct lab experiments in connection with a wastewater management project in the village of Lai Xa, Vietnam (l); an uncontrolled rubbish dump in Lai Xa (r). Photos: Didier Ruef



**Research topics:** health and sanitation, livelihoods and environment **Countries:** Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, China (Yunnan Province), Cambodia, Myanmar

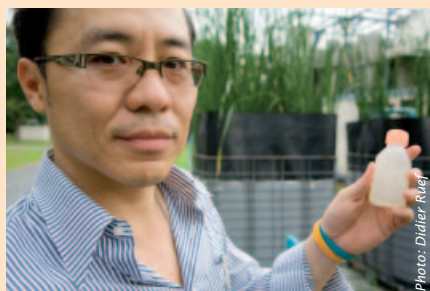
**Regional Coordination Office:** hosted by the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Bangkok, Thailand. AIT works closely with the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (Sandec at Eawag) as well as the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH).

**Upcoming Research:** The research projects being carried out in Southeast Asia seek to generate substantial practical and research outputs that will benefit local institutions, populations and scientists alike. For example, researchers in the region are working to develop a practical tool for use in assessing health risks due to deficient sanitation. They are also attempting to identify the key constraining or supportive factors that determine the success of participatory sanitation planning processes, such as the Household-Centred Environmental Sanitation (HCES) approach. This entails pinpointing factors and motivators that influence technology selection and improved hygiene behaviour at the household, neighbourhood and community levels. Other research activities in the region aim to generate knowledge on landscape transformation and its effect on environmental services, particularly regarding food production and biodiversity. With a view to poverty alleviation, such research will improve our understanding of the processes

at work and the consequences of poor natural resource management on household welfare.

### Highlights 2001-2009

- In 2009, four Eawag scientists – two of whom belong to the NCCR North-South research network – were honoured by the Vietnamese government for their “outstanding contributions to vocational training and teaching”, which enhanced the research capacity of two local graduate institutes and improved water and wastewater management.
- Research into on-site sanitation systems was integrated into Vietnamese environmental protection legislation that highlights the value of decentralised planning.
- The generation of accurate socio-economic data in Vietnam and Laos led to the publication of *The Socio-Economic Atlas of Vietnam* and *The Socio-Economic Atlas of Lao PDR*, which are recognised by policy-makers as highly valuable for improving poverty alleviation strategies.
- In Thailand, research was incorporated into a set of technical guidelines issued by the Pollution Control Department regarding constructed wetlands for wastewater and faecal sludge treatment, oil and grease management and wastewater reuse.



“Doing research and publishing results is one thing – but the real challenge is getting simple, affordable technologies out to communities and convincing them that they work.”

*Thammarat Koottatep, Regional Coordinator Southeast Asia, Bangkok, Thailand*

# Caribbean and Central America

- Murals add some colour to a housing development in Tepito of Mexico City.
- Photo: Tina Hirschbuehl



**Research topics:** urban planning, governance and natural resources **Countries:** Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Cuba, Mexico

**Regional Coordination Office:** hosted by the Costa Rican headquarters of the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO), in San José. FLACSO is an international organisation with regional and autonomous capacities in various Latin American countries.

**Upcoming Research:** The research emphases of associated academic centres, individual senior researchers and students in the region include urban sanitation interventions, natural resource governance and migration. One research project explores the dimensions of participatory planning processes intended to provide user-driven, gender-sensitive solutions to the problem of insufficient sanitation. Another project being carried out in Cuba and Mexico examines governance issues regarding the transformation of multifunctional agrarian systems. In addition, senior researchers will contribute to the NCCR North-South project on migration and development. Finally, a case study in El Salvador investigates the role of private-sector involvement in peace promotion.

### Highlights 2001-2009

– An NCCR North-South training course at the Dominican-Haitian border helped to transfer knowledge to local stakeholders by strengthening 25 community

leaders' knowledge and capacity regarding diagnosis techniques, project management and lobbying for local sustainable development.

- Festival of Urban Youth Culture hosted by Circo Volador in Mexico City: more than 1000 young people participated in competitions in art, photography, dance, graffiti, music and short story writing. By providing young people in Mexico City with a platform for cultural activities, the festival sought to mitigate urban violence and the effects of social exclusion. In a similar project, the NCCR North-South helped to finance a recording studio that enabled 25 bands to record CDs, giving them an opportunity to start a career.
- In Tepoztlán, Mexico, easily replicable ecological greywater treatment methods were developed, and research was conducted on the use and public acceptance of urine as a fertiliser.
- Capacity building in Tepito, a low-income district of Mexico City: In regular participatory workshops, the inhabitants of Tepito analysed their housing and livelihood conditions and developed a set of propositions to enhance the quality of life, including a project to renovate a park selected by the local government and financed by its urban improvement programme.



“ Working together with an urban community in Mexico to find appropriate sanitation solutions was a very rewarding experience, as it led to a greater involvement of the affected population in local policy-making. ”

*Marian Perez, Regional Coordinator Caribbean and Central America, San José, Costa Rica*



## South America

- Harvesting Andean tubers in Bolivia (l) and Peru (r). There are over 2000 varieties of potatoes; in both countries, the diversity of native crops is at risk. Photos: Sarah-Lan Mathez-Stiefel



**Research topics:** agrarian and rural systems, governance, bio-cultural diversity, indigenous people and endogenous knowledge. **Countries:** Bolivia, Peru

**Regional Coordination Office:** hosted by the Centre for Development Studies at the University of San Andrés (CIDES-UMSA) in La Paz, Bolivia.

**Upcoming Research:** In the past two decades, Latin American countries experienced substantial net economic gains. Growth was rapid, relying on expansion of export-oriented industrial production, exploitation of energy and mineral resources, and industrial agriculture. However, these activities often compromised the multifunctionality of rural and agrarian systems, threatening bio-cultural diversity and the participation of indigenous groups in politics and wider society. The benefits of economic growth did not trickle down as predicted by the neo-liberal paradigm, that various governments chose to follow. In rural areas, the distribution of benefits was highly uneven, spurring ecological and socio-cultural deterioration. Recently, in Bolivia, Peru and other South American countries, these dynamics have sparked calls for alternative models to the neo-liberal paradigm, particularly from civil society and social and indigenous movements. Observing these trends, researchers in the region ask: How can natural resource governance be made more sustainable, enabling rural systems to benefit from, and be integrated into, wider society, without harming

bio-cultural diversity? And what is the best way to formulate, implement and monitor new policies for more sustainable governance of agrarian systems?

### Highlights 2001-2009:

- In Bolivia's Tunari National Park, combined transdisciplinary research and pilot actions helped to end two decades of conflict, revitalising and re-legitimising the traditional land use system of 300 indigenous communities.
- Two books published by the NCCR North-South drew upon case studies conducted in South America: *Decentralisation Meets Local Complexity* and *Parks, People and Protected Areas*.
- A practical methodology, the "Governance Analytical Framework", was developed. It is a useful, efficient tool for studying governance systems and analysing debates on governance models.
- The Swiss Ambassador and senior researchers met with the Bolivian President, Evo Morales. He acknowledged the importance of the NCCR North-South's support of AGRUCO, a local partner organisation that is institutionalising the concept of transdisciplinarity, facilitating a university-level "dialogue between scientific, indigenous and popular knowledge" in Bolivia and other South American countries.



Photo: Elizabeth Jimenez

“ Research in South America should be able to contribute to the current rethinking of the development process as a whole. In Bolivia, research can contribute to a better understanding of the role of local rural organisations and institutions, as well as the linkages between local/traditional knowledge with outside scientific knowledge. Involving social actors throughout the research process is one way to attain not only useful results but also outputs that can become part of public policies and local development practices. ”

Elizabeth Jimenez, Regional Coordinator South America, La Paz, Bolivia

# Swiss Alps

- Not all scenes in the Swiss Alps make it onto postcards: here, in the Kiental valley, the normally serene and picturesque Gamchibach brook is blackened with mud after heavy rainfall. Photo: Hanspeter Liniger



**Research topics:** development and conservation, management of protected areas, land use conflicts, effects of policy changes on landscape and land use systems **Country:** Switzerland

**Regional Coordination Office:** Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), Bern, Switzerland. The Swiss Alps partnership region fulfils the important role of providing a basis for exchange and mutual learning with other partnership regions.

**Upcoming Research:** The Alps are the highest, largest mountain system in Europe. In Switzerland, they cover 60% of the country. Despite the fact that only 20% of the Swiss population lives in the Alps, the mountains contribute a great deal to Switzerland's identity. The country's main economic activities are concentrated in the lowlands, but the Alps are of significant regional economic importance. They also provide informative, historic examples of interactions between human development and the environment. The interplay of economic issues and cultural values has been central to the development of the Swiss Alps, where agriculture, forestry, tourism and trade are mainstays of local livelihoods. Questions of sustainable regional development form the core of NCCR North-South research in the region. Studies mainly centre on the area of the Swiss Alps UNESCO World Heritage Site Jungfrau-Aletsch, but other areas in the Alps are also important case study locations. Upcoming research analyses the extent to which Switzerland's experience with

sustainable regional development may be applied to the challenges faced in developing and transition countries. South-North linkages are sought in selected research projects in order to foster mutually beneficial exchange. MSc projects and close collaboration with Southern research partners ensure individual capacity development in the North and the South.

#### Highlights 2001-2009:

- NCCR North-South researchers aided development of a management plan for the UNESCO World Heritage Site Jungfrau-Aletsch.
- Numerous publications on the UNESCO World Heritage Site Jungfrau-Aletsch: They are crucial to management of the site and contribute to discourses on future management concepts for protected areas.
- NCCR North-South researchers from Kyrgyzstan and Mali visited Switzerland to study Alpine pasture use and management and how the Swiss approach can be applied elsewhere.
- Teaching materials on sustainable regional management were developed for Swiss high schools and made available online: Lessons cover geography and issues such as tourism development, regional economic development, infrastructure, land use, natural hazards and more.



Photo: Hanspeter Liniger

“The Swiss Alps partnership region complements the other eight partnership regions of the NCCR North-South by providing a platform for bilateral exchange. It also contributes to achieving global developmental objectives through its activities in support of protected areas and sustainable regional development.”

Astrid Wallner, Regional Coordinator Swiss Alps, Bern, Switzerland



# Research into Policy and Practice

Providing scientific evidence is of limited use if it is not communicated to those that would most benefit from it. The NCCR North-South has various approaches and instruments for conducting policy-oriented research. It has also launched a number of products aimed at ensuring that results from research for development reaches policymakers and actors in development work.

## Transdisciplinary Research

Development needs are integrated into the research approach from the very start, using a transdisciplinary approach which involves drawing on the practical knowledge of non-scientific actors. Non-scientific knowledge is essential to ensuring the effectiveness of development goals and interventions. The participatory approach – involving society in the decision-making process – is vital.

## PAMS

Platforms such as the Partnership Actions for Mitigating Syndromes (PAMS) – a practice-oriented component – and a focus on participatory methods help to maintain the dialogue between researchers and multiple stakeholders during the research process.

## Perspectives

Books in the *Perspectives* series published by Geographica Bernensia are collections of peer-reviewed papers produced by NCCR North-South researchers within the context of programme-wide interdisciplinary activities. They offer insights into transversal topics such as gender, decentralisation and conservation versus development, or syntheses of research activities conducted within the programme.

## Dialogues

Publications in the NCCR North-South *Dialogue* series are usually working papers reflecting on research topics of concern to programme members. Dialogues introduce the results of case studies, reflect on concepts and conceptual frameworks for the programme, offer baseline data and discuss the interface between research and development.

## Policy Briefs

With its policy briefs – *evidence for policy* – the NCCR North-South aims to improve the dissemination of these results to a wider readership. The aim of these briefs is to provide practical, operationally useful evidence which can be integrated into policy.

## Outcome Highlights

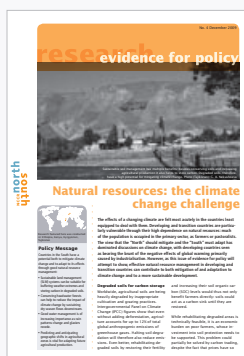
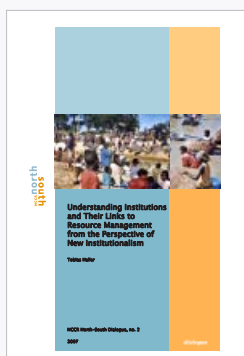
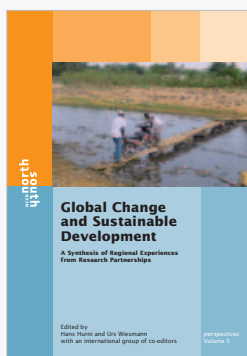
This new series provides an overview of the various outcomes of the NCCR North-South. These outcomes are defined as changing practices of various actors from different sectors – e.g. policymakers, practitioners and local communities. The series highlights successful collaboration between researchers and the different actors, and the effects these research partnerships have on promoting sustainable development.

## Newsletters

Newsletters targeted towards a wider audience are published at regular intervals, containing information on current research projects.

## Website

The above material in PDF form as well as more information on the NCCR North-South can be found on its website, [www.north-south.unibe.ch](http://www.north-south.unibe.ch). The site is regularly updated with news, publications and references to media articles. Its multimedia features include short video clips of NCCR North-South researchers speaking about their work.



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### Management Centre

The NCCR North-South Management Centre in Bern, Switzerland, is in charge of the operational management of the programme. Its overall aim is to efficiently support the different bodies of the NCCR and to assure their coordination in view of common goals, activities and outputs.

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**Additional photo information:** Cover: A bridge over a highly polluted river connects two disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The bridge was set up by an inventive inhabitant who charges a small fee for people to cross it, thus feeding his family and providing a needed service. Photo: Anne Zimmermann. Photo detail: Urs Wiesmann (front cover); Felicitas Bachmann (back cover). Message from the Directors: Peter Mosimann





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