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**INSTITUTION BUILDING IN PRACTICE:
AN EVALUATION OF SWEDISH CENTRAL AUTHORITIES'
REFORM COOPERATION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS**

Richard Allen, Giorgio Ferrari, Krenar Loshi, Nümi Östlund and Dejana Razić Ilić

Institution Building in Practice: An Evaluation of Swedish Central Authorities' Reform Cooperation in the Western Balkans

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Rapport 2020:04

till

Expertgruppen för biståndsanalys (EBA)

Please refer to the present report as: Allen, R., G. Ferrari, K. Loshi, N. Östlund, D. Razić Ilić, *Institution Building in Practice: An Evaluation of Swedish Central Authorities' Reform Cooperation in the Western Balkans*, EBA Report 2020:04, Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA), Sweden.

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ISBN 978-91-88143-58-7

Printed by Elanders Sverige AB
Stockholm 2020

Cover design by Julia Demchenko

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the staff at all Swedish Government Authorities, their partner Authorities in the Western Balkans, as well as the Swedish Embassies that we met during the evaluation for cooperation with the evaluation and for their openness in sharing their views.

The reference group has given us invaluable support through their always positive and constructive feedback, we would like to thank them individually: Monika Bauhr, Jessica Giandomenico, Mo Hamza, Finn Hedvall, and Jonas Lövkrona. Finally, special thanks go to Markus Burman and Eva Lithman at the EBA for their patience, understanding and insight. Inevitably, in a report of this nature, there will be errors. We appreciate everyone's efforts to provide us with accurate data and to correct errors. Any remaining errors are the responsibility of the authors alone.

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Foreword by the EBA

The role of well-functioning institutions in explaining why some countries are more successful than others in creating human welfare and reducing poverty, has been extensively researched throughout the last decades. Indicators measuring so-called quality of governance have been shown to have a positive impact on measures such as infant mortality, life expectancy and child poverty (see EBA 2015:7 and EBA 2016:11).

Swedish development cooperation has a long history of work aimed to strengthen the capacity of the public central administration of partner countries. Earlier referred to by Sida and other donors as “knowledge transfer”, “technical assistance” and “technical assistance personnel”, today the term “capacity development” is primarily used. The difference is mainly a stronger focus on ownership and on contextual adaptation. It is, at the same time, an open empirical question whether these factors (and change in terminology) are accomplishing more, better and sustainable results.

In recent years, around SEK 600 million of Sweden’s development cooperation (ODA) have been directed through Swedish government authorities. Some of the most active agencies include Statistics Sweden (SCB), the Swedish Mapping, Cadastral and Land Registration Authority (Lantmäteriet), the Swedish Environment Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket), the Swedish Tax Authority (Skatteverket) and the Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen). The geographical area that recently has had the largest invested volumes of ODA through these agencies are the Western Balkans (primarily Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo).

Few previous evaluations have attempted to draw credible conclusions about long-term results of the development assistance of Swedish government agencies in a specific region of the world. This evaluation commissioned by EBA could therefore be the first of its kind.

The results suggest that Swedish government authorities have contributed to sustainable results in terms of improved capacity of government agencies in the Western Balkans, particularly in relation

to personell and processes. However, a more limited number of interventions – five out of ten – evidenced clear improvements in performance related to outcomes for end beneficiaries. Intervention selection and design was good in identifying interventions relevant to EU accession but less able to work on clear priority issues for accession and the interventions were also hampered by a lack of scale. Interventions that performed well tended to be system-wide interventions in which the agencies sought to effect performance improvement across connected institutions.

As a note on external validity of the findings, the focus in the Western Balkans on EU accession as an influential factor for institutional reform is not found elsewhere. To echo a previous EBA-report, that “a particular solution has proved to be successful in one group of countries is no guarantee, however, that it will be conducive to good policy making in other countries. Institutions do not function in a political and historical vacuum” (EBA 2016:11, p.17).

One key recommendation from the evaluators is that the Swedish government authorities require support, collaboration and funding models that go beyond the individual project level funding to enable them to develop key skills and capabilities for their international development roles.

I hope this report will find its audience at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida, Embassies and the Swedish Central Government Authorities who are working with Swedish reform cooperation on the Western Balkans, as well as among the general public.

The authors’ work has been conducted in dialogue with a reference group chaired by Eva Lithman.

The authors are solely responsible for the content of the report.

Göteborg, September 2020



Helena Lindholm

Sammanfattning

Utvärderingens syfte och omfattning

Varje år förmedlas cirka 600 miljoner kronor av det svenska utvecklingssamarbetet genom svenska statliga myndigheter, och fler än tjugo myndigheter har en betydande biståndsverksamhet.¹ Trots verksamhetens omfattning är relativt lite känt om insatsernas effektivitet och långsiktiga resultat.

Den här utvärderingens syfte är att bidra till en fördjupad förståelse av de långsiktiga effekterna, hållbarheten och kostnadseffektiviteten i de svenska myndigheternas internationella utvecklingsprojekt. Ett annat viktigt syfte är att generera lärdomar som kan stödja liknande verksamhet framöver.

Utvärderingen fokuserar på svenska myndigheters arbete på Västra Balkan, vilket ger ett långsiktigt perspektiv inom ett klart definierat och avgränsat sammanhang. Det är en region där 24 svenska statliga myndigheter har varit verksamma under de senaste tjugo åren och där minst sju är aktiva idag. Mellan 2009 och 2017 gick cirka 624 miljoner svenska kronor, eller 10% av det svenska stödet till regionen, till projekt genomförda av eller i samverkan med svenska myndigheter.

För att förstå statliga myndigheter som distinkt modalitet för svenskt bistånd har tio fallstudier valts ut för djupare analys. Dessa omfattar fyra länder (Albanien, Bosnien och Hercegovina, Kosovo och Serbien) och fem myndigheter (Polisen, Naturvårdsverket, Lantmäteriet, SCB och Skatteverket). Fallstudierna valdes ut för sin relevans under perioden 2009-2018, för möjligheten till jämförelser mellan länder samt för att fånga upp olika typer av projekt. Utvärderingens genomförande omfattade ett antal metoder för datainsamling under perioden maj till juli 2019. Bland annat genomfördes dokumentgranskning, intervjuer och en online-enkät.

¹ Denna summa avser förvaltningsmyndigheter. Även högskolor och universitet har en betydande Sidafinansierad verksamhet.

Utvärderingens fokus på Västra Balkan innebär att de slutsatser som presenteras kan ha begränsad validitet för insatser i andra geografiska kontexter. Regionen är på flera sätt speciell, bland annat eftersom ländernas strävan efter EU-anslutning har stor betydelse för institutionell reform och förvaltning i regionen. Även om vi inte kan generalisera våra slutsatser utanför Västra Balkan hoppas vi ändå att läsaren finner rapporten användbar och inspirerande också för andra regioner och kontexter.

Viktiga iakttagelser

Svenska myndigheter har bidragit till **hållbara resultat** i termer av ökad intern kapacitet hos partnermyndigheterna på Västra Balkan, framförallt vad gäller personalutveckling och förbättrade processer. I hälften av de studerade projekten har ökad kapacitet också tydligt bidragit till förbättrad myndighetsutövning, så att resultaten kunnat komma samhälle och medborgare till del.

Den långsiktiga hållbarheten för de förbättringar som uppnåtts var dock i flera fall svag, och just interna processer och personalutveckling visade sig särskilt sårbara. De samarbeten som kunde påvisa andra typer av resultat, som förändrade förvaltningsstrukturer eller utvecklad lagstiftning, kunde också påvisa en bättre hållbarhet i dessa resultat.

Det finns god anledning att tro att flera av de studerade projekten bidrar också till en bredare förvaltningsreform, men det saknas tillräckligt underlag för att slå fast detta definitivt.

Samtliga tio fallstudieprojekt är i strikt mening relevanta i relation till partnerländernas pågående **arbete mot EU-anslutning**. Samtidigt är det tydligt att ett antal faktorer påverkade i hur stor grad projekten i praktiken bidrog till denna process. Varje projekt analyserades utifrån respektive lands prioriteringar i processen för EU-anslutning, EU:s ”Fundamentals First” agenda samt projektens ambition och relevans i relation till Köpenhamnskriterierna. Resultatet visar att projekten inte alltid fångade upp verkligt prioriterade frågor. Flera projekt var även för begränsade i sin ambition för att kunna påverka processen för EU-anslutning.

De projekt som påvisade goda resultat mot de samlade kriterierna var framförallt de som hade ett systemperspektiv samtidigt som de fokuserade på prioriterade frågor.

Problemet med att tydligt, objektivt och mätbart definiera ”kostnad” och ”resultat” resulterade i att utvärderingen av **kostnadseffektivitet** utgår från hur centralt placerade intressenter bedömer denna fråga. Sammanställningen visar på en bred konsensus att svenska myndigheter är ett kostnadseffektivt alternativ för att leverera långsiktigt stöd till kapacitetsförbättringar.

Resultaten varierade dock mellan projekten. De samarbeten som bedömdes ge högst värde tenderade att vara de som levererade bredare resultat i ett system eller genom att nå en större andel av landets medborgare.

Få ansåg att någon annan modalitet skulle vara mer kostnadseffektiv. Det unika mervärdet av samarbetet mellan tjänstemän bidrog starkt till slutsatsen att andra aktörer inte skulle kunna bidra med samma värde.

Eftersom samtliga dessa länder uttryckligen strävar mot EU-anslutning finns det ett tydligt ramverk för **givarsamordning**, vilket inkluderar Sidas stöd via svenska myndigheter. I flera av länderna har nationella myndigheter också kapacitet att säkerställa att internationellt stöd bedrivs i linje med nationella prioriteringar. Samtidigt finns möjligheter att stärka samarbetet mellan svenska myndigheter när de har projekt med samma förvaltning i samma land. Detta skulle kunna bidra till bättre design av insatser och ökad effektivitet i genomförandet.

Den samlade analysen av de tio projekten och en jämförelse av vilka faktorer som bidragit till deras resultat låter oss identifiera ett antal lärdomar eller erfarenheter, som kan bidra till framtida insatser.

Exempel på faktorer som bidrar till framgångsrika resultat är:

- *Tillgången till långtidsexperten och deras kompetens.* Viktiga framgångsfaktorer är experternas förmåga att arbeta i den specifika kontexten samt hur väl deras erfarenheter och kompetens speglade projektets faktiska behov.

- *Projektdesign och inledningsfas.* En längre design- och uppstartsfas möjliggjorde mer konsultation med partners och bidrog till ett starkare åtagande från samtliga inblandade. Behovsanalyserna blev mer realistiska och den gemensamma förståelsen för samarbetets mål fördjupades.
- *En systemövergripande ansats.* Fyra av de mer framgångsrika projekten hade explicit valt ett systemperspektiv, där målsättningen var att förbättra myndighetsutövning hos flera samarbetspartners. Att inte involvera sådana partners begränsade tydligt resultaten i två av fallstudierna. Ett systemperspektiv är svårt att designa, men tycks leda till bättre och mer hållbara resultat.
- *En blandning av inhemska tjänstemän och extern expertis i genomförandet.* När centrala och tongivande tjänstemän i respektive förvaltning tydligt involverades i genomförandet har detta bidragit till mer realistisk design av insatser, större ägarskap för genomförandet och mer hållbara resultat.
- *Stöd från ambassaderna.* Utvärderingen visar att den svenska ambassaden på plats kan vara en viktig bidragande faktor för projektens slutliga framgång. Detta eftersom:
 - Deltagande i projektdesignen bidrog till mer ambitiösa målsättningar och bättre genomförande.
 - Stöd i design samt genomförande stödjer följsamhet i den lokala politiska och institutionella kontexten.
 - Politiskt stöd, oftast från ambassadören, tydliggör vikten av föreslagna reformer och nödvändiga förändringar.

Övergripande slutsatser

Svenska myndigheter bidrar på ett tydligt och kostnadseffektivt sätt till det svenska utvecklingssamarbetet. De bidrar med verksamhetsrelevant förvaltningsexpertis och möjliggör ett unikt tjänstemannasamarbete som lägger grund för stark tillit myndigheter emellan. Att svenska myndigheter inte omfattas av lagen om offentlig upphandling i detta sammanhang skapar en flexibilitet som kommer insatserna till gagn. Myndigheterna ger ett viktigt bidrag i arbetet med att stödja och utveckla lokala institutioner.

De svenska statliga myndigheternas arbete på Västra Balkan har bidragit till förbättrad kapacitet och myndighetsutövning hos partnermyndigheterna. Samarbetet har även bidragit till utvecklingen av ländernas förvaltning och deras stävan mot EU-medlemskap.

De mer framgångsrika av de studerade projekten har inneburit mer än grundläggande erfarenhetsutbyte mellan myndigheter. De har istället varit djupgående förändringsprojekt där den svenska myndigheten agerat såväl parter som projektledare och rådgivare.

Projekten har lyckats väl när medarbetarna haft bred kompetens inom relationsskapande, problemanalys, projektdesign och förändringsledning. Men denna kompetens har inte sällan funnits tillgänglig av en tillfällighet, när talangfulla och erfarna medarbetare varit tillgängliga vid rätt tidpunkt. De svenska myndigheterna upplever en mycket stark efterfrågan på deras expertis i internationella sammanhang, men deras förmåga att leverera med kvalitet är samtidigt delvis satt under press.

Flera svenska myndigheter begränsas av hur finansieringen över biståndet styrs. Styrningen får effekter för hur mycket myndigheterna investerar i personal och kompetensutveckling, samt i utvecklingen av rutiner, metoder och verktyg för biståndsinsatserna.

Utvärderingen visar tydligt att kompetensen från myndighetens svenska kärnverksamhet behöver kompletteras med kunskaper om internationell utveckling och om förändringsarbete. För att svenska myndigheter ska utveckla sin effektivitet och kapacitet i verksamheten måste de investera på dessa områden.

Sida, och de svenska ambassaderna, spelar en viktig roll för de slutgiltiga resultaten i de samarbeten som svenska myndigheter är involverade i. För att säkerställa att svenska myndigheter kan möta den ökade efterfrågan på deras kompetens med kvalitet är det viktigt att Sida och de statliga myndigheterna samarbetar för att investera i myndigheternas interna kapacitet.

Rekommendationer

Till Sida och Utrikesdepartementet:

1. Svenska myndigheters kapacitet och unika bidrag bör tas tillvara i den långsiktiga strategiska planeringen av det svenska biståndet. En sådan planering bör säkerställa att myndigheterna får ett stöd som går utöver enskilda projekt så att de kan utveckla den kapacitet de behöver för att fylla sin roll på bästa möjliga sätt i utvecklingssamarbetet.

Till Sida

2. När möjliga kapacitetsutvecklingsprojekt inom statlig förvaltning identifieras bör Sida styra designprocessen så att den väger in både styrkor och begränsningar hos svenska myndigheter som genomförandepartners. Sida bör säkerställa att det vid behov finns kompletterande kompetenser tillgängligt både i design och genomförande.
3. Vid design av projekt bör Sida sträva efter projekt som tar ett systemperspektiv och som omfattar samtliga påverkade institutioner, istället för att begränsa sig till aktiviteter inom enskilda partnermyndigheter. Detta för att stödja ökade resultat och förbättrad hållbarhet.
4. Sida bör även skapa möjligheter för myndigheter att utbyta erfarenheter, samarbeta och lära från varandra på ambassadnivån.

Till Svenska myndigheter

5. Svenska statliga myndigheter som är aktiva i utvecklingssamarbetet bör överväga att ta fram långsiktiga planer för hur de ska utveckla sin verksamhet inom internationell kapacitetsutveckling. En sådan plan bör omfatta i) kompetensutveckling för personal som ska delta i internationella projekt ii) en strategi för hur myndigheten ska kunna möta en ökad efterfrågan inom området, samt iii) en utveckling av den enhet på myndigheten som ansvarar för internationella projekt, för att stärka kapaciteten för design och genomförande.

Till Sida och de svenska myndigheterna

6. Sida och de svenska statliga myndigheter som är involverade i utvecklingssamarbetet bör tillsammans hitta lösningar som kan stödja och utveckla myndigheternas kapacitet för internationellt kapacitetsutvecklingsarbete. Möjliga lösningar skulle, till exempel, kunna vara i) finansiering av specifika utvecklingsplaner hos respektive myndighet, ii) utveckling av partnerskap med externa aktörer som kan bistå med kompetens, iii) stöd till myndigheternas Nätverk för lärande, till exempel genom finansiering eller genom att institutionalisera samarbetet, iv) en utveckling av gemensamma resurser för genomförande och kompetensutveckling.

Executive Summary

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

Every year around SEK 600 million of Swedish international development assistance is directed through Swedish government authorities (SGAs). More than twenty primarily domestic government agencies have significant international development roles. These authorities have a government directive that allows or obliges them to work internationally in development cooperation. Yet not much is known about the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and impact of this modality.

This evaluation aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the long-term effects, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of Swedish government authorities' capacity development initiatives, and to generate lessons to inform Swedish reform cooperation ahead. It focuses on the work of the SGAs in the Western Balkans, a context which provides a long-term perspective within clearly defined and coherent boundaries. It is also a region where 24 SGAs have been working over the last twenty years and seven are still active today. Between 2009 and 2017 some SEK 624 million, or 10% of Swedish aid to the region, was spent via the SGAs.

To generate a greater understanding of the SGAs as a distinct modality or implementation channel, the evaluation selected ten cases for in-depth study. These cases covered four countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia), and five authorities (Swedish Police Authority, Swedish National Environment Protection Agency, Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority, Statistics Sweden and Swedish Tax Agency). These cases were selected for their significance over the period since 2008, the ability to make comparisons across countries, and to be representative of the range of interventions. Data collection methods included document review, field interviews and an online survey over the period May to July 2019.

The focus of research on the Western Balkans means that the conclusions presented here have limited validity for contexts outside

this geographical area. Specificities of the region, such as its EU accession perspective, are highly influential factors for institutional reforms that are not found elsewhere. Although we do not claim to be able to generalise these conclusions beyond the Western Balkans, we nevertheless hope that readers will find the report useful and stimulating and may find it relevant also in other contexts.

Key findings

Swedish government authorities were able to contribute to **sustainable results** in terms of improved capacity of government agencies in the Western Balkans, particularly in relation to people and processes. Fewer interventions in the sample demonstrated evidence of performance improvement, particularly in relation to outcomes for beneficiaries. Nevertheless, there were clear such performance improvements in five of the ten sample interventions.

Sustainability of achieved capacity improvements was vulnerable particularly in relation to change in people and systems, which is a concern since these are the most frequently cited organisational changes achieved. It suggests that where interventions only achieved changes in these two dimensions, the changes are more fragile than changes achieved in other dimensions, such as structural and legal.

There exist good reasons to suppose that sample interventions do contribute to governance performance improvement, but harder evidence is lacking.

All sample interventions were in a strict sense relevant to the **process of EU accession** for the Western Balkans, but other factors were critical in determining the importance and significance of the interventions. The evaluation took into account factors such as the priorities for EU accession for each country, including the EU's 'Fundamentals First' agenda, as well as the scale and significance of the intervention in relation to meeting the requirements of the Copenhagen Criteria. The analysis showed that intervention selection and design was good in identifying interventions relevant to EU accession, less able to work on priority issues for accession, and primarily hampered by a lack of scale of

the intervention. Interventions that performed well against these criteria tended to be system-wide interventions, addressing priorities such as rule of law, democratic accountability and environment.

The **cost effectiveness** analysis relied on the perceptions of stakeholders rather than attempt more objective analyses which would be fraught with difficulties in defining ‘costs’ and ‘results’. There is broad consensus among stakeholders that the use of Swedish government authorities is a cost-effective means of delivering long-term capacity development support. Few thought that other modalities might be more cost effective for the purpose.

There were variations between the projects: interventions with higher perceived added value tended to be those with wider impact across a system or with large numbers of the general population affected. The uniqueness of the peer-to-peer support contributed to respondents’ views that other modalities could not provide comparable support.

The EU accession direction of all sample countries provides a clear **coordination framework** for donor assistance, including Sida support through SGAs. National authorities are good at ensuring international assistance is aligned with national priorities and systems. There are opportunities, however, for strengthening the cooperation and learning between SGAs working in a country, which could contribute to improved design and greater operational effectiveness.

Lessons learned were drawn from a contribution analysis of the ten case studies, comparing factors in relation to whether the interventions were seen as ‘more’ or ‘less’ successful in relation to each other.

Among the key factors which contribute to successful outcomes, are:

- *The quality and presence of long-term experts.* Quality factors included the experts’ ability to operate in the context and the fit between their experience and the needs of the intervention.

- *Inception phase and quality of design.* Longer inception phases enabled more consultation between partners and generated greater partner commitment to project goals. Analyses of the needs were more realistic and there was more common understanding of the goals.
- *System-wide approach.* Four of the more successful interventions had an explicitly system-wide approach, in which they sought to effect performance improvement across connected institutions. Not involving dependent institutions was a constraining factor in two of the less successful interventions. System-wide approaches are harder to achieve, but likely result in greater performance improvement and sustainability.
- *Mixed delivery teams of civil servants and experts.* Involvement of core civil servants in delivering change projects likely contributed to more realistic design of solutions, greater commitment to implementation and overall sustainability of results.
- *Support from the embassy.* The research suggests that the role of the embassy team is an important contributor to interventions' success. The positive contribution of the embassies included:
 - Involvement in project design, contributing to more ambitious objectives and implementation arrangements;
 - Guiding design in terms of ensuring responsiveness to local political and institutional realities;
 - Providing high level political support, typically from the Ambassador, to promote required legislation and conditionalities, and to demonstrate international support for reforms.

Conclusions

Swedish Central Government Authorities make a distinctive and cost-effective contribution to development cooperation, providing critical expertise related to the running of government operations, a unique relationship of trust between peers, together with international development approaches. As Swedish agencies, the exemption from tendering processes provides additional flexibility.

The SGAs' contribution is important for the challenging work of supporting institution building in international development.

The SGAs' work in the Western Balkans has contributed to tangible improvements in the capacities and performance of partner agencies, and a likely positive contribution to the EU membership aspirations of the countries and the quality of governance.

The more successful interventions in our sample have gone well beyond the 'twinning' approach of peer-to-peer learning and sharing of experience. These successful interventions have been in effect change management projects in which the SGA has played the role of consulting partner, project manager and senior level advisor.

These interventions have succeeded when the teams were equipped with advanced skills in relationship building, problem analysis, programme design and management of change. But these skills and knowledge have been available to the SGAs largely on the basis of chance, where talented and experienced people have been in the right place at the right time. SGAs are experiencing an increasing demand for their international services and consequently their ability to deliver is being stretched.

The Swedish Government Authorities are constrained by their funding models, some more than others, in the extent to which they can invest in staff development and the development of tools and methods for their international work, outside of specific projects.

Key skills and methods required for international development need to be present, together with those required for their domestic work. For the SGAs to become more effective in their capacity building work, they need to invest in developing the international development skills and methods.

The role of the Sida and Swedish embassies in SGA supported capacity development has also been seen to be instrumental in determining the performance of interventions.

To ensure the future effectiveness of this form of international development support, Sida and the SGAs need to work closely together to invest in the future ability of the SGAs to respond to the demand for their services.

Recommendations

To Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

1. The distinctive contribution and capabilities of Swedish government authorities should be recognised and factored into strategic planning as a key component of development assistance. Strategic planning should recognise that SGAs require support, collaboration and funding models that go beyond the individual project level funding to enable them to develop key skills and capabilities for their international development roles.

To Sida

2. Where project opportunities for capacity development of partner institutions are identified, embassies and Sida should lead on the design process, taking into account strengths and limitations of the SGAs, identifying additional complementary international development skills where necessary both for the design process, and as potential partners for implementation.
3. At the design stage, Sida should re-orient the agency-specific approach to capacity development towards integrated and system-wide approaches that address institutional dependencies and interlinkages to enable improved performance and sustainability.
4. Sida at the embassy level should support more opportunities for their development partners to share experience, cooperate and learn from each other.

To Swedish government authorities

5. The SGAs should consider developing medium- to long-term development plans for their international capacity development work. These plans should address the i) needs for core technical staff to strengthen skills working in international settings, ii) how to meet the growing demand for their services, as well as iii) the capabilities of the international departments to identify, design and deliver international development assistance.

To Sida and the Swedish government authorities

6. Sida and the SGAs should work together to find solutions for supporting SGAs' core international development capabilities. Solutions may involve providing core funding in support of SGAs development plans, supporting partnerships with providers of international development expertise, supporting the SGAs' Network for Learning (N4L) with funding and an 'institutional home', developing common guidelines and accessing common training resources, for example.

Sample projects

Throughout this report we refer to the ten sample interventions using the following abbreviations. Detailed descriptions of these interventions can be found in Appendix 5.

Abbreviation	Project name	Swedish authorities
AL JJ	Albania Juvenile Justice	Swedish Police Authority, Swedish National Court Administration Swedish Prosecution Authority Prosecutor General of Sweden Swedish Prison and Probation Service
AL ProTax	Albania Property Tax	Swedish Tax Authority, supported by Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority
BiH CILAP	Bosnia and Herzegovina Capacity for Improvement of Land Administration and Procedures	Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority
BiH Stats	Bosnia and Herzegovina Partnership in Statistics in BiH	Statistics Sweden
KS Stats	Kosovo Swedish Support to Statistics Development at the Kosovo Agency of Statistics	Statistics Sweden
KS ProTax	Kosovo Improved Property Tax Collection in Kosovo	Swedish Tax Authority, supported by Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority
RS ENVAP	Serbia Environment Accession Project	Swedish Environment Protection Agency
RS SPAP	Serbia Swedish Police Assistance Programme	Swedish Police Authority
Reg IMPULS	Regional Land Administration Project for INSPIRE EU Directive	Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority
Reg Stats	Regional Statistics Programme	Statistics Sweden

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the report

There are more than twenty primarily domestic Swedish government authorities (SGAs) which play a significant role in international development. Every year they receive around SEK 600 million of Swedish international development assistance for their international work.² These authorities have a government directive that allows or obliges them to work internationally as part of what is often referred to informally as ‘team Sweden’. For most, international work is only a small proportion of their overall work; their primary focus is delivering on their mandates domestically.³

Many of these Swedish organisations are given responsibility for providing capacity development assistance to counterpart institutions in developing and transition countries. There are existing evaluations of overall Swedish support for capacity development, Swedish assistance to specific sectors, and evaluations of SGAs’ work at individual project or programme level.⁴ To date, however, there has not been a systematic evaluation of the provision of capacity development assistance by Swedish government authorities as an approach in itself.

In filling this gap, the Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA) commissioned this report in order:

- to gain an in-depth understanding of the long-term effects, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of Swedish government authorities’ capacity development initiatives in the Western Balkans;
- to generate lessons to inform Swedish reform cooperation ahead.

² See Sida 2012 p. 146, Sida 2015a, p. 58, Sida 2018, p. 29. Note that this figure excludes funding going to Swedish Universities.

³ See section 2.3.

⁴ Eg Carneiro et al (2016), Hydén et al (2015) and Markensten (2018).

The Western Balkans was selected as a focus of the study because Swedish government authorities have had a large number of aid-financed capacity development interventions during the last two decades in the region. These capacity development activities, along with other Swedish aid support, have had the long term goal of bringing the Western Balkan countries closer to the EU in terms of their compliance with EU legislation (the ‘acquis’) and meeting the economic and political criteria set out in the so-called Copenhagen criteria for EU membership. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida are in the process of developing a new strategy for Swedish support for the Western Balkans region, and the findings of this report will inform the strategy process.

The findings and recommendations of this report are primarily relevant to policy makers and planners in Sida, Swedish Embassies, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish government authorities involved in international cooperation. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations can also be of interest to a wider audience of those interested in the mechanisms of capacity development in international cooperation.

The EBA requested that the evaluation “should concern investments and projects from the year 1998 onwards” and provided five questions as guidance for the evaluation:

1. Has the Swedish central government authorities’ reform cooperation in the Western Balkan countries contributed to sustainable results in terms of capacity and effectiveness in the central public administrations of these countries? If so, why, in what way, and to what extent?
2. To what extent have the efforts contributed in bringing the Western Balkan countries closer to the EU in terms of public sector capacity, efficiency, and adaptation to EU standards?
3. Have the results from these interventions been cost-effective?
4. Have the interventions been coordinated in an efficient way, regionally and in respective country, among Swedish actors as well as with other relevant actors (especially the EU)?
5. What lessons from the interventions can inform Swedish reform cooperation and capacity development cooperation ahead?

This report is the final report from the evaluation, and presents the main findings, conclusions and recommendations from the research.

1.2 Report structure and contents

This report is structured in five main chapters. After this introductory chapter follows chapter 2, which describe the background to the engagement of Swedish government authorities in the western Balkans and provides some data to illustrate the scope and nature of that engagement.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of the methodology followed by the evaluation team to arrive at this report. A more in-depth description of the methodology and a discussion of its merits and limitations can be found in appendix 4.

Chapter 4 looks at the findings against the five evaluation questions, with a dedicated section to each evaluation question. Complementing these chapters, appendix 5 - case study summaries, presents more detailed findings for each of the ten case studies.

Finally, chapter 5 provides a brief conclusion and presents a set of recommendations for the consideration of the key Swedish stakeholders.

2 Background

2.1 Context and Swedish assistance strategies

The Western Balkans region emerged from the ruins of war in Yugoslavia following the final conflict over Kosovo in 1999. At the EU-Western Balkans Summit in Thessaloniki on 21 June 2003, the EU set out a clear path to EU membership. All Western Balkans countries have clearly indicated their wish to join the EU, and public support for EU membership is strong and growing overall, although support in Albania and Kosovo is rather stronger than in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.⁵

Figure 1 Map of the Western Balkans



In order to join, all prospective EU members must meet the so-called ‘Copenhagen Criteria’, which were laid down at the European Council in Copenhagen in 1993:

- stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities (‘political criteria’);

⁵ RCC 2019 p38.

- a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competition and market forces in the EU ('economic criteria');
- the ability to take on and implement effectively the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union (compliance with the EU 'acquis').

The path to EU membership for the Western Balkans countries (apart from Slovenia and Croatia, which joined in 2004 and 2013 respectively) has proven to be complex and uncertain. There are common challenges facing all countries, primarily that of building new states formed by the break-up of Yugoslavia, while Albania, the only non-Yugoslav state in this group, emerged from a particularly isolationist regime. Table 1 presents the status of EU accession as of October 2019.

These countries all share common features such as relatively weak governance, rule of law and media freedom, and low trust in public institutions.⁶ Gender inequality is decreasing, but still worse than the values for EU Member States.⁷ War-affected Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular face challenges related to the post-war constitutional settlements and the status of minorities. Serbia and Kosovo are required to 'normalise' their relations before membership can be approved.⁸

Three key trends inform the background to this evaluation: the trends in liberal democracy, government effectiveness and control of corruption.

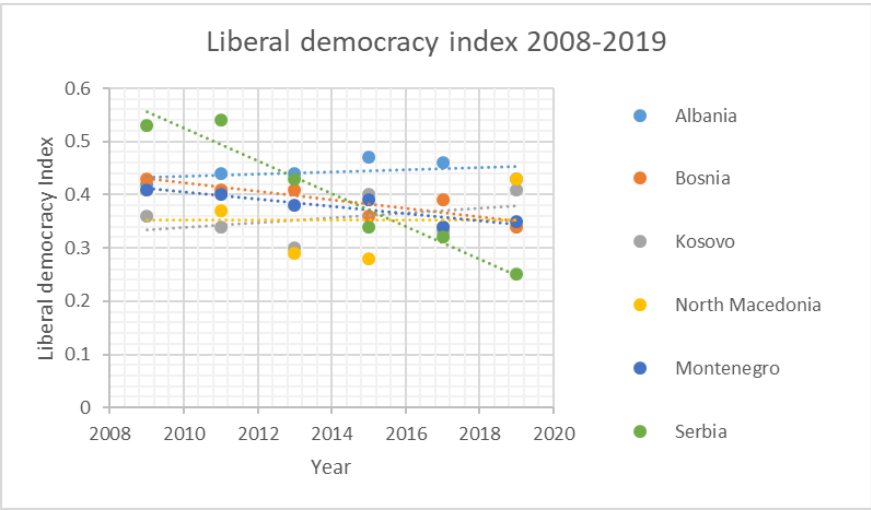
Despite the apparent common trajectory towards EU membership, countries in the region diverge in the direction of improvements against political requirements for membership, especially in respect of the degree of liberal democracy (Figure 2).

⁶ The four countries score well below averages for Europe and Central Asia on the five dimensions of the World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators: Info.worldbank.org, 2020; and Eurostat, Average rating of trust by domain, sex, age and educational attainment level [ilc_pw03], 26/04/2019.

⁷ According to the Gender Inequality Index, Hdr.undp.org, 2020

⁸ EC 2019a pp. 52-54.

Figure 2 The Liberal Democracy Index, Western Balkans.



Source: V-Dem - Liberal Democracy Index ⁹

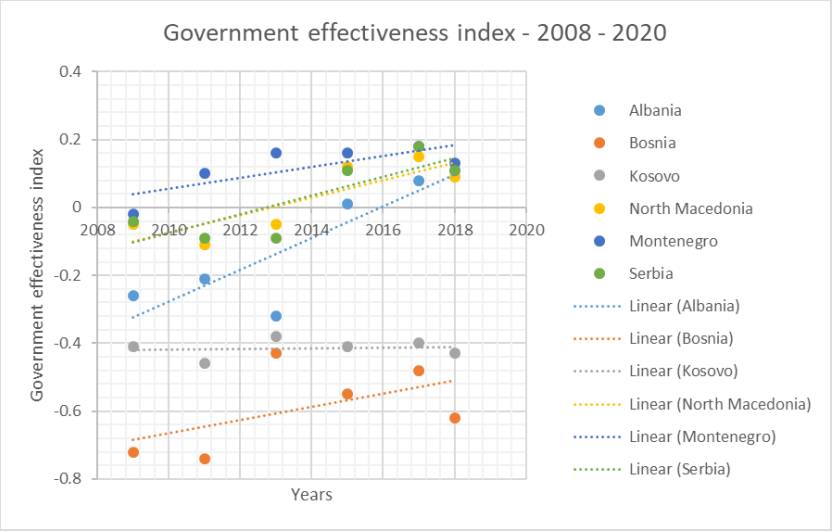
Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia have experienced an upward trend for liberal democracy, but Bosnia, Montenegro, and especially Serbia, a downward one. ¹⁰

By contrast, the index of performance for government effectiveness shows a marked upward trend across the region, with the exception of Kosovo (Figure 3). The World Bank government effectiveness index captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies.

⁹ V-Dem Liberal Democracy Index' (Our World in Data, 2020)
<<https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/v-dem-liberal-democracy-index>>
accessed 9 June 2020.

¹⁰ The Liberal Democracy Index (LDI) combines measures of the quality of elections, suffrage, freedom of expression and the media, freedom of association and civil society, checks on the executive, and the rule of law. Autocratization captures any substantial and significant decline on V-Dem's Liberal Democracy Index (LDI), which may start in democracies (democratic regression) or autocracies (autocratic regression). Democratization is the opposite process and means any substantial and significant improvement on the LDI scale either in autocracies (liberalization) or democracies (democratic deepening).

Figure 3 Government effectiveness index, Western Balkans.

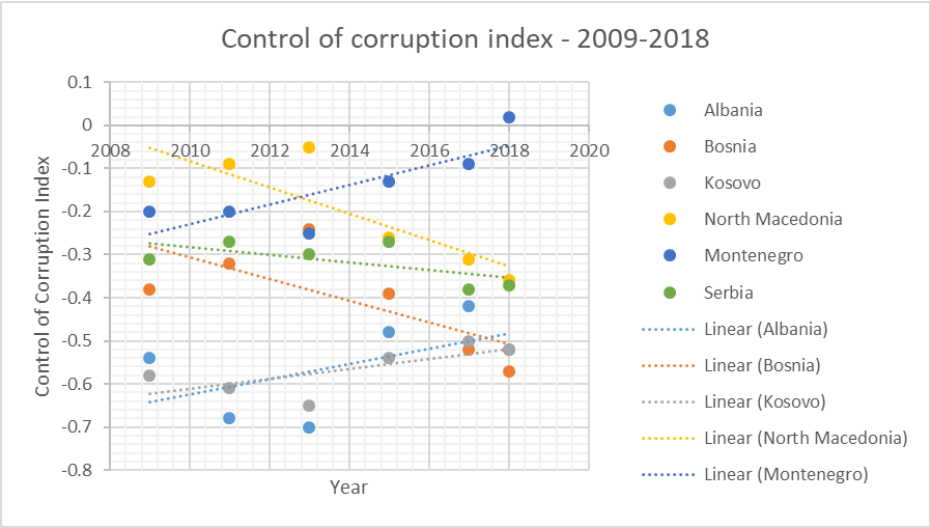


Source: World Bank – World Governance Indicators, Government Effectiveness Index¹¹

Corruption has been a pervasive problem in the region, and again there are mixed trends in terms of the extent to which the countries have been able or willing to deal with it. Albania, Kosovo, and Montenegro show upwards trends, but Bosnia, North Macedonia, and Serbia are heading downwards (Figure 4).

¹¹ 'WGI-Home' (Info.worldbank.org, 2020)
<<https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/>> accessed 9 June 2020. The index ranges from a value of -2.5 to + 2.5.

Figure 4 Control of corruption index. Government effectiveness index, Western Balkans.



Source: World Bank – World Governance Indicators, Control of Corruption Index¹²

These trends, especially in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, illustrate the argument that there is no necessary or simple connection between democracy per se and government performance. And even where government effectiveness is improving, this is no guarantee that corruption is under control.

Taken together, these trends suggest that some kinds of reforms are more likely to succeed than others. More technocratic reforms, those that do not alter the accountability or political balance, which are incremental rather than radical, are likely easier to achieve. Those that aim to tackle democracy or corruption, for example, will struggle against the prevailing winds.

¹² 'WGI-Home' (Info.worldbank.org, 2020)
<https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/> accessed 9 June 2020. The index ranges from a value of -2.5 to + 2.5.

Table 1 Status of EU Accession as of October 2019

Applicant	Current status	Negotiations
Albania	Candidate	Not yet started
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Potential candidate	n/a
Kosovo	Potential candidate	n/a
Montenegro	Candidate	Started
N Macedonia	Candidate	Not yet started
Serbia	Candidate	Started
Turkey	Candidate	Started ¹³

Source: European Commission, DG NEAR: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/check-current-status_en

Swedish strategies since at least 2008 demonstrate clear support for the EU accession hopes of the Western Balkan countries.¹⁴ From the latest MFA Results Strategy (2014) the EU direction for the Western Balkans is clearly stated and Swedish efforts are closely linked in particular to the economic and political criteria for membership as well as the environmental aspects of the EU's acquis.¹⁵

The main objectives in the Swedish Strategy for Western Balkans are as follows:

1. Enhanced economic integration with the EU and development of market economy;
2. Strengthened democracy, greater respect for human rights and a more fully developed state under the rule of law;
3. A better environment, reduced climate impact and enhanced resilience to environmental impact and climate change.

¹³ Since 2016 accession negotiations with Turkey have stalled.

¹⁴ Relevant MFA strategies: Albania, Country strategy, 2004-2007; Albania, Strategy for development cooperation with Albania, 2009-2012; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Strategy for development and cooperation, 2006-2010; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Strategy for development cooperation, 2011-2014; Kosovo, Strategy for development cooperation, 2005-2006; Kosovo, Strategy for development cooperation, 2009-2012; Serbia and Montenegro, Country Strategy 2004-2007; Serbia, Strategy for development cooperation, 2009-2012; Regional, Results strategy for Sweden's reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey, 2014-2020.

¹⁵ Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014.

The strategy recognises that Western Balkans countries need to strengthen their public administration capacities in order to comply with EU membership requirements. Institutions in the region are frequently supported in their efforts by their counterparts from existing EU member states.

Over the period 2009-2017, Sweden has invested SEK 6.5 billion in six Western Balkans countries. Of this total, 9% was delivered through Swedish government authorities.¹⁶

2.2 Swedish Government Authorities in the Western Balkans

Swedish Government Authorities have been active in the Western Balkans for more than twenty years (data on their activities is available going back at least to 1998). Since 1998, SEK 1.4 billion has been spent through Swedish Government Authorities in both bilateral and regional projects.¹⁷ Most, but not all of this is capacity development assistance.

We characterise the work of the SGAs in supporting capacity development of Western Balkans institutions as a ‘modality’. This modality has some characteristics distinct from other approaches to international development work. These are primarily as follows:

- SGAs are government agencies working with their peers in other countries; the peer to peer relationship is the foundation of the work.
- The primary ‘product’ of the SGAs is their technical knowledge and skills related to the performance of their key functions domestically, and not international development work.
- The staffing of the SGAs’ international work is drawn largely from the domestic cadre.

¹⁶ Sources: total Swedish Official Development Assistance OECD QWIDS extracted Nov 2019; data on SGAs’ projects from openaid.se extracted May 2019; authors’ calculations based on USD SEK x-rate 9.62849.

¹⁷ Data from IATI/d-portal.org extracted Feb 2019.

- The SGAs are not selected through a competitive procurement process, as their contracts with Sida are authority to authority agreements.

In these respects, the work of the SGAs is distinct from that of other development actors such as private contractors and international/national NGOs.

Table 2 presents the total value of Swedish aid delivered via Swedish government authorities.

Table 2 Swedish aid via Swedish government authorities, SEK millions, 2009-2017

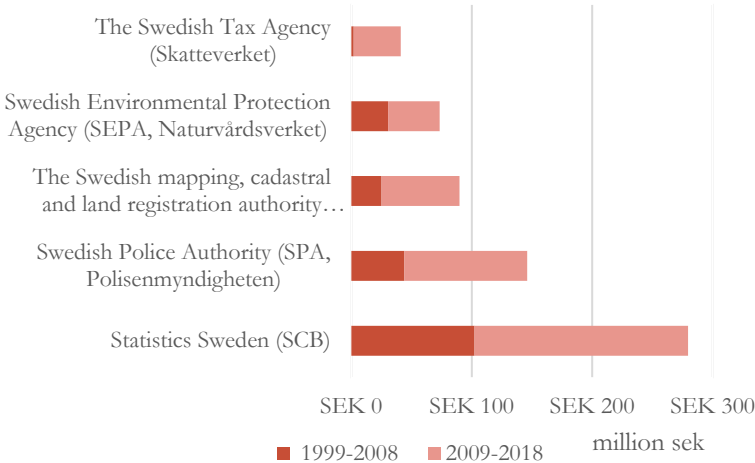
Beneficiary	Total aid	Via SGAs	%
Albania	970.2	135.6	14%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,217.7	93.6	4%
Kosovo	1,573.4	92.6	6%
Montenegro	55.7	10.0	18%
North Macedonia	224.0	60.4	27%
Serbia	1,440.8	173.0	12%
Totals	6,481.8	565.1	9%

Source: Authors' calculations based on data from Sida, OECD DAC, IATI and Openaid.se. Notes: If we also include SEK 58.4 million of regional SGA projects this total rises to SEK 623.5 million. There is no readily available total aid equivalent.

Twenty-four authorities have been involved in the Western Balkans over this period (see Appendix 3 for a full list). Just four authorities account for more than two thirds of the total expenditures: Statistics Sweden (SCB), the Swedish Police Authority (SPA, Polismyndigheten), the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA, Naturvårdsverket) and the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority (Lantmäteriet) (Figure 5). As described in the section on methodology above, these four together with the Swedish Tax Agency (Skatteverket) are the five SGAs represented in the case selection for this evaluation.¹⁸

¹⁸ Data from Sida. One of the larger Swedish government authorities active in the Western Balkans by expenditure has been the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency; however, much of their work was for emergency response and not capacity development – it has therefore been excluded from this study.

Figure 5 Five authorities with the largest expenditure in the Western Balkans, 1998—2018

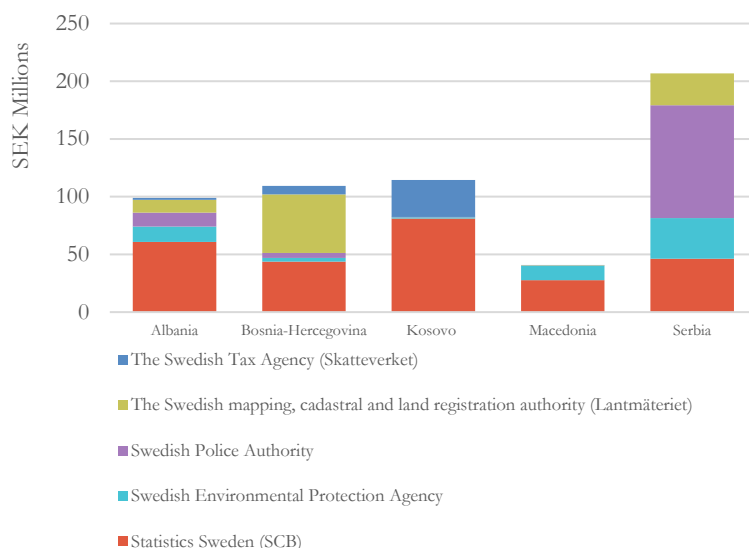


Source: Sida

All five SGAs have been involved in international development cooperation for the last 30-40 years.¹⁹ In the context of Western Balkans, all five have been active for a long period, some with projects since the early 2000s. In relation to the period covered by this evaluation, there has been a clear increase in the last ten years from all five authorities (see Figure 5).

¹⁹ Swedish National Audit Office 2017, p. 17.

Figure 6 Expenditure on capacity building activities through selected SGAs, in the Western Balkans, 1998—2018



Source: Sida

The data in Figure 6 illustrates that the largest level of activity has been in Serbia, where all authorities except the Swedish Tax Office have had significant partnerships. The other country that stands out is North Macedonia, where activities have been limited – in line with Swedish priorities in the region.

2.3 The organisation and mandate of the SGAs

All five authorities are among the most active in Swedish development cooperation, not only in the Western Balkan region. In terms of allocated funding from Sida, the five authorities were all among the largest in 2018, with funds received for each authority between SEK 40 million and SEK 65 million per year.²⁰

²⁰ Sida Annual report, 2018. p. 29.

All five authorities have chosen to organise their work in international development cooperation in a similar fashion. A unit at the authorities' headquarters in Sweden is responsible for managing international projects. In some authorities, international development projects are the single focus of the unit, while others also manage other international commitments such as EU-projects and international relations.²¹ Table 3 presents the authorities' approach to international development.

For each project, the authorities normally have a project manager at headquarters that manages the project, primarily focusing on the relationship with Sida, staffing with experts and reporting. The operational side is most often managed by a Resident Advisor (RA) that works at the partner agency for a set period, often 2 or 3 years. The RA is generally hired from within the SGA core staff, having a specific expertise on a specific subject matter of relevance to the project.

The resident advisor can then draw on the SGA expertise by having visits from Swedish colleagues, coming as Short-Term Experts (STE) for days or a few weeks.

Table 3 Swedish government authorities staffing of international units, March 2019

SGA	Project staff at HQ	Resident Advisors	Pool of Short-Term Experts
Statistics	10	7	120
Mapping, cadastral and land registration authority	5–6	10	*
Environmental Protection Agency	19	-	**
Tax Office	7	3–4	75–100
Police Authority	9	6–7	*

Source: evaluation team interviews with agency representatives, 11–12 March 2019, May 2019 * No formal pool of STEs ** The Swedish EPA has no formal pool of STEs, but draws on resources from not only the authority itself but also other Swedish authorities such as KEMI or HaV, the marine agency, in their areas of expertise.

²¹ Interviews with agency representatives, 11-12 March 2019, May 2019.

The participation of SGAs in development cooperation is mandated in the authorities' formal instructions, where the Government defines their role and mandate. Most SGAs have weak mandates that state they *may* participate in international development cooperation with activities related to their role and field of expertise.

A few authorities have a stronger mandate stating that they *should* participate in international development cooperation as a part of their core operations.

This instruction defines how SGAs approach international development cooperation and how their international work is funded. If an SGA does not have development cooperation as a part of its core mandated operations all such activities must be funded fully by external means.²²

The five SGAs selected in this evaluation have different mandates for their participation in international development cooperation.

The Swedish Police Authority has a strong mandate in their instruction, that states that the authority shall use the possibilities of international police cooperation and also contribute to international development cooperation and international peacekeeping.²³ As such, the SPA is the only authority among the sampled five SGAs that has a clear mandate to use agency core funding for costs related to international development cooperation.

The mapping, cadastral and land registration authority and Environmental Protection Agency both have mandates that are, compared to the SPA, slightly less strong but still highlight international development cooperation. The authorities *shall* contribute to the Swedish objectives for global development, and

²² For a recent analysis of cost coverage for SGAs see Swedish National Audit Office, 2017, p 35-37.

²³ Förordning (2014:1102) med instruktion för Polismyndigheten, § 4.

can conduct fully funded international projects, as long as they are relevant to the authorities' core mandates.²⁴

The instructions for Statistics Sweden and the Tax Office simply state that the authorities *may* conduct fully funded international projects, as long as they are relevant to the authorities' core mandates.²⁵

²⁴ Förordning (2009:946) med instruktion för Lantmäteriet. §§6–7. Förordning (2012:989) med instruktion för Naturvårdsverket §§ 4–5.

²⁵ Förordning (2017:154) med instruktion för Skatteverket. § 12, Förordning (2016:822) med instruktion för Statistiska centralbyrån, § 5.

3 Methodology

The research for this evaluation aimed both to generate a greater understanding of the role and effects of Swedish government authorities' work, and to generate lessons learned and recommendations that are relevant, realistic and timely. This section briefly describes the overall approach, the data collection methods used, and the data analysis process. For a more detailed explanation of the methodology, see Appendix 4.

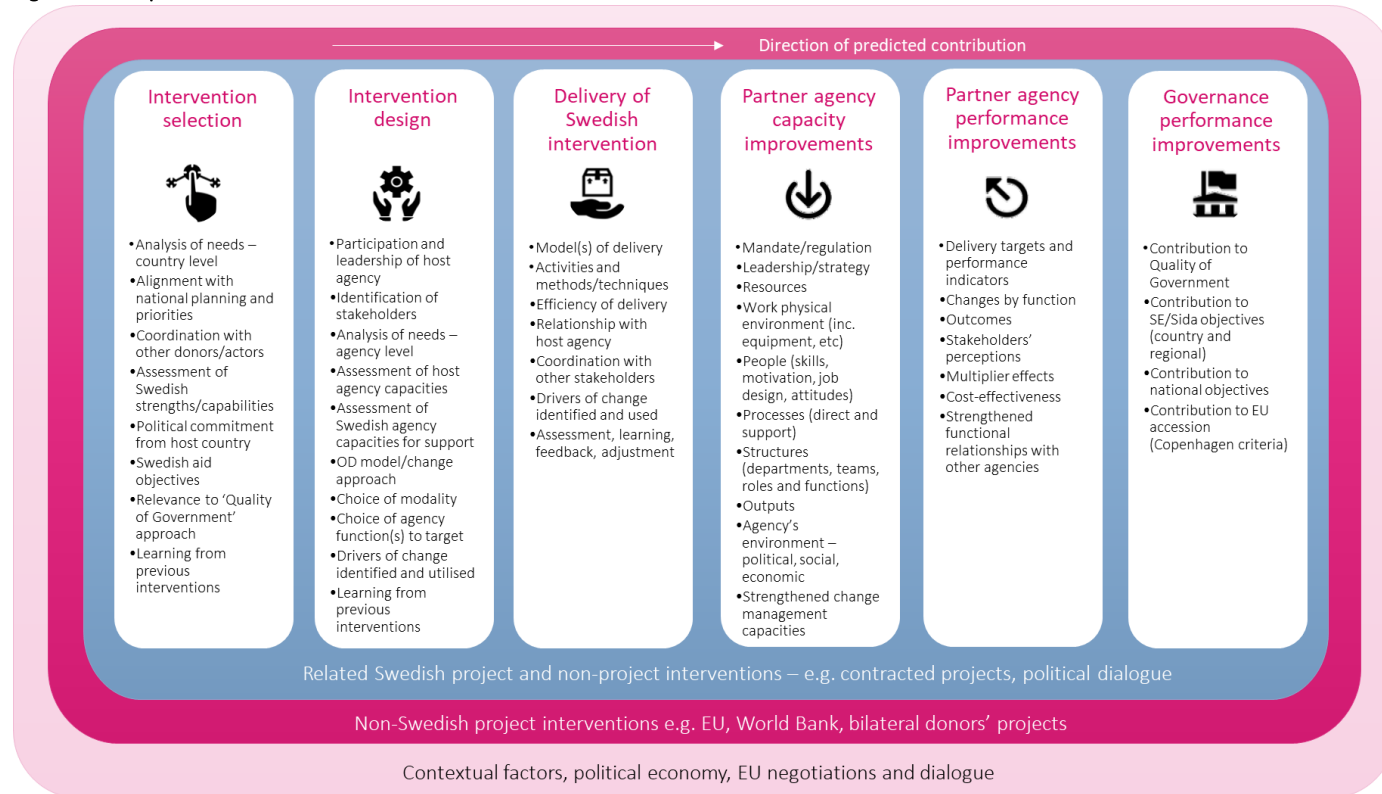
3.1 Research framework

The focus of the evaluation is the modality: interventions managed by and involving SGAs rather than any specific instrument, programme, or project. At the level of the modality, there were common features across the interventions evaluated, but no common theory of change.

The research responded to this challenge by developing a high-level conceptual model to guide the research rather than a proper theory of change. This model first provided a simplified representation of the process of an intervention, from selection, through design to delivery, all located in the national context. The model then predicts that the delivery of a capacity development intervention will first contribute to some change in organisational capacity at the agency level, and that, if the capacity changes are appropriate, a performance improvement will follow. Finally, agency level performance improvements are predicted to make a contribution to overall improvements in Government performance.

This model proved to be flexible and high-level enough to cover a sample of ten unconnected interventions by five different agencies in four countries, while at the same time providing a consistent framework for research questions and comparison across the sample (Figure 4 Conceptual model).

Figure 7 Conceptual model



3.2 Sample of interventions

The research was based on 10 case studies that represent about 50% of the value of Swedish investment through SGAs in the Western Balkans. The set of ten interventions was large enough to provide sufficient coverage and representativeness of the range of differences to be found, while at the same time, it was small enough to be the practical object of study. The selection of the interventions was guided by the following sampling criteria and rationale:

- **Timeframe:** 2009 – 2019 to reduce gaps in information available and to coincide with relevant periods of Swedish development strategies for BiH, Kosovo and Serbia;
- **Geography:** four countries were selected where there had been more significant activities by SGAs, as well as two regional interventions;
- **Authorities:** five authorities were selected which represent the highest level of activity in capacity development.²⁶
- **Thematic areas:** five themes of interventions were selected in order to be able to provide a basis for comparison. Two themes per country, and the same theme in two different countries, enabling comparison of different approaches in the same context as well as similar approaches in different contexts. The two regional themes selected were implemented by authorities which were also the subject of study at the country level.
- **Additional dimensions:** Interventions were also included in which two or more SGAs were collaborating.

On this basis, the sample selected represents more than half of all Swedish investment through the modality in the Western Balkans, 7 out of 20 authorities active in the region, 4 out of 6 of the region's countries and 85% of the region's population.

²⁶ Of the seven most active authorities, the National Audit Office was excluded because it falls under the authority of Parliament, and the Civil Contingencies Agency because its work is mostly emergency response and not capacity development.

3.3 Data collection

The evaluation findings were drawn from evidence generated through an analysis of existing documentation, primary field research and an online survey. The analysis of documentation was based on available context information, and identification of key data against the conceptual model drawn from project level documentation – inception reports, progress reports, final reports and project level evaluations. The desk review structure guide is shown in Appendix 8.

Field research was undertaken from May to July 2019 in Sweden, Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo and Serbia. In total, 168 people were interviewed, representing the SGAs in Sweden and the field, Sida and Swedish embassy staff, the national level authorities and stakeholders, and key independent informants and CSOs. Interview questions were structured based on the conceptual model, and the interview guide is available in Appendix 7.

The online survey for the cost-effectiveness question was conducted in July - August 2019, and this elicited 117 responses from informants from the SGAs, partner government institutions, Sida, Swedish embassies and CSOs involved in the sample interventions. Just under a half of respondents were from the partner governments, and 51% were female.

3.4 Data analysis

The collected data were analysed using the following methods:

- outcome harvesting, to identify what has changed
- contribution analysis at the project level, to identify verifiable mechanisms through which the sample interventions can claim to have contributed to the identified outcomes
- stakeholder-based benchmarking using an online survey for the cost-effectiveness assessment
- thematic analysis to draw more widely valid conclusions based on comparison of the ten case studies.

- for contribution to overall governance, the research found its theoretical basis in the ‘Quality of Government’ approach set out in Rothstein and Tannenbaum’s “Making Development Work: The Quality of Government Approach”.²⁷

All of this is described in more detail in Appendix 4.

The collected evidence and initial analysis were **presented to a group of representatives from the Swedish government authorities and Sida** at a workshop in September 2019. The aim of the workshop was to ‘make sense’ of the collected data; in other words, to discuss and validate (or reject) the findings and to add background, explanation and fill in any gaps in understanding. The workshop also helped to provide directions for the final report recommendations.

3.5 Limitations

The research has had to be careful in moving from the sample of 10 case studies to claiming conclusions valid for the modality of cooperation through Swedish Agencies, especially with an eye to the future and regions other than the Western Balkans. The careful sample selection has eliminated most of the bias that could be connected to country and thematic contexts. However, some remaining limitations are as follows:

- The sample is focused on the more experienced Swedish Agencies and countries that had larger volumes of international cooperation. Cooperation might work differently for those SGAs that are less experienced in development cooperation.
- Cooperation in Montenegro and Macedonia might also work differently, because of the small size of the former and the history of the latter.
- The prospect of EU accession functions as a unique and large-scale incentive for Western Balkans countries to work for reforms, and it provides a clear framework for most

²⁷ Rothstein and Tannenbaum, 2014.

international assistance. Findings for this region may not be clearly applicable elsewhere.

- The sample deliberately included both completed interventions and interventions in progress, to ensure findings throughout the results chain. This has resulted in variation between countries. The sample selection for Albania, for example, includes only recent interventions which cannot yet demonstrate longer term results.
- The cost effectiveness analysis relies primarily on survey findings and is generated by findings from people with knowledge of the SGAs but not necessarily of other approaches. It is limited in the extent to which it can provide a benchmark against which to assess capacity development interventions by SGAs against other modalities.

4 Findings

4.1 Sustainable Results

Has the Swedish central government authorities' reform cooperation in the Western Balkan countries contributed to sustainable results in terms of capacity and effectiveness in the central public administrations of these countries? If so, why, in what way, and to what extent? (Evaluation question 1)

The first evaluation question touches on several issues (contribution to results, types of results, sustainability of results,). Our findings are presented as to capture these different issues, and how they relate to one another.

1. We first describe observed and reported changes that have reasonable claims of contribution from the sample Swedish Government Authority interventions.
2. Secondly, we look at the factors affecting the likely sustainability of the reported changes in capacity and performance.
3. Finally, we discuss the potential contributions these capacity and performance changes may have in relation to overall governance performance.

The evidence presented in this section is taken from the case studies. These are summarised in appendix 5, where the changes observed and reported are described in more detail, and a structured contribution analysis for each case is presented.

4.1.1 Partner agency capacity improvements

Across the board, it was clear that the partners with whom Swedish government authorities worked had experienced capacity and organisational changes over the period during which Swedish support had been provided. We here set out examples of capacity changes observed corresponding to those listed in the conceptual model and discuss the contribution claims. It is not a comprehensive

collection of all capacity changes observed, but is intended both to confirm that such capacity changes took place, and to provide examples to illustrate the changes and contributions observed.

Table 4 presents a summary overview of changes reported by projects where there was a plausible Swedish contribution.

Table 4 Summary of change by dimensions of organisational capacity

Dimension of organisational capacity change	N of projects that reported change	Projects
Mandate and regulations	2	KS ProTax RS SPAP
Leadership and strategy	2	RS ENVAP RS SPAP
People	10	AL JJ AL ProTax BiH CILAP BiH Stats KS Stats KS ProTax RS ENVAP RS SPAP Reg IMPULS Reg Stats
Processes and systems	8	AL JJ AL ProTax BiH CILAP BiH Stats KS Stats KS ProTax RS ENVAP RS SPAP
Organisational structures	2	RS ENVAP RS SPAP
Outputs	7	AL JJ BiH CILAP BiH Stats KS Stats KS ProTax RS ENVAP RS SPAP
Capacity to manage change	3	RS SPAP RS ENVAP BiH CILAP

Two interventions were able to influence the **mandate and regulations** influencing the partner agency. ProTax Kosovo supported change in legislation to enable the collection of land tax as well as property tax, extending the mandate for the Ministry of Finance and municipalities, with the consequence that the IT system itself was enhanced to be able to take on this new form of tax. SPAP in Serbia contributed to revised laws and secondary legislation for crime scene investigation and intelligence-led policing, enhancing the police mandate. The Swedish Police Authority provided their own experience and international best practices in order to improve Serbian legislative framework.²⁸

Two projects had an explicit focus on strengthening partner agency **leadership and strategy** – the ENVAP and SPAP projects in Serbia.²⁹ Within the timeframe of the ENVAP project, the Ministry of Environment compiled its negotiating position for Chapter 27 of the *acquis* – and demonstrated an increased leadership capacity for engaging in EU membership negotiations as well as leading donor coordination in the environmental sector. Senior police officers in Serbia demonstrated a greater understanding of gender issues, particularly those in relation to the way in which the police deal with gender-based violence and the introduction of a reform strategy in the Ministry of Interior.

²⁸ See Appendix 5 Case Study 8.

²⁹ See Appendix 5 Case Study 7&8.

Box 1: Serbia Environment: Preparations for negotiations related to Serbia's EU accession process (ENVAP)

EU membership requirements in the field of the environment constitute around a third of all necessary legislation and 40% of all estimated investment costs. The scope and scale of the challenge requires considerable environmental knowledge, as well as strategic understanding and the ability to mobilise ministries and agencies across government. The Swedish Environmental Agency recruited a former Minister of Environment from Lithuania as an advisor to the Government of Serbia. Since Lithuania had recently undergone the same changes that Serbia is expected to adopt, the advisor's skills were precisely those required. By bringing the most relevant experience – which was not, in this case, Swedish – the Swedish EPA was able to provide senior level advice that informed the overall strategy for Serbia's negotiations with the EU on Chapter 27 of the EU acquis, and provided the Serbian Ministry of Environment with the critical leadership experience. As a result, Serbia's level of preparedness for Chapter 27 has improved since 2015, one of only four chapters (of 35) to do so.

See appendix 5, case study 7 for more detail.

People within the partner organisations had changed; they had learned new knowledge and techniques, some had opened up to other ways of doing things and in many cases, people were working differently. All the ten sample projects reported observable changes in the knowledge and behaviour of people in the organisations. In the statistics agencies of BiH and Kosovo, staff statisticians learned new methodologies for collecting statistics on labour costs, agriculture and environment, for example, and were applying them in their work. This was achieved by a combination of classroom-based training and individual coaching. Regional statistics summer schools were popular with staff of the statistics agencies.

Box 2: Serbia: Swedish Police Assistance Programme and gender

The SPAP project supported the Serbian Ministry of Interior to introduce gender equality and anti-discrimination principles. It contributed to improved human resources functions and procedures (such as gender equality guidelines); supported the establishment of a policewomen's network which gave women in the police service a stronger voice to advocate for their rights; and supported implementation of affirmative measures for women's recruitment and advancement in the police. The project introduced individual gender coaching of senior managers in the police service and created in-house gender coaching capacities. This raised senior managers' awareness and ownership of these reforms and mainstreamed gender equality in HR procedures. As a result, for the first time women were selected as heads of regional police districts.

See Appendix 5, case study 8 for more details.

Staff at the geodetic agencies of the region increased their knowledge and understanding of the new EU directive ('INSPIRE') related to sharing spatial data between countries.³⁰

All partner agencies were able to demonstrate **changed processes and systems** as a result of *country level* interventions by Swedish authorities. These varied from processes managed by individuals or small groups, such as those in the statistics agencies for conducting surveys and preparing statistical publications, to inter-institutional arrangements for handling juvenile offenders, as in the Albania juvenile justice project.³¹ In Albania, a consortium of Swedish agencies led by the police engaged with a similar consortium on the Albanian side supported reform of the entire "chain of justice", the series of institutions which a young offender, victim or witness to crime would come into contact with, including police, prosecution, courts, detention and probation services.

³⁰ See Appendix 5, case study 9 for more on the regional IMPULS project.

³¹ See Appendix 5, case study 1, page 142-157.

Box 3: Bosnia and Herzegovina: CILAP project and the address registers

In 2012, 40% of households in BiH did not have a proper street address or house number. This complicated not only mail deliveries but also personal documentation such as identity cards, affecting access to rights as well as public services. One component of the CILAP project, in which the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority worked with the two Geodetic authorities in BiH (one for the Federation of BiH, the other for Republika Srpska), aimed to tackle this problem.

The project jointly developed a software platform intended for use by municipalities, which are the responsible authority for street addresses. Implementation of the system was done by these local authorities, including naming streets, numbering buildings and entering these details into the system. The visible successes of the pilot municipalities were enthusiastically followed by almost all municipalities in the country. High level political support from the BiH authorities and Sweden and the tangible benefits for efficiency and effectiveness of local services contributed to the rapid take-up by municipalities. Municipalities invested their own resources to set up the systems, and the benefits included generating income from the sale of accurate address information to utilities and businesses. By 2018, more than 300,000 addresses had been entered into the address register.

See Appendix 5, case study 3 for more details.

New IT systems were introduced by two agencies under review – the BiH geodetic agencies (CILAP) and the Kosovo Ministry of Finance (ProTax KS). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the geodetic agencies had put in place new systems to provide street addresses for all properties and to register the sales price of property transactions. In Kosovo, a new property tax collection system was in operation, hosted by the Ministry of Finance. Municipalities were operating the system, entering property data and valuations, billing and collecting taxes. Other partner agencies had introduced systems and procedures that changed the way they worked that were not based on an IT system, such as the Serbian Police's adoption of intelligence-based policing and new practices for forensic crime scene investigation.

New or changed **organisational structures** were more rarely reported. In Kosovo and Albania, new permanent Property Tax departments were created within respective Ministries of Finance. Temporary project management teams were formed as part of the change management process in the BiH CILAP project and both ProTax projects. These teams led the implementation of project activities which resulted in organisational change.

Seven out of the ten interventions under review reported new or improved **outputs** delivered regularly by the partner agencies. As for the new processes and systems, some cases were relatively small new outputs, such as statistical publications. Others were much more significant: the Kosovo ProTax project introduced a completely new form of taxation including billing and collection. Those that did not report new outputs included the regional projects for which specific outputs were hard to define, and projects that were still in process and had encountered implementation difficulties (Albania ProTax).³²

³² See Appendix 5 Case Studies 9&10 for more on the two regional projects.

Box 4: Regional: Regional Statistics Programmes

Reliable and impartial statistics production is a key element of EU accession requirements (Chapter 18 of the EU acquis), as well as a fundamental basis for any modern society. The regional statistics programmes were intended to support improvements in the quality and range of statistical products from the national statistical institutions (NSIs) in each of the six Western Balkans countries (Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Serbia, with North Macedonia and Montenegro since 2014). The programmes offered training, seminars, a regional summer school and study visits for statistics professionals in each NSI. They were intended to complement the national statistics projects, offering additional knowledge and skills on common problems (and solutions) across the national statistical institutes in the region. Some of its activities, aimed to fill the gap in the availability of more general statistical knowledge in the region, such as the lack of university degrees in statistics offered in any university in the region. For this reason, its actual contribution to outputs and outcomes was often ancillary and complementary to the work being conducted by the national level statistics projects and the NSIs' own development work. No action by the regional programmes could be identified as a contribution to any specific organisational changes in the NSIs or national statistical systems. It was therefore difficult to isolate any specific contribution from the regional project to the capacities or performance of the national statistical agencies.

See Appendix 5, case study 10 for more details.

Finally, there were observed improvements in the extent to which partner agencies had the **capacity to manage change**. Three in particular – Serbian Police and Ministry of Environment and BiH geodetic agencies – had strong understandings of how to implement organisational change in practice.³³

The SPAP project supported change in the Serbian Police by identifying and supporting change agents in high-level positions. These experienced police officers helped drive the reform and influence ministers and decision-making processes crucial for the success of the reform. The strong messages they passed down to lower organisational levels (particularly during the pilot phases of

³³ See Appendix 5 Case Studies 3, 7&8.

ILP and forensic components of the project) ensured roll-out and institutionalisation of the reform. This experience and knowledge of driving organisational change remains within the Serbian police.

The BiH CILAP project was managed by teams within each of the geodetic agencies made up primarily of civil servants, complemented by contracted local expertise where necessary. These teams were supported by the Swedish Mapping, cadastral and land registration authority to design and deliver the project components themselves. Through this process, the permanent staff of the agencies learned critical skills in **managing change**. This capacity to *build capacity* could be the most significant achievement of a capacity building effort – meaning that the partner agencies have the ability to continue to build their own capacities – a critical contribution to sustainability, because it enables partner agencies to continue the process of capacity development alone.

4.1.2 Partner agency performance improvements

This section looks at what performance improvements were observed, and whether and how the capacity changes contributed to the performance improvements.

There were some outstanding examples of performance improvements by the partner agencies that exemplify how improved capacities within the agencies also resulted in improved performance. These performance improvements were seen at the level of individual agencies, inter-agency level, and across a range of different government functions.

Table 5 presents a summary overview of reported change that is plausibly linked with Swedish support.

Table 5 Summary of change by dimensions of performance

Dimensions of Agency performance improvement	N of projects that reported change	Changes observed in interventions with plausible Swedish contribution:
Performance in discharging the Agency primary functions, delivery targets, and performance indicators	4	AL JJ KS ProTax RS ENVAP BiH CILAP
Adding new/changed functions to the Agency	8	AL JJ AL ProTax BiH CILAP BiH Stats KS ProTax KS Stats RS ENVAP RS SPAP
Outcomes for beneficiaries of the Agency's work	3	BiH CILAP KS ProTax AL JJ
Stakeholders' perceptions of the work of the Agency(ies)	5	AL JJ KS ProTax RS ENVAP BiH CILAP BiH Stats
Inter-agency relations	4	AL JJ BiH CILAP KS ProTax RS ENVAP

AL JJ: The juvenile justice system in Albania improved treatment and services provided to the few hundreds of juveniles in contact with the law.³⁴ Juveniles were experiencing better treatment in police custody, with an improvement expected also in the interview process, by the courts and prosecution, with a lower percentage of requests and sentences for prison time and an increase in the use of probation and alternative sentences, and in detention centres, where, for example, the juveniles started having access to school exams. There was significant improvement in cooperation between

³⁴ At baseline, juveniles represented 5,7% of the total number of those in conflict with the law in Albania. See Appendix 5, case study 1, page 142-157.

agencies along the ‘chain of justice’. However, there was still a long way to go to achieve the intended results in terms of reducing youth crime – rehabilitation was a notable area in which improvements had not yet been seen.

AL ProTax: the property tax system in Albania had not yet started to function at the time of the evaluation, and so there were no primary performance improvements to report. New functions, such as mass valuation, were becoming operational.

BiH CILAP: The BiH geodetic agencies had implemented new systems – the address register and sales price register – both of which resulted in the agencies providing practical and direct support to other government bodies, notably municipalities and the justice system for example. Municipalities received systems for allocating addresses to all households and businesses, while the sales price register provided reliable current data for property valuations. The intervention had therefore contributed to new functions, improved performance, and improved relations with other agencies. New data and services helped municipalities and other agencies achieve improved outcomes.

BiH Statistics and KS Statistics: Statistics agencies in both BiH and Kosovo improved the quality and range of their statistical reports and other products, notably in areas of agriculture, environment and labour.

Box 5: Kosovo: Property tax and government performance improvement

Property tax at the local level was envisaged as part of the so-called Ahtisaari plan for a settlement of the status of Kosovo, following its declaration of independence in 2008. The aim was twofold: to increase the autonomy of local authorities by reducing their financial dependence on central government disbursements, and to strengthen the accountability of local authorities to its citizens by making a more direct connection between taxation and local services.

The ProTax project supported the development of legislation to regulate property tax, and the establishment of the necessary department to set policy and administer property tax within the Ministry of Finance. A key part of the project supported the development of the IT systems which would enable municipalities to register taxpayers, bill them and collect taxes.

The system functions well, within limits. Municipalities have registered taxpayers and are collecting taxes. The revenues contribute to local small-scale infrastructure projects, such as playgrounds and local roads. Municipalities reported targeting investment to the localities where revenue collection is higher, as a form of recognition, and encouragement to others.

Nevertheless, the amounts of tax collected are low compared to other forms of taxation. Property ownership issues, resulting from the conflicts of the 1990s and subsequent illegal development, mean implementation is not perceived to be fair (legal owners are taxed while illegal occupiers are not). These factors, while outside the its control, reduce the project's contribution to its original objectives.

See Appendix 5, case study 6 for more details.

Statistical products were also more gender sensitive, incorporating more gender disaggregated data and data on specific issues faced by women. More products were accepted by Eurostat, demonstrating improved quality. Stakeholders in government responsible for gender equality appreciated the greater range of gender-related and disaggregated statistics.

KS ProTax: The Kosovo Ministry of Finance and municipalities improved their abilities to set local tax policy, administer and collect property taxes. The Ministry introduced new functions, such as the team which conducts mass valuation of property for tax purposes.

Property tax revenue had exceeded EUR 20 million per year. The public relations function for communicating with taxpayers was targeted by the intervention but not substantially strengthened. There was no evidence to suggest that the property tax system had improved the level of accountability of local government or strengthened the social contract, the intended outcomes.

RS ENVAP: Uniquely among the sample, the ENVAP environment project in Serbia aimed to strengthen primarily policy-making functions, not service delivery. Here it succeeded in strengthening the Ministry and associated agencies' abilities to formulate its negotiating position for Chapter 27 of the EU *acquis*. At the time of the evaluation, formal negotiations for Chapter 27 had not been opened, which was a key benchmark of performance for the project.

RS SPAP: The Serbian police improved the quality of interviewing victims of gender-based violence in part by using new procedures and special interview rooms. There are now specially trained female police officers in each regional police directorate who interview victims of gender-based violence according to special procedures. They also employed new methods of forensic evidence collection and analysis, and prioritised their activities based on gathered intelligence. Improved outcomes, however, were hampered by a lack of cooperation with the court system, which had not been involved in the project, and were not ready to accept new kinds of forensic evidence, for example. Consequently, stakeholders did not perceive improved performance.

There was insufficient evidence from both regional projects to identify plausible contributions to agencies' improved performance.

4.1.3 Sustainability of results

There were two key areas in which sustainability of achieved performance improvements were affected by the development assistance projects.

The first was the issue of human resources, and particularly staff turnover. Three interventions in the study reported a concern that

inability to retain staff adversely affected sustainability, though the evidence that core civil service staff turnover per se is a key barrier to sustainability is relatively weak.

The RS ENVAP project reported that key personnel trained by the project in the Ministry of Environment had left, and their position not replaced since the Ministry not allocated the promised budget from the Government.³⁵ Under the BiH statistics project, statistics agencies reported that some trained staff had left.³⁶ The KS ProTax project was concerned that its IT development team would not be retained after the end of the project to provide ongoing support and continuing development for the ProTax system.

While there are no reliable data on normal rates of staff turnover in Western Balkans public administrations, it would be safe to assume that the rate is not zero.³⁷ If staff turnover is to be expected, it is not clear whether the projects were disproportionately affected, or whether they did not take it sufficiently into account during planning and implementation. Agencies that invested in developing people and nurtured a positive working environment, such as the FBiH geodetic agency, did not report staff turnover as a sustainability issue.

The second area was the issue of systemic sustainability. This is illustrated by comparing two projects, the Kosovo ProTax project and the BiH CILAP project.

The KS ProTax project put an IT system in place that is functioning and collecting revenues for municipalities. However, the IT system did not have clear arrangements in place for its continuous maintenance and development. The system was developed by a team engaged by the Swedish tax agency, nominally linked to the Ministry of Finance. The terms of the team's employment were significantly different to that for regular civil

³⁵ Interview with Swedish Environment Protection Agency, June 2019. See Appendix 5, case study 7.

³⁶ Interviews with BiH Statistics Agencies, June-July 2019.

³⁷ 2017 assessment of public administration indicators by the SIGMA project "Fairness and competitiveness of the remuneration system for civil servants" as follows: Serbia 1, Kosovo 3, BiH 1, Albania 3 on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) http://www.par-monitor.org/regional_par_scoreboard. CEP, 2017.

servants within the Ministry. In order for the Ministry to take ownership of the system, it needed to secure the funds to pay people to maintain and develop it. IT experts are in short supply, and command much higher salaries or fees than civil service norms. There are therefore open questions about the likelihood and the mechanisms for the sustainability of the IT system.

By contrast, the systems produced by the BiH CILAP project have a higher likelihood of sustainability. Responsibility for maintenance and development is clearly defined within the geodetic authorities' mandates. The teams that developed the system were composed of both in-house civil servants with additional external expertise, so much of the knowledge remains within the agencies. In addition, the address register and sales price register both generate income for municipalities (through sale of data), a proportion of which is contributed to the geodetic authorities as a means to support maintenance and development.

The KS ProTax is an example of where additional costs were foreseen at the start of the project, but there were no clear agreements put in place on how the additional costs would be funded after the end of the project. While in the BiH CILAP project, sustainable financing mechanisms were agreed during project implementation.

From these examples, we conclude that the design stage of interventions should both factor in an inevitable turnover of staff during and after the interventions, and design in the mechanisms for sustainably financing additional ongoing costs incurred as a result of the intervention.

4.1.4 Governance Performance Improvements

Based on the Quality of Government perspective, we can argue that all of the interventions supported by the SGAs are at least aiming to improve the quality of partner governments' public administrations.

We argue that the most direct contribution to quality of government could be seen in the **ProTax** projects in Kosovo and Albania. By introducing new taxation at the local level, based on fair

valuation of property, the project aimed to strengthen the social contract between citizen and municipal government. The actual contribution so far is limited. In Kosovo, problems of property ownership, illegal occupation and illegal construction have yet to be resolved, which mean that the property taxation does not yet have a reputation for fairness and impartiality. The small size of the tax means it is not a significant expense for most people, and poor enforcement further undermines the perception of fairness. Nevertheless, the principle of the project is clearly one that will contribute to quality of government; more steps are needed to promote fairness and significance in order to strengthen the social contract and have a positive effect on the quality of municipal governance.

The **statistics** projects in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina make indirect contributions to quality of governance by providing the evidential basis for allocations of public services and resources. A focus on gender in statistics should theoretically improve the impartiality with which women are treated by government. This theoretical improvement was confirmed in one interview with the equality body in Bosnia Herzegovina – that improved gender focus in statistics did indeed contribute to more fair policymaking and public service delivery. This evidence is not convincing enough to ‘prove’ a direct contribution from the SCB to quality of government. A key link in the logical chain is the uptake and use by policy makers of gender-disaggregated statistics. Given the contested census in BiH, there is a long way to go for better statistics to contribute to improvement in quality of government.

The **BiH CILAP** project’s address register was an effective solution to the problem that 40% of households and businesses in the country did not have proper street addresses. The absence of addresses hampered deliveries, billing, maintenance and other forms of local services. The uptake of the address register by municipalities and their efforts to name streets and number buildings led to the problem being tackled more quickly than expected. The consequence of having a proper street address is that public services can be significantly improved. This includes having an actual address in the civil register and identity documentation, improved mail services (including for billing, public information, etc.), and

such practical matters as getting an ambulance to the right location quickly enough to save a life.

Under the same project, the sales price register created a transparent and public resource for valuation of property. In terms of governance performance improvements, this contributed to, for example, reducing the number and duration of court cases linked to property expropriations. In public infrastructure projects, government was able to offer a transparently fair price for land and buildings, based on recent sales price data. Property owners were less likely to contest the offer because they could also see that the price was fair. When they did contest, courts had an open data basis on which to make a judgement about the fairness of the offer price.

Both elements of this project have made a clear and tangible contribution to the fair and impartial exercise of government, and this is likely to influence quality of government.

The Serbian police, as noted above, through the **RS SPAP** project had improved their capacities to conduct crime scene investigation and intelligence led policing. The expected contribution to governance performance was the increased conviction rates and perceived fairness in the justice system. In terms of strengthening the social contract and improving impartiality of public services, this would be a vital contribution. The public in Serbia has a poor opinion of the justice system overall, perceiving bias in favour of the rich, powerful and well connected.³⁸

³⁸ See for example, World Bank, 2014.

Box 6: Albania: Juvenile Justice and quality of government

The Albanian Juvenile Justice project is built on the idea that government should treat all cases without discrimination, based on law and clear guidelines rather than discretion and bias. Prior to the project, there was no clarity or consistency in the way juvenile offenders, as well as young witnesses to crime, were treated by the system. As minors, they were sometimes treated in the same way as adults, at other times as children. Coherence between agencies had also been a problem. Agencies used templates and procedures that did not match and communicated only through formal letters.

The Juvenile Justice project contributed to establishing a separate system and ‘chain of justice’ that could handle cases involving minors, from first contact with the law, through the court process and to detention, if necessary. This has introduced greater clarity and understanding among judges, law enforcement professionals and police about how to work with juveniles in contact with the justice system and led to more consistent and fair treatment of juveniles.

The project achieved these results by organising project activities so that staff from all agencies worked together on common issues, improving reciprocal understanding and relationships. Common training and support for implementation was provided to justice sector workers from all relevant institutions in mixed groups, which led to greater shared understanding and cooperation between institutions.

The intended result is a fairer system in which all juveniles are treated more consistently and fairly, according to transparent rules and guidelines rather than decisions of individuals. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that some categories of juveniles, such as Roma children, are still not treated in the same way as other minors.

See Appendix 5, case study 1 for more details

While the intervention selection was clearly linked to quality of government issues, the implementation of the project has so far failed to have an overall impact on conviction rates and the public perception of the police and justice system. This is because the judiciary did not take up the availability and use of forensic evidence in trials as enthusiastically, leading to little improvement in conviction rates or impact on crime. The exception may be the work of the police on gender, and improvements in the way that the police treat women victims of crime.

This section has looked at some examples that illustrate how the sample projects have contributed to improved quality of governance, following the Rothstein and Tannenbergs proposal. The aims of the interventions are generally in line with quality of government, some more directly than others. The contributions could be made stronger by paying more attention to the links in the chain that lead from agency performance improvement to the actual interface with citizens.

This subject is further developed in section 4.2 where we look at the contribution of Swedish government authorities to the EU accession prospects of the Western Balkans countries.

In the annex to this report all case studies are summarised, and results are presented case by case.

4.1.5 Conclusion

Overall, the Swedish government authorities were able to contribute to sustainable results in terms of improved capacity of government agencies in the Western Balkans, particularly in relation to people and processes. Fewer interventions in the sample demonstrated evidence of performance improvement, particularly in relation to outcomes for beneficiaries. Nevertheless, there were clear performance improvements across more than one dimension of performance improvement in five of the ten sample interventions. It proved particularly difficult to identify any kind of performance improvement for the partner agencies based on the contribution of *regional* interventions.

Sustainability of achieved changes was vulnerable particularly in relation to people and systems, which is a concern since these are the most frequently cited organisational changes achieved. It suggests that where interventions only achieved changes in these two dimensions, the changes are more fragile than changes achieved in other dimensions, such as structural and legal.

Finally, the evidence pointing to improvements in governance performance is largely anecdotal and hypothetical. There exist good

reasons to suppose that sample interventions do contribute to governance performance improvement, but harder evidence is lacking.

4.2 Contribution to EU Membership

To what extent have the efforts contributed in bringing the Western Balkan countries closer to the EU in terms of public sector capacity, efficiency, and adaptation to EU standards? (Evaluation question 2)

4.2.1 Overview

The previous section has concentrated on what the SGAs' interventions achieved and why. This section looks at, in turn, whether there was any contribution to EU membership.

All of the relevant Swedish strategies for the countries of the Western Balkans have clearly prioritised support for EU membership as one of the main areas of development cooperation (see p 27). Meeting the criteria for membership requires, above all, strong public institutions that can effectively adopt, implement and monitor compliance with the EU *acquis communautaire*. The importance of institutions means that institutional development is a critical element of development cooperation, and this gives the Swedish government authorities a potentially significant role.

In this section, the report examines the extent to which the ten sampled interventions have assisted the partner countries to move towards meeting the criteria for EU accession. Progress is well documented through the so-called EU progress reports published by the European Commission annually.

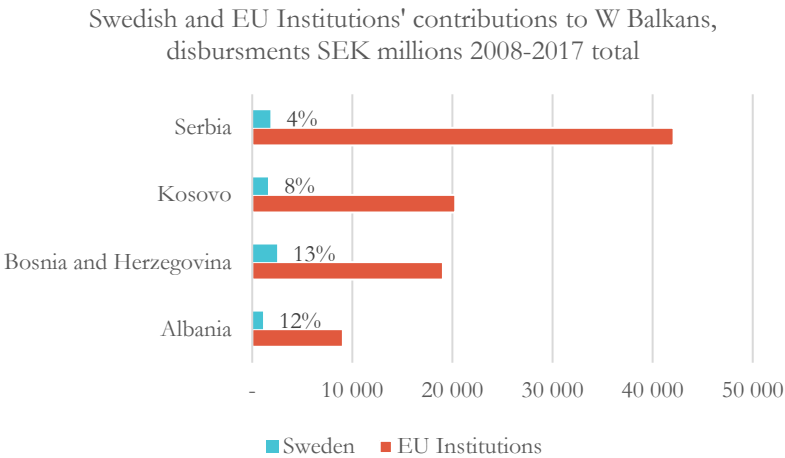
The scale of the challenge of meeting the criteria for EU membership in the western Balkans is enormous.³⁹ While the EU is contributing financial support through the IPA instrument (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance), the countries

³⁹ This is set out clearly in EC 2018c.

themselves are also expected to provide much of the investments required, and to drive through the necessary reforms.

Swedish direct assistance from 2008 to 2017 has totalled some SEK 7 billion, while EU contributions (which include also Swedish contributions to the EU budget) have totalled SEK 90.5 billion (Figure 8).⁴⁰ Given that the Swedish contribution is relatively small compared to the EU commitments and the governments' own financing of reforms, it is all the more important that it is well targeted in order to be able to demonstrate Sweden's unique contribution.

Figure 8 Swedish and EU financial contributions to Western Balkans



Source: OECD DAC extracted Nov 2019

Given that only 10% of Swedish direct bilateral aid is delivered through the Swedish government authorities, the financial contribution covered by the ten sample projects in this evaluation represents less than 1% of external assistance, and much less than that of the total contributions to the EU accession efforts. Because of this, it would be unlikely to find any direct causal or contribution link between Swedish interventions and the overall assessments of countries' progress towards EU membership. Instead, for this

⁴⁰ OECD DAC Official Development Assistance data, extracted Nov 2019.

report, we have constructed an index based on three indicators of contribution to EU membership:

- Strict relevance - does the intervention fit with national plans for meeting *acquis*/meeting Copenhagen criteria?
- The extent to which the issue being addressed is a priority identified in the EU progress reports for the country to tackle. This helps us to qualify the relevance – while the *acquis* and criteria provide a daunting list of tasks for the countries, not all these tasks are of equal importance.
- Third, the actual scale and scope of the change achieved in relation to, for example, the size of the population affected and the degree of improvement in institutions' functioning. Contribution is not only about targeting the most relevant areas, but also about the actual change provide.

The following sections take examples from the sample interventions to illustrate the extent to which SGA interventions contributed to EU membership.

4.2.2 Relevance of the interventions

The objectives of all ten sample interventions were relevant to the EU accession efforts of the four countries. In some cases, the links are explicit, as in the statistics and environment interventions (there are chapters of the *acquis* dedicated to these topics).⁴¹ In other cases, the links are less direct. Land administration reform assists in ensuring property rights, which in turn is one of the aspects of the respect of fundamental rights. Land administration is additionally an important component of agriculture and rural development.

Table 6 sets out the strict relevance of each intervention.

⁴¹ European Neighbourhood Policy And Enlargement Negotiations - European Commission, 2020.

Table 6 Intervention relevance to EU membership

Intervention	Relevance to EU membership
AL Juvenile Justice	Rule of law and justice reform: political criteria and Acquis Chapters 23 Judiciary & Fundamental Rights and 24 Justice, Freedom & Security
AL ProTax	Local taxation is important for accountability of local government to the people – political criteria
BiH Statistics	Acquis Chapter 18 – Statistics
BiH CILAP	Land – agriculture and rural development Property rights – fundamental rights Chapter 23 Rule of law and functioning of the judiciary – property rights/real estate registration
KS ProTax	Local taxation is important for accountability of local government to the people – political criteria.
KS Statistics	Acquis Chapter 18 – Statistics
RS ENVAP	Acquis Chapter 27 – Environment
RS SPAP	Political criteria; Chapters 23 Judiciary & Fundamental Rights and 24 Justice, Freedom & Security
Reg IMPULS	Direct link to EU INSPIRE directive, Acquis Chapter 27, Environment
Reg Statistics	Acquis Chapter 18 - Statistics

Source: Evaluation team case studies – see Appendix 5

4.2.3 Meeting priorities

All four countries have been urged by the European Union and its member states to address some key priorities that, unless addressed, would prevent them from being admitted to the EU as members. Rule of law features frequently, as does tackling corruption. The EU is concerned about relations between Serbia and Kosovo, which should be ‘normalised’ as quickly as possible. The dysfunctional political arrangements in Bosnia and Herzegovina are a key concern because they undermine the unity of the country. Freedom of the media is increasingly a priority in Serbia and other countries in the region. The environment is becoming more significant and is likely to feature more prominently under the incoming (2019) Commission, though is not (yet) described as part of the ‘fundamentals first’ agenda.⁴²

⁴² EC 2020.

“Fundamentals First”

Economic criteria

Functioning of democratic institutions

Public administration reform

Chap 5 - Public procurement

Chap 18 - Statistics

Chap 23 -Judiciary and fundamental rights

Chap 24 -Justice, Freedom and Security

Chap 32 - Financial control

From EC 2020

The case studies illustrate how, while all relevant in a strict sense, the interventions are not equally meeting the key priorities of each country.

- The RS ENVAP environment project in Serbia focused completely on preparing the country's institutions for negotiating Chapter 27. The environment is a priority, and Serbia has a long way to go. The provisions of Chapter 27 are wide, and it is probably one of the most complex and expensive of all conditions to meet. Its link to priorities is therefore high, although not a 'fundamental'.
- The RS SPAP police project in Serbia has a strong link to the rule of law because intelligence-led policing and improved forensic investigation are contributors to more effective and trustworthy police, and therefore to Chapter 24.
- Statistics has its own chapter in the *acquis*, and the state of the statistics systems are commented on every year. Statistics systems are considered to underpin a great deal of a country's ability to comply with the Copenhagen Criteria, because reliable statistics in are key to knowing whether a country is indeed complying with the requirements of EU membership. Therefore Statistics, Chapter 18, is part of the fundamentals first agenda.
- Land ownership and land registration are moderate priorities in BiH. The CILAP project only has an indirect link to improved land registration itself (this is the focus of a World Bank credit). Its contribution to EU priorities is therefore not strong. If its complementary role in strengthening the geodetic

- administration to support the World Bank project is taken into account, this rating increases.
- The two ProTax projects differ in terms of meeting priorities. ProTax in Kosovo developed from the Ahtisaari plan to stabilise the country and improve relations with Serbia.⁴³ Part of the plan was to increase municipalities' independent revenues as a means to improve the sense of security of the minority-dominated municipalities. This is directly in line with perhaps the EU's number one priority in the Balkans – relations between Serbia and Kosovo. In Albania, this was not the issue; rather the project was a technical solution needed for building municipal capacities following a major reorganisation, but not closely linked to EU priorities. Both projects will eventually reach a large number of the property-owning population. In Kosovo, the system is currently active, while in Albania it is still under development.
 - The Albania Juvenile Justice project is focused on the situation of a relatively small number of young people in the justice system. Because it is linked to rule of law and fundamental rights (Chapters 23 and 24), this is closely related to the 'fundamentals' agenda.

4.2.4 Scale and scope of results

The last of the three criteria for assessing contribution is the extent to which the interventions have actually achieved results, and the scope and scale of these results. While interventions might be both strictly relevant and targeting a key priority for EU accession, the actual contribution is ultimately also defined by the scope of the intervention.

Once again, there is a wide variation, and the following examples aim to illustrate the range of factors that lead to these variations. The case studies in Appendix 4 provide more details for each intervention.

⁴³ UNSC 2007.

- As described above, the SPAP police project in Serbia is targeting a highly relevant and prioritised area in Serbia's journey towards EU accession. In addition, the cooperation has produced performance improvements in the Serbian Police. The weak link here, though, is that the project has been limited to the Police alone, and not supported a corresponding capacity increase in the rest of the justice chain. The improved forensic evidence produced by the police has, not led yet to a corresponding increase in sentencing. The SPAP project has so far not been able to contribute significantly to the overall rule of law.
- The Albania Juvenile Justice project is relevant and a high priority. The changes achieved will affect several institutions, but the target population of the project numbers only a few hundred individuals every year. In 2012 there were 186 young offenders in detention, and in 2017, 386 young people were presented to courts.⁴⁴ While juvenile justice is a relatively small part of the justice system in Albania, it is nevertheless of vital importance to the lives of the children themselves. However, in terms of the intervention's contribution to EU membership, it needs to be recognised that the scale of the contribution is small. EU membership will not be determined based on the treatment of minors in the judicial system.
- The CILAP project in BiH has had a large-scale impact; it is well on the way to tackle the problem of the 40% of all properties without addresses, and will have subsequent impact on public services for these properties and residents in them. At the same time, the project targets an area that is of lower significant in terms of priority for the country's EU accession.
- The statistics projects are difficult to track directly to the scale and scope of their results. In theory, they should be having an impact on almost all areas of public life; the availability of better statistics in health, education, employment, public finance and so on should lead to better policymaking. The actual scope and scale of the impact of the three (Kosovo, BiH plus regional) statistics projects is perhaps rather modest. There are two reasons for this: the limited range of improved products supported by Statistics Sweden, and the limited awareness and usage of statistics by policy makers.

⁴⁴ Out of a total prison population of over 5,000, Prisonstudies.org, 2020.

Table 7 is an attempt to rank approximately the contribution to EU membership. The aim is to give some indications for planners when exploring future project options in accession countries.

Table 7 Scores to assess contribution to EU membership

Project	Relevance	Priority	Scale	Simple average
Serbia ENVAP	5	5	5	5.00
Serbia SPAP	5	5	3	4.33
Kosovo ProTax	3	4	5	4.00
AL JJ	5	5	1	3.67
BiH CILAP	3	2	5	3.33
Kosovo Statistics	5	3	2	3.33
BiH Stats	5	3	1	3.00
Regional IMPULS	5	2	2	3.00
Regional Statistics	5	3	1	3.00
AL ProTax	3	2	1	2.00
Simple average	4.4	3.4	2.6	

4.2.5 Conclusion

This analysis hopes to show that while all interventions were in a strict sense relevant to the process of EU accession for the Western Balkans, other factors were critical in determining the importance and significance of the interventions.

It has shown that intervention selection and design has been good in identifying interventions relevant to EU accession (4.4 out of 5), less able to work on priority issues for accession (3.4 out of 5), and primarily hampered by a lack of scale of the intervention to the challenge of supporting EU accession (2.16 out of 5).

4.3 Cost effectiveness

*Have the results from these interventions been cost-effective?
(Evaluation question 3)*

4.3.1 Overview

This section reviews the results of the cost effectiveness survey, together with evidence collected from document review and interviews, providing an overall assessment of the selected sample interventions' cost effectiveness.

As noted in the methodology (section 3.5), the evidence base which informs the findings of the research for this evaluation question is limited to the results of the survey. The survey findings are in turn based on the perceptions of respondents, all of whom are stakeholders in the SGAs' interventions in the Western Balkans. The methodology has the advantage that it takes into account the wider perceived benefits of project interventions based on informed and expert knowledge, while being constrained by the possibility of bias or limited experience on the side of respondents. While the survey findings triangulated well with findings from interview and secondary project-level evaluations, the methodology did not allow for quantitative assessment or benchmarking of SGAs approach in relation to other modalities.

Some 117 survey responses were collected in all, from people who were familiar with one or more of the sample interventions. Survey respondents were invited to comment on the projects with which they were familiar, and an average of 11 people commented on each of the country projects (max 19, min 9). There were too few responses for the two regional projects, so these were excluded from the analysis.

Table 8 - Breakdown of questionnaire respondents

Respondents' type of organisation	%	No.
Government (national, entity/provincial or local) from a country in the Western Balkans	48%	56
Ministry for Foreign Affairs or Sida in Sweden	0%	0
Embassy of Sweden and/or Sida in a Western Balkans country	10%	12
Swedish Government Authority either in Sweden or in a Western Balkans country	20%	23
NGO or private company	9%	10
Other	14%	16
	Answered	116
	Skipped	1

The survey asked three main questions:

1. To what extent do you think the project actually delivered the planned results?

The aim of the first question was to get respondents' perceptions of the success of the project. It was assumed that this perception would influence respondents' perceptions of cost effectiveness.

2. Whether the amount of money spent was high or low considering the results achieved

The second question was the critical one to assess whether they thought the project was cost effective. For each project, respondents were given the total cost of the project so far in both SEK and EUR, and the time over which the cost had been incurred.

3. Whether another modality could have delivered the same results more cheaply.

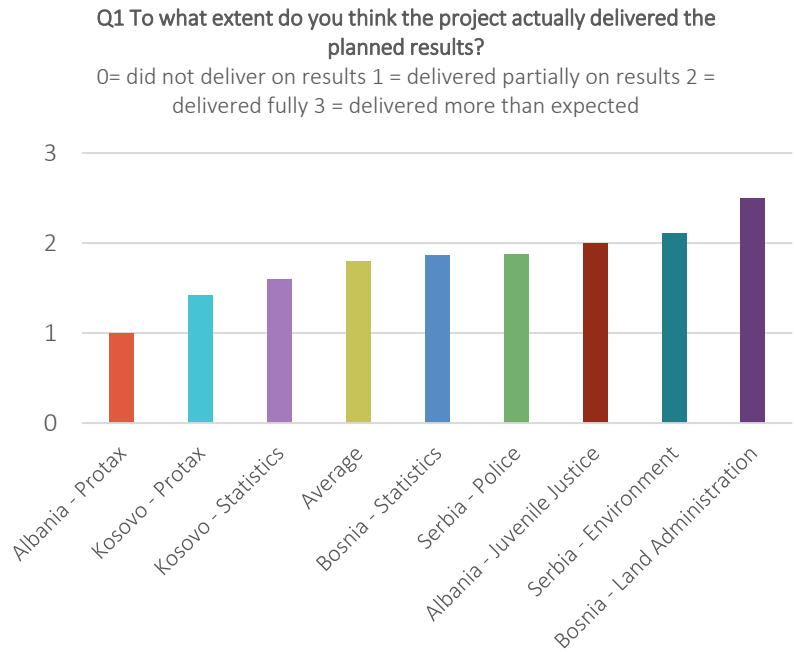
The third question sought to prompt respondents to think about whether other modalities – and they were given examples of consultancy firms, international organisations and others – could deliver the same results more cheaply. The aim was not to prompt thinking about effectiveness overall, but to focus on

the cost element. The assumption was that if respondents believed other modalities could deliver the same results for less, then they also believed the intervention was not cost-effective.

4.3.2 Results achieved

The survey findings on results achieved are presented in Figure 9. Respondents were asked to indicate whether projects achieved more than expected, delivered fully, delivered partially, or did not deliver, with each grading given a score from 0 (did not deliver) to 3 (delivered more than expected). The scores for each project are the simple averages of the scores given by respondents.

Figure 9 Illustration of the results of cost effectiveness survey question 1



Source: Evaluation team

The average score is close to 2, meaning that on average, projects tended to fully deliver on results, and two out of eight delivered better results than expected.

Respondents considered the BiH CILAP (Land administration) and Serbia ENVAP (environment) projects to have achieved more than expected. At the other end of the scale, the Albania ProTax project was having trouble in implementation and scored low for achievement of results. This is very much in line with the findings from the field interviews and the preceding analysis. The CILAP and ENVAP interventions in particular have wide scale results that have the potential to affect a large proportion of the population: CILAP through improved addresses for 40% of the population, and ENVAP for cleaning up the environment for all.

Perhaps the big surprise was the score for the Kosovo ProTax project, which had been fully implemented and was actively collecting property tax revenues for the municipalities. Comments were generally positive about the project's achievements, with the main caveat being the challenges with project sustainability. The lower than expected score may reflect this concern for sustainability, which was a pressing issue at the time the survey was carried out.⁴⁵

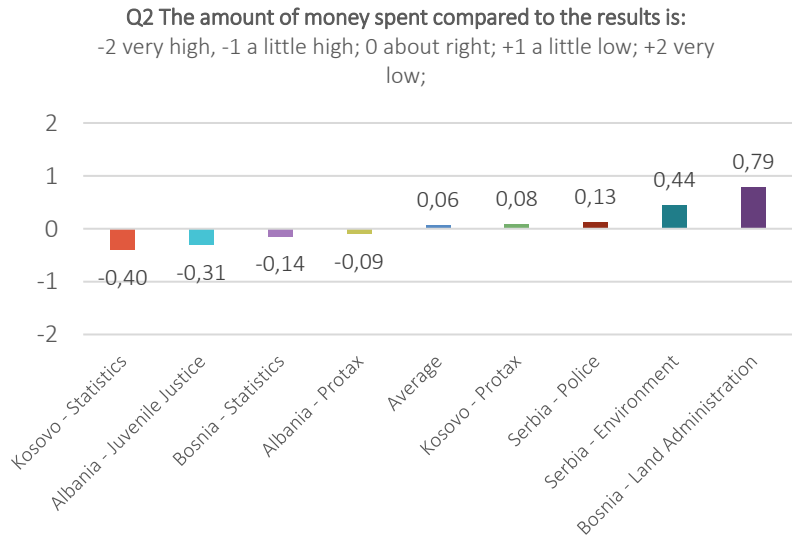
The most frequent comments about results concerned the difficulties of assessing long-term results, especially for projects that are still under way, and for which full results have yet to be realised. The Albania ProTax project is one which is in this position. By contrast, however, while the Albania Juvenile Justice project was not complete, it scored above average for delivery of results.

4.3.3 Costs compared to results

Having established an assessment of the results achieved, the questionnaire then gave the respondents information about the actual costs of the intervention to date and the time period and asked them to assess whether the amount of money was high or low compared to the results. The results from this question were scored from -2 (very high cost compared to results) to +2 (very low cost), with zero representing 'about right' (Figure 10).

⁴⁵ Interviews with Kosovo ProTax team and Swedish Embassy Pristina, June 2019.

Figure 10 Assessment of cost compared to results, survey question 2



Source: Evaluation team

The average score for this question was very close to zero, and there were no extreme scores – indeed, none scored more than +1 or less than -0.5. It is notable that the responses generally clustered around zero and there were no extreme deviations. Overall, this suggests that there is considerable agreement on that the sample interventions were good value for money.

Respondents considered the best performing project in terms of value for money to be the BiH CILAP project. Comments suggested that this intervention could have achieved even more with more money and expressed surprise that the municipalities were engaged into the project much more quickly than expected.

Some survey respondents were concerned about the costs of the experts and their travel. In the projects where the survey raised concerns about the costs of experts, field findings suggested that the experts were less valued for their inputs, or they were at a lower level. In the projects where high-level experts were used (eg ENVAP), despite the clearly higher costs of the experts, there was

strong satisfaction with their performance, and we see that cost was not raised as a concern through the survey.

Qualitative data from the ten sample projects (see Appendix 5) and from the thematic review of cost effectiveness (Appendix 9) help provide some triangulation and depth to the survey findings here.

In relation to the Serbia SPAP project, a representative of the Ministry of Interior said in a field interview, *“reform requires time and investment into the system. If somebody gave us the same amount of money that was invested through SPA support, it is questionable if we would have been able to use it better than we did in the partnership with SPA: their experience and their support and this partnership made MoI completely different now compared to 10 years ago.”*

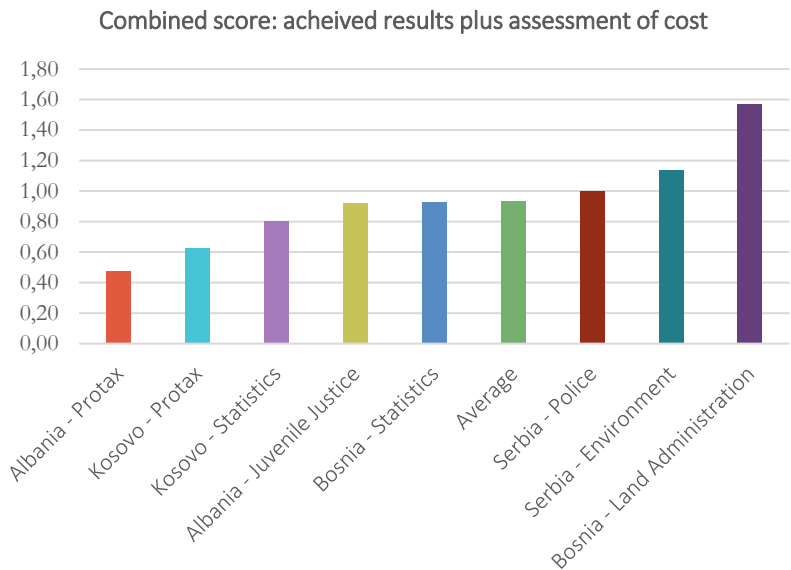
Financial and narrative reports as well as key informant interviews revealed that a majority of the sample projects had underspent compared to budget.⁴⁶

4.3.4 Aggregated results and cost-effectiveness

As a means to connect the perception of the project success with the cost effectiveness of the project, the evaluation team created a calculated index and ranking score.⁴⁷ The results of this index are shown in Figure 11.

⁴⁷ This was calculated as a simple average of four scores: Q1 mean, Q1 mode, Q2 mean, Q2 mode.

Figure 11 Index for results against costs



Source: Evaluation team

The aggregate score and ranking confirm the assessments from the field regarding the projects above the average score. For the projects below average, the Albania Juvenile Justice project ranks lower than in the pure assessment of results (Q1). Commenters noted that while successful, the involvement of several Swedish authorities added to the costs unnecessarily because of a perceived duplication of effort for coordination and management: “[t]he project took time to orient itself before delivering. There were many visits and trips from each of the authorities in order to orient their upcoming input, instead of having the Project coordinator playing that role for all the agencies”.⁴⁸

Clearly, the score only shows the projects in relation to each other, and not in an absolute sense of ‘successful’ or ‘not successful’. However, it can provide some guidance to Sida and the Swedish MFA in terms of where to look in the search for examples of good practice.

⁴⁸ Anonymous survey respondent.

Findings from the desk and field broadly support the survey findings. For example, the evaluation of the ProTax II project in Kosovo reported that, *“in terms of efficiency the assessment is that outputs related to costs is good, also the overall impact in terms of project costs in relation to Property tax collection is good but could potentially be much better, also in comparison with some of the neighbouring countries.”*⁴⁹

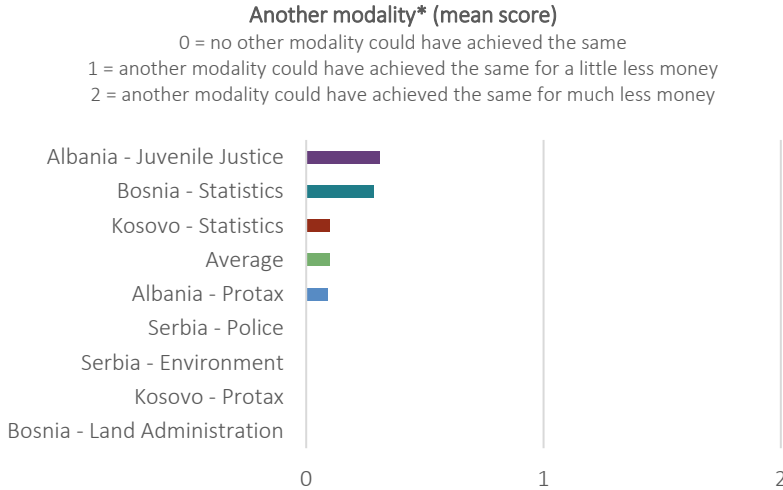
4.3.5 Other modalities

Survey respondents were asked whether they thought that another modality would have achieved the same or better results for less money.⁵⁰ This question sought to assess the extent to which respondents believed the modality of using a Swedish Government Authority to deliver the programme was cost effective (Figure 12).

The average of the responses to this question cluster close to zero, meaning that respondents mostly thought that no other modality could achieve the same results for less money.

⁵⁰ “The implementation modality for this project was the use of a Swedish Government Authority to manage and deliver the project (Swedish Police, Swedish Environmental Agency, etc...). Based on your direct experience working on other projects or programmes, to what extent do you think that the same results could have been achieved using different modalities? Examples of other modalities are: use of international NGOs or private consulting firms, direct budget support to government or some other combination.”

Figure 12 Could other modalities deliver better cost effectiveness, survey question 3



Source: Evaluation team

It should be noted here that there are ‘modality experiments’ being planned in the Western Balkans combining the use of a Swedish government authority with consulting firms in a consortium. This is a new modality, and questionnaire respondents are unlikely to have experience of such combinations. We should assume, then, that the findings here do not exclude the possibility that the experimental modalities could be more cost-effective.

Comments on the questionnaire also questioned whether other modalities could even achieve the kind of results that Swedish government authorities could:

*“The real added value with the project is the inter-agency cooperation. A consultant could not have contributed with this. [...] The Swedish Agency [...] has a wealth in knowledge on EU legislation (experts on every part of the EU acquis) that no consultancy could bring. The inter-agency cooperation is not only about documents and policies, but also about building capacity being an agency, executing the power of an agency / Ministry. Consultancy can give a lot, but not that.”*⁵¹

⁵¹ Anonymous survey response, July/August 2019.

This takes the cost-effectiveness calculus and powerfully argues not only that the modality is *cost* effective, but also that the modality offers something that cannot be provided in any other way.

Overall, the survey responses suggest that respondents believe the use of Swedish government authorities as an aid delivery modality was the most cost-effective one available.

Interview and evaluation findings were broadly supportive of this analysis. An informant from the Serbia SPAP project said, *“when you see the money invested in twinning or IPA: the funds are far bigger than the funds invested through SPA support and at the same time SPA achieves much more for their money, because they are changing police culture and investing in long-term development – they implement change and improve Serbia police performance.”*⁵²

Similarly, an evaluation of the CILAP project in BiH reported, *“in conclusion it can be viewed that the efficiency of the project is good [...], It is also difficult to determine if there would be other means that would be more cost effective.”*⁵³

4.3.6 Conclusion

From these findings, we conclude that there is broad consensus among stakeholders that the use of Swedish government authorities is a cost-effective means of delivering capacity development support. Few thought that other modalities or a combination between support through SGAs and another modality might be more cost effective.

There were variations between the projects, which is to be expected. Projects with perceived lower cost effectiveness tended to have comments related to the cost of experts and travel, while for the projects with perceived higher cost effectiveness focused on the added value that agency-to-agency peer support can bring. The interventions with higher perceived added value also tended to be

⁵² Interview, SPAP project team, June 2019.

⁵³ Sida 2015b, p55.

those with wider impact across a system or with large numbers of the general population affected.

Overall, the findings from the cost-effectiveness questionnaire are broadly in line with the findings from the field and document research, providing a useful triangulation. However, the evaluation has not compared the SGA modality with other modalities that function through different procurement processes and under different contractual rules. This prevents the evaluation from being able to conclude beyond any doubt that SGAs provide value for money, just by the fact of being SGAs. The evaluation however does point out to the fact that SGAs benefit from better procurement and contractual conditions for a reason: the fact that Sida and other SGAs are peers in a way that contractors are not.

4.4 Coordination

Have the interventions been coordinated in an efficient way, regionally and in respective country, among Swedish actors as well as with other relevant actors (especially the EU)?
(Evaluation question 4)

Coordination is not a one-dimensional issue but affects projects throughout their complete lifecycle. In this evaluation, we have explored coordination especially in relation to the identification, design and implementation of projects. In addition, we have also identified the importance of coordination in relation to the communication and sharing of results and lessons learned.

And at each of these stages, the coordination issues were explored in relation to i) alignment with national authorities' agenda and coordination with other international actors, and ii) coordination with other Swedish actors and interventions.

4.4.1 Relevance and donor coordination

The prospect of EU accession means that each of the four countries has a clearly defined reform framework and action plans for meeting

the requirements of the Stabilisation and Association process, and, once negotiations have opened, for meeting the Copenhagen Criteria. These frameworks and action plans should form a clear basis for donor coordination in each of the countries. As such, a clear baseline can be used to assess to what extent Swedish funded projects not only align with national priorities but also complement other initiatives within each sector.

4.4.2 Coordination with national priorities in the partner countries

In practical terms, the primary formal responsibility for donor coordination lies with the governments of the Western Balkans countries themselves.⁵⁴ The EU delegations have also been encouraging donor embassies to take the lead in coordinating donors for specific sectors, in partnership with government representatives. In Serbia, for example, Sweden takes the lead in coordinating for the environmental sector; this is natural given its interest and capacities in the sector. In each sector, Sweden has thus a clear responsibility to coordinate projects with the relevant national governments and in some sectors is the lead donor.⁵⁵

Based on analysis of the ten cases, it is clear that all eight bilateral projects were well coordinated with national priorities in terms of the topic or theme of the interventions. The two regional projects were also clearly aligned with national priorities. As analysed in detail, all projects were directly relevant to national priorities, and most of them contributing to the EU accession efforts in particular.

In the case of the RS ENVAP environment intervention in Serbia, the project was not only in line with national priorities, but also succeeded in strengthening the Ministry of Environmental Protection's (MEP) capacities to plan and coordinate donor support for reforms (see case study appendix 5).

⁵⁴ E.g. OECD 2006.

⁵⁵ See for example, Government of Serbia ISDACon donor coordination site: <http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Evropa/PublicSite/Documents.aspx>

As well as facilitating alignment with government priorities, the EU accession framework provides both Sida and the Swedish government authorities with useful basis for coordination with other donors. Most other donors are familiar with governments' planning and are committed to supporting the Western Balkans countries' efforts towards EU membership.

Some of the sample projects were operating in niche areas – such as property tax – where there were no other donors present. These presented no particular issues when it came to donor coordination.

Where there is a strong EU interest, the EU donor framework functions reasonably effectively. The close involvement of Sweden in the coordination of donor support for environmental reform in Serbia is a good example of this.⁵⁶

Cooperation in the area of statistics was more challenging. The EU is a big supporter of statistics reform, and usually engages through contracted consulting firms or twinning projects with EU countries' statistics agencies. The EU typically has long lead times from programming through to contracting. The Swedish Statistics Agency's support was reactive to the stated needs of the partner statistics agencies, without more in-depth needs assessment or coordination. Therefore, there were examples in which the assistance provided by the Swedish Statistics Agency overlapped or duplicated planned EU support. Nevertheless, the Kosovo and BiH statistics agencies generally preferred Swedish support because of the higher level of professionalism and expertise. Swedish statistics support was also low profile and not active in engaging other international actors. In BiH, for example, Unicef had been working with the statistics agencies for more than 15 years but was unaware that Statistics Sweden had also been working there.⁵⁷

In Kosovo, the challenge of donor coordination in statistics cooperation is being met by an innovative approach for Sweden. Sida funds will be blended with EU funds in a single pot to support a statistics development project. The project will involve Statistics

⁵⁶ Minutes of sector donor coordination meetings are available online until 2014 (ISDA CON: www.evropa.gov.rs).

⁵⁷ Interview Unicef Sarajevo, June 2019.

Sweden as a junior partner in a consortium led by an international consulting firm. It is hoped that this approach will lead to improved alignment with national priorities and donor coordination, as well as having more impact on the overall statistical system in the country. This innovation will be interesting to follow over the coming years.

4.4.3 Coordination with other Swedish interventions

An area of concern arose in interviews with the Swedish government authorities present in the Western Balkans regarding the extent to which they were able to coordinate with other Swedish interventions in the same country.

They noted that there should be many opportunities for sharing information and learning. After all, they share a common context and are engaged in comparable development processes. Even if the topics and themes may be different, there ought to be benefits to be gained from meeting more frequently in either structured or unstructured discussion. This applies to both the Swedish government authorities as well as consulting firms, other contractors and NGOs.

There were, however, no identified initiatives from Sida HQ and/or the Swedish Embassies to share information about other Swedish authorities engaged in the country. As such, there were no initiatives to explore potential opportunities not only for the sharing of lessons learned, but also for the potential of direct collaboration between authorities engaging representatives from the same counterpart.⁵⁸

This finding, where coordination or collaboration between SGAs is lacking, was also highlighted in a recent report from the Swedish National Audit Office (SNAO). The Audit Office concluded that

⁵⁸ Interviews with Swedish Embassies in Belgrade, Pristina, Sarajevo and Tirana, June – July 2019.

the risk for overlap seemed limited but that there was a significant risk that potential synergies were not harvested.⁵⁹

A positive example of more practical coordination is the cooperation between the Juvenile Justice programme and Sida's Community Policing project, both in Albania. Both projects worked to develop quality standards for interviews with minors, including interview rooms and recording infrastructure. Both agreed on a geographical distribution of their respective programme's investments in upgrading the interview rooms in police commissariats.⁶⁰

Another example is the collaboration on a framework contract for communication in Serbia. The Serbia SPAP project has taken the lead on procuring a framework contract with a local service provider to ensure a strong communication of development results. This contract can also be used by MSB and the consultancy company IMG.

Analysing the ten case studies, it is clear that similar arrangements might be possible in areas such as HR development, procurement, IT and general civil service training/capacity building.

In Sweden, there is a learning network for the Swedish government authorities – the 'Network for Learning' or N4L – which aims to promote knowledge sharing between the SGAs. The feedback on this network suggested that while it is regarded as a positive idea, it is used mainly to share information on common administrative practices rather than more constructive or in-depth knowledge about support for capacity development in international settings.

4.4.4 Conclusion

The EU accession direction of all sample countries provides a clear coordination framework for donor assistance, including Sida support through SGAs.

⁵⁹ Swedish National Audit Office, 2017, pp. 33-34.

⁶⁰ Source: comment on draft report from Swedish Embassy, Tirana.

National authorities are good at ensuring international assistance is aligned with national priorities and systems.

There are opportunities, however, for strengthening the cooperation and learning between SGAs working in a country, which could contribute to improved design and greater operational effectiveness.

4.5 Lessons Learned

*What lessons from the interventions can inform Swedish reform cooperation and capacity development cooperation ahead?
(Evaluation question 5)*

This chapter draws primarily from the contribution analysis of the ten case studies (appendix 5). The contribution analysis explored the evidence collected through document, field and survey research methods, and for each case, identified factors which contributed to project outcomes.

The contribution factors draw from the conceptual model which was also used as a checklist for both the document review and for the structure of interviews. Interviews provided deeper and more nuanced analysis of the contributions to intervention success than can be presented in a simple analysis, and we try to capture some of that depth in the discussion here.

We compared ‘more’ and ‘less’ successful projects (Table 9) to explore which of the internal, external, positive and negative contribution factors are more associated with more or less successful projects.

The categorisation of projects in terms of success is intended only to inform lessons learned, rather than provide an absolute judgement on whether an intervention was successful. ‘Success’ was defined in terms of i) the extent to which capacity and performance improvements were observed, and ii) the strength of the likely contribution of the intervention to the improvements in capacity and performance.

Table 9 Summary of more and less successful projects

'More successful'	'Less successful'
AL JJ	AL ProTax
BIH CILAP	BIH Statistics
KS ProTax	KS Statistics
RS ENVAP	Reg IMPULS
RS SPAP	Reg Statistics

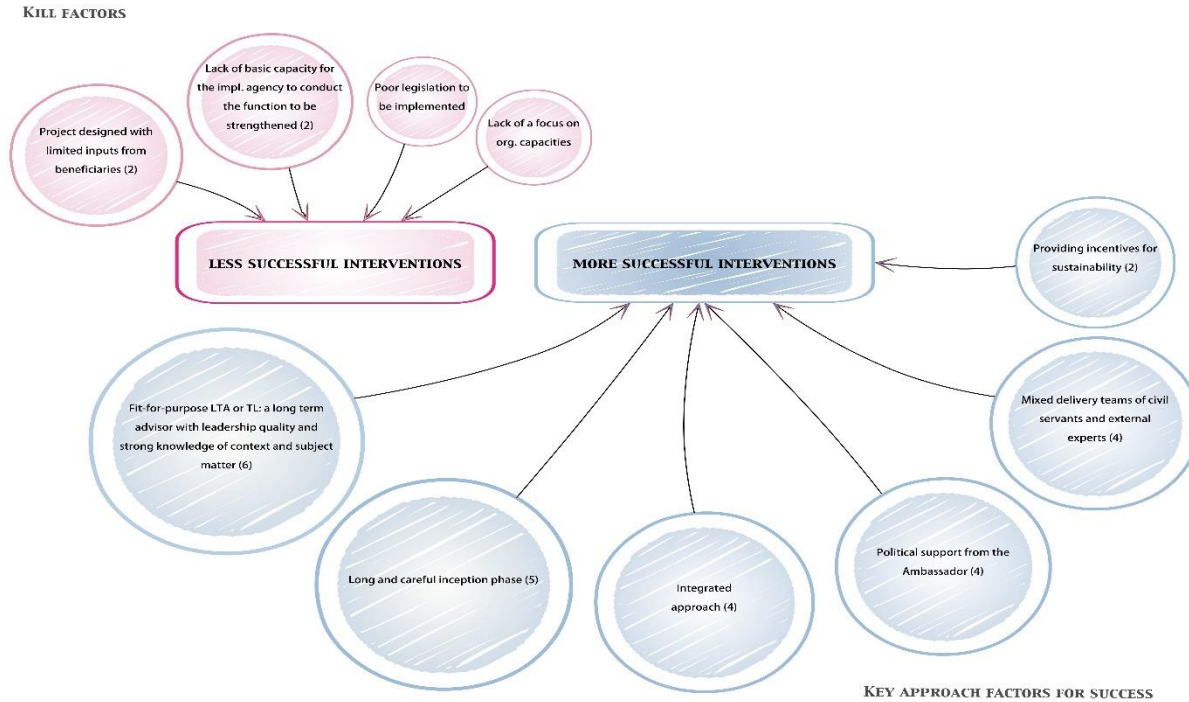
Below, we separate factors internal to the project logic, and external factors. Internal factors are typically within the control of authorities designing and implementing the projects and internal to the logic of change around which they designed the project. External factors have to be managed through influence rather than management control.

In between, there are also factors that are present as contribution factors in both more and less successful projects; similarly, there are preventing factors present also in both categories. These additional factors for which the evidence that they do not strongly contribute to project success is briefly discussed.

Appendix 6 sets out a summary of the contribution analyses, on which this section is based.

Figure 13 presents in graphical forms the most important factors, which are then explained in the section below.

Figure 13 Key contribution factors



4.5.1 Internal contributions to project success

The following were the factors most frequently identified as positive contributions to intervention results. We therefore suggest that they are likely critical factors for future project design and implementation, and therefore deserve careful attention from Sida and the SGAs.

Quality of long-term experts. The quality of the long-term expert was considered an important and key contributing factor to project success in all five of the more successful projects. Where the LTE was present in a country, it often enabled more rapid progress; he or she was able to solve problems more quickly, and, critically, the expert learned about the local context, how to work and what was appropriate. The degree to which the long-term expert was able to facilitate project progress often depended on their skills and experience, and whether they could function effectively in another culture and operating environment. A critical factor identified in the RS ENVAP intervention was that the long-term expert was not Swedish, but Lithuanian, and he had more relevant and recent experience of supporting a country's accession to the EU in the field of environment.

We conclude that presence is important, but not sufficient. Long term advisors were also present in two of the less successful projects. Therefore, quality of the LTE is a more important factor in determining success.

Inception phase and quality of design. All five of the more successful projects reported the inception phase as being critical contributions to intervention success. Longer inception phases enabled greater consultation between partners, study visits to explore options (eg for BiH CILAP), and crucially, greater partner commitment to project goals.

The more successful projects invested in in-depth inception and design phases that sought to understand the real issues facing the partner institutions, and to create a common understanding between both parties (partner and SGA) of the issues and their potential

solutions. Study visits and other joint activities played a useful role in opening up opportunities and providing examples of what ‘success’ looks like. The national partner agencies were key in this process – their leadership was closely involved in the design and selection of the solutions. As a result, the partner agencies in the more successful projects had greater commitment to project goals.

Supporting this finding, two less successful projects cited lack of input from partner agencies in the design as key constraints to project success.

The research found that a good design process was hard to realise. Time, financial and human resources are needed but not always available for longer design processes. Pressures are frequently present to shorten design and inception processes. Leadership of partner organisations may not be confident or knowledgeable enough to be able to embark on the design of a change process or may not have enough political support.

System-wide approach. Four of the more successful interventions had an explicitly system-wide approach, in which they sought to effect performance improvement across connected institutions, not focused only on individual agencies. Likewise, the absence of a system-wide approach was a constraining factor in two of the less successful interventions.

BiH CILAP and KS ProTax involved municipalities in the delivery of new functions and services as well as central government agencies, and sought to ensure that there were clear and defined arrangements for cooperation between central and local government. AL Juvenile Justice brought about change across the ‘chain of justice’, including police, social services, courts, penitentiary institutions and probation services.

The inability of the RS SPAP project to affect the court system reduced the overall impact of police reforms in forensic evidence gathering, for example. Statistics agencies in BiH and Kosovo experienced limited reforms supported by the respective Swedish interventions because they are both dependent on administrative statistics from other public services such as in healthcare and education. This was a bottleneck, because the other public services

were still highly reliant on labour-intensive manual collection of administrative data.

The system wide approach is more ambitious than single-agency approaches and likely harder to achieve, but the evidence from this research suggests that interventions that take such an approach experience greater contributions to agency performance improvement. We suggest that this is because performance of government agencies is frequently dependent on other institutions, and so reform has to be planned with this in mind.

Mixed delivery teams of civil servants and experts. Four of the more successful projects were implemented by dedicated teams made up of both civil servants and independent experts (AL JJ, BiH CILAP, RS ENVAP, RS SPAP). Less successful projects had exclusively external teams (KS ProTax) or no dedicated change management teams, relying instead on individuals to change their own work processes (BiH Statistics, KS Statistics).

Interview evidence suggests that the mixed teams had a number of advantages. The establishment of the team in itself required (and therefore implied) commitment to the planned changes from senior management. The involvement of civil servants meant the teams had firm roots, with knowledge and understanding of the partner agency and could therefore manage change processes appropriately. And the teams themselves developed knowledge of managing change, so the civil servants involved strengthened the agency's internal capacities for managing future changes. Mixed dedicated teams therefore contributed both to the effectiveness of the interventions, and to the sustainability of capacity and performance improvements.

Support from the embassy. Evidence from four of the more successful projects (BiH CILAP, KS ProTax, RS SPAP, RS ENVAP) suggests that the role of the embassy team is an important contributor to interventions' success. The positive contribution of the embassies was claimed in a number of ways:

- Involvement in project design, contributing to more ambitious objectives (including promoting and facilitating a systems-wide approach), and suggesting alternative modalities;

- Guiding design in terms of ensuring responsiveness to local political and institutional realities, helping international experts to understand the local context.
- Providing high level political support, typically from the Ambassador, to promote required legislation and conditionalities (eg KS ProTax), or to demonstrate international support for reforms (eg BiH CILAP).

The role of the embassy in initiating a project was contrasted with the alternative typical project initiation by personal contacts between professionals in respective Swedish and partner agencies. The former approach (eg BiH CILAP, KS ProTax) was more likely to deliver an intervention that had strong relevance and higher-level buy-in. The professional-to-professional initiation experienced strong trust and respect, but appeared to be less likely to effect more profound change. We can speculate that this is because in such professional respectful relationships, it is hard to probe and get to the root of organisational challenges, focusing instead on development of professional skills.

Embassies therefore play a key role in ensuring project goals are suitably ambitious, that the scope covers the right range of institutions, and that projects have sufficiently high-level political commitment from the partner countries.

Designing in incentives for sustainability. Two more successful interventions provided strong evidence that sustainability could be strengthened by designing in incentive mechanisms at the design stage (BiH CILAP and AL JJ). In contrast, one of the more successful programmes was facing a challenge for not having appropriate sustainability mechanisms in place (KS ProTax) at the end of the project. Less successful projects were closed without an exit strategy (BiH Statistics).

The BiH CILAP project ensured that a small proportion of revenues generated by municipalities from sales of the address register data went to the respective entity geodetic agencies. While revenues may not be sufficient to cover the costs of maintenance and development, it formally established a client-customer

relationship between geodetic agencies and municipalities which created the obligation to sustain the systems.

4.5.2 External contributions to project success

This section explores the contribution factors that were external to the projects and interventions, but nevertheless were frequently present in the more successful projects.

The reform was a priority or had the support of the partner government. All five more successful projects were clearly identified as priorities by the partner governments. There was evidence that senior politicians attended project events (BiH CILAP), and necessary primary and secondary legislation passed through the required procedures (KS ProTax, RS SPAP) with support from partner governments. In one of the less successful projects, this factor was also present, suggesting that it alone is not sufficient for project success. In one of the less successful projects, the rejection of the project approach by the partner government was a key constraining factor.

We conclude that partner government support is a very desirable condition for project success, and that this support, ideally, has to be explicitly in relation to: the overall aims of the project; the approach the project will take; the legal and structural reforms required; and any ongoing financial and institutional commitments beyond the project's lifetime.

Quality of the legislation to be implemented. In three of the more successful cases, project success was dependent on approval and implementation of new legislation (RS SPAP, KS ProTax, RS ENVAP). This legislation was developed by the partner governments in collaboration with the SGA interventions. The legislation in these cases was successful because it was developed with participation of experts from both SGAs and partner governments, as well as consideration of the realistic constraints and opportunities for implementation.

By implication, these external contribution factors are things that project funders and implementers should ensure are in place either

as project preconditions, or are key parts of the project communications and influencing strategies, to ensure they are present to support project success.

4.5.3 Other factors

The contribution analysis highlighted many other factors that were important contributors or constraints on project performance, but were not cited frequently enough to be highlighted in the above analysis. We list them here in brief to ensure a more complete record of the factors for consideration in intervention conception, design and implementation, while at the same time making it clear that the evidence from our research that they are important factors is not strong:

- Interventions work in parallel on multiple dimensions of organisational capacity, including people, processes, strategies and resources.
- Longer term partnerships were claimed to be a success factor in one case but are also present in the less successful interventions.
- Internalising findings from previous evaluation. This was cited as a contribution factor in one case.
- Capacity to mobilise a large number of experts. This was cited in one successful case, but on the other side, a large number of short-term missions was cited as a constraining factor, making support disjointed.
- Lack of political economy analysis was cited as a constraint for both successful and less successful projects. Suggesting this is desirable, but not clearly linked to project success. Such analysis may help further strengthen successful projects.
- Staff turnover was present as a constraining factor in both successful and less successful projects. This is likely a reality that all projects have to factor into design and implementation.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The focus of research on the Western Balkans means that the conclusions presented here have limited validity for contexts outside this geographical area. Specificities of the region, such as its EU accession perspective, are highly influential factors for institutional reforms that are not found elsewhere. Although we do not claim to be able to generalise these conclusions beyond the Western Balkans, we nevertheless hope that readers will find the report useful and stimulating and may find it relevant also in other contexts.

Swedish Central Government Authorities make a distinctive contribution to development cooperation, providing critical expertise related to the running of government operations, together with international development approaches. Overall, the SGAs' work in the Western Balkans has contributed to tangible improvements in the capacities and performance of partner agencies. Within the sample selection, there have been variations in the extent to which interventions have achieved capacity and performance improvement and the likelihood with which they contributed to improved quality of government.

The variations in interventions' performance have depended on a number of factors. Interventions that are selected to influence areas related to the EU's 'fundamentals first' agenda are more likely to contribute to the Western Balkans' EU accession prospects, though scale and significance also play a part. System-wide interventions, which address inter-linkages across agencies to improve overall performance have more impact and also appear likely to be more sustainable. The change management approach, such as the involvement of core civil servants in managing change processes is likely to lead to stronger implementation, sustainability and enhanced change management and continuous development capacities of the partner institutions. The long-term partnerships developed are advantageous in building trust and offering credible

capacity development support but need careful management so as not to lose strategic direction.

Perceptions of stakeholders confirm a view that the SGAs offer cost effective interventions, and that they are an effective modality for providing peer to peer knowledge and assistance. If there is a commitment to the future international development work of the SGAs, then measures need to be taken to enhance both the relevance and the effectiveness of their work.

The more successful interventions in our sample have gone well beyond the ‘twinning’ approach of peer-to-peer learning and sharing of experience. These successful interventions have been in effect change management projects in which the SGA has played the role of consulting partner and project manager.

These interventions have succeeded when the teams were equipped with advanced skills in relationship building, problem analysis, programme design and management of change. But these skills and knowledge have been available to the SGAs largely on the basis of chance, where talented and experienced people have been in the right place at the right time. SGAs are experiencing an increasing demand for their international services, and consequently their ability to deliver is being stretched.

The Swedish Government Authorities themselves are constrained by their funding models, some more than others, in the extent to which they can invest in staff development and the development of tools and methods for their international work, outside of specific projects.

The key skills and methods required for international development are in some ways significantly different to those required for their domestic work. For the SGAs to become more effective in their capacity building work, they need to invest in developing the international development skills and methods. Options include developing these resources internally and developing close partnerships with external international development specialists. Either way, SGAs would require core funding to invest in developing these resources.

The role of the Swedish embassies in SGA supported capacity development has also been seen to be instrumental in influencing performance of interventions. Embassies define scale and scope and help to establish project implementation arrangements and relationships. They bring knowledge of the local context and enable access and influence beyond the direct partner agency. They can also guide interventions to navigate the complexities of the local political economy. There exist also many opportunities for enhancing learning and effectiveness by sharing knowledge between Swedish authorities and other partners at the country level.

To ensure the future effectiveness of this form of international development support, Sida and the SGAs need to work closely together to invest in the future ability of the SGAs to respond to the demand for their services.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations have emerged from the field research and from subsequent discussions with key stakeholders. They are intended as guidance for future planning, and are directed to i) Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Sweden; ii) Swedish government authorities engaged in international development work – not only the five represented in this research; and iii) the Sida staff and other embassy staff based in the field.

To Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

1. The Swedish government authorities provide effective capacity building support for international development assistance, but are now facing increasing demands which are stretching their resources.

The distinctive contribution and capabilities of Swedish government authorities should be recognised and factored into strategic planning as a key component of development assistance. Strategic planning should recognise that SGAs require support, collaboration and funding models that go beyond the individual project level funding to enable them to

develop key skills and capabilities for their international development roles.

To Sida

2. Country level interventions are stronger when the initial selection and design is done in close cooperation by the embassy and the SGA.

Where project opportunities for capacity development of partner institutions are identified, **embassies and Sida should participate closely in the design process**, taking into account strengths and limitations of the SGAs, identifying additional complementary international development skills where necessary both for the design process, and as potential partners for implementation.

3. Interventions have more impact and sustainability when working with partners in their wider institutional systems.

At the design stage, **Sida should re-orient the agency-specific approach to capacity development towards integrated and system-wide approaches** that address institutional dependencies and interlinkages to enable improved performance and sustainability.

4. SGAs working at the country level have much to learn from each other, and from other Swedish-funded development actors.

Sida at the embassy level should support more opportunities for their development partners to share experience, cooperate and learn from each other.

To Swedish government authorities

5. There is a need for SGAs to more systematically develop the skills and capabilities to support international development work.

The SGAs should consider developing medium- to long-term development plans for their international capacity development work. These plans should address the i) needs for core technical staff to strengthen skills working in international settings, ii) how to meet the growing demand for their services, as well as iii) the capabilities of the international

departments to identify, design and deliver international development assistance.

To Sida and the Swedish government authorities

6. The SGAs are constrained in their ability to fund the core investments required to strengthen the international development capabilities.

Sida and the SGAs should work together to find solutions for supporting SGAs' core international development capabilities. Solutions may involve providing core funding in support of SGAs development plans, supporting partnerships with providers of international development expertise, supporting the SGAs' Network for Learning (N4L) with funding and an 'institutional home', and developing common guidelines and training resources, for example.

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Table of abbreviations

AIS	Agency for Information Society
AREC	Agency for the Real Estate Cadastre of the Republic of Macedonia
ASIG	National Authority for Geospatial Information in Albania
BHAS	Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina Sarajevo, including Branch Office in Brcko District
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CRA	Civil Registration Agency
CSI	Crime Scene Investigation
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DSIP	Directive Specific Implementation Plan
EAA	Economic Accounts for Agriculture
EC	European Commission
ECPR	European Commission Progress Report
ENVAP	Preparations for negotiations related to Serbia's EU accession process
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
EU-SILC	EU statistics on income and living conditions
FGA	Federal Administration for Geodetic and Real Property Affairs of FBiH
FIS	Institute for Statistics of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo
GARS	Republic Authority for Geodetic and Property Affairs of the Republic of Srpska
GDT	General Directorate of Taxation
GoA	Government of Albania
HR(M)	Human resource (management)
ILP	Intelligence Led Policing
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (EU)
IPRO	Immovable Property Central Registration Office of the Republic of Albania
JJ	Juvenile Justice
KAS	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
KCA	Kosovo Cadastral Agency
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LCS	Labour Cost Survey
LTA	Long-Term Advisor
MEF	Ministry of Finance, Kosovo
MEI	Ministry of European Integration, Serbia
MEP	Ministry of Environmental Protection
MESP	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Serbia
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
MFE	Ministry of Finance and Economy
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys

AIS	Agency for Information Society
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MPA	Ministry of Public Administration
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
NCIS	National criminal intelligence system
NPSD	Negotiating Position Support Document
NSDI	National Spatial Data Infrastructure
NSIs	National Statistical Institutes
NWS	National workshops
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSHEE	Electricity Corporation of Albania
PCO	Programme Coordination Office
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategies
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTIS	Property Tax Information System
QMS	Quality Management System
RBM	Results Based Management
RCP	Regional Cooperation Project
REA	Real Estate Administration of the Republic of Montenegro
RGZ	Republic Geodetic Authority of the Republic of Serbia
RSIS	Institute for Statistics of Republika Srpska, Banja Luka
SA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SAA	Stabilization Association Agreement
SCB	Statistics Sweden – Statistika centralbyrån
SGA	State Geodetic Administration of the Republic of Croatia
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SJV	Swedish Board of Agriculture
SKL	The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
SKV	Swedish Tax Agency - Skatteverket
SLG & OLG	Strategic/Operational logistics groups (ILP)
SOK	Statistical Office of Kosovo
SPA	Swedish Police Authority
SPAP	Swedish Police Assistance Programme
SPIK	Internal Time Reporting System
SS	State Secretary
SWG	Sector Working Group
Unicef	United Nations Children’s Fund
WB	World Bank

Appendix 2 - List of people met

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Agic	Mirza	BiH	Senior Advisor Environmental Statistics	BH Agency for Statistics
Ahmeti	Shemsi	Kosovo	Head of Property Tax	Municipality of Lipjan Tax Office
Alijagic- Dolovac	Danijela	BiH	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	Unicef
Ambrozic	Sanja	BiH	Assistant Director for Business Sector Statistics	FBiH Agency for Statistics
Andersson	Anne	Serbia	ENVAP Project Manager	Swedish EPA
Andersson	Ola	Serbia	Head of Development Cooperation	Swedish Embassy
Andersson	Veronica	Sweden		SCB
Aranitović	Nenad	Serbia	Chief of CSI department National Forensic Centre	MoI Forensic Centre
Atanasković Opačić	Sanja	Serbia	Head of the Group for International Cooperation and European Integration - deputy member	Office for cooperation with civil society
Avdic	Samka	BiH	Head of Department of Labour Market Statistics	FBiH Agency for Statistics
Avdiu	Valon	Kosovo	Senior Official – Department of SAA Economic Criteria	MEI – Ministry of European Integrations
Avignon	Antoine	Serbia	Attache, Programme manager environment	EUD

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Bahtanovic	Fuad	BiH	head of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Statistics Department	BH Agency for Statistics
Behic Bolic	Edina	BiH	Consultant in CILAP	FBiH Geodetic Agency FGA
Berggren	Mats	Serbia	Senior Police Advisor/SPAP III Program Coordinator	SPA
Berisha	Ilir	Kosovo	Director – Department of Economic Statistics	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Bilcar	Petar	BiH	Head, Department for Communal Affairs	City of Banja Luka
Bood	Fredrik	Sweden		SCB
Bozdo	Rajmonda	Albania	Executive Director	Tirana Legal Aid Society
Bukvic	Nedim	BiH	Program Officer	Swedish Embassy
Bunjaku	Nazmie	Kosovo	Property Tax Officer	Municipality of Novoberdo Tax Office
Cano	Drini	Kosovo and Albania	Legal Analyst	MF Property Tax Department
Cerkini	Agron	Kosovo	Project expert	MF Property Tax Department
Cokaj	Shpetim	Albania	Director at Dep of Civil Registration	MIA - Civil Registration
Damjanic	Dragana	BiH	Coordinator for project preparation, Department for Local Economic Development and Strategic Planning	City of Banja Luka
Dejanovic	Vedrana	BiH	Senior Officer for sample and analysis	RS Institute of Statistics

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Doci	Blerta	Albania	Head of Social Services Sector	Prison
Drufva	Anna	Sweden		SPA
Dučić	Jelena	Serbia	Head of biodiversity dpt, Deputy head of NG 27 WG	MEP
Dzebo	Nisveta	BiH	Assistant Director for Sector of Economic Statistics	FBiH Agency for Statistics
Edfast	Maja	Kosovo	First secretary – Swedish Embassy	Embassy of Sweden
Eskic	Aida	BiH	Senior associate in department for social sector (and gender focal point)	BH Agency for Statistics
Fisek	Selma	BiH	Senior Associate for Legal Affairs	FBiH Association of Municipalities
Fshazi	Tidita	Albania	National Officer	EU Office
Gashi	Agron	Kosovo	Policy Analyst	GAP Institute
Gashi	Kujtim	Kosovo	Head of Agency	Agency of Information Society
Geladze-Ekstedt	Nina	Sweden		Sida
Gerzina	Jelena	Serbia	External consultant	midterm review SPAP II and planning SPAP III
Gjermani	Linda	Albania	Programme Coordinator	Embassy of Sweden
Glušćević	Miodrag	Serbia	Head of the Department for Communal Issues	Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities
Hadzic	Sead	BiH	Geodetic Engineer for Survey	FBiH Geodetic Agency FGA
Halili	Jonida	Albania	Director of Taxation	Municipality of Tirana
Halimi	Teuta	Kosovo	Portfolio Manager	Unicef

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Hamza	Doruntina	Kosovo	ProTax Project Coordinator	MoF Property Tax Department
Hasic	Sejla	BiH	Senior Associate for Projects	FBiH Association of Municipalities
Hysi	Engjell	Albania	General Director	Albanian Probation Agency
Ibrahimi	Sazan	Kosovo	CEO	Association of Kosovo Municipalities
Imamovic	Nusreta	BiH	Head of Department, Indus. Cons. Energy	FBiH Agency for Statistics
Isakovic	Jasna	BiH	Head of Department for Sampling Design and Methodology	BH Agency for Statistics
Islami	Ramadan	Kosovo	Deputy Project Leader	GIZ
Ivanović	Sabina	Serbia	Head of NG27 WG	MEP
Jaensson	Carl-Magnus	Sweden		SCB
Jeremic	Dejan	BiH	CILAP Technical Assistant	CILAP - RS Geodetic Agency
Jögiste	Kadri	Kosovo	Project Leader	GIZ
Josipovic	Milena	BiH	Head of Department for Archive of Documentation and Digital Archive	RS Geodetic Agency
Jungic	Stojan	BiH	Head of Department for International Projects, CILAP Project Coordinator	RS Geodetic Agency
Karahasanovic	Mirjana	BiH	Senior Operations Officer	World Bank Group - Environment and Natural Resources
Karić	Ivan	Serbia	State Secretary (Chairman of the Negotiating Group CH27)	MEP

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Kezunovic	Svjetlana	BiH	Senior Officer in Labour Market Department	BH Agency for Statistics
Kita Kljucanin	Kletjon Slobodanka	Albania BiH	Deputy Mayor IMPULS project manager	Municipality of Korca FBiH Geodetic Agency FGA
Kocollari	Migena	Albania	Probation specialist	Probation
Kombi Koprancovic	Elina Stana	Albania BiH	Prosecutor Senior Officer for Environmental Statistics	Prosecution RS Institute of Statistics
Kosova	Adnand	Albania	Director of the Department of Studies, Inspections and Legal Affairs	Albanian Prosecution Authority
Kostadinović	Nenad	Serbia	Criminal Police Directorate, Service for criminal intelligence affairs. ILP programme manager	MoI Police Directorate
Krasniqi	Isa	Kosovo	Head of Agency	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Kujic	Djordje	BiH	Head of Department for Cadastre	RS Geodetic Agency
Kuko	Romina	Albania	Deputy Minister of the Interior	Ministry of Interior
Kundrotas	Arunas	Serbia	Team Leader, ENVAP Project coordinator	Swedish EPA
Kurtishi	Shar	Kosovo	Independent Consultant	
Leijkvist	Lars	Kosovo	Tax Sweden Director	Tax Sweden
Leskovac	Sasa	BiH	Advisor	Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Lika	Ersenta	Albania	Lawyer at Local Taxes and Tariffs	Municipality of Durres
Lutteman	Max	Sweden		SPA
Macanović	Vanja	Serbia	Coordinator	Autonomni Ženski Centar
Malasi	Myfarete	Albania	Statistic Specialist at Local Taxes and Tariffs	Municipality of Durres
Maria Johansson	Anna	Kosovo	Tax Sweden Expert	Tax Sweden
Mathiasson	Ulf	Kosovo and Albania	Tax Sweden Expert	Tax Sweden
Mato	Orland	Albania	Coordinator for the right of information	ASIG
Mehaj	Ermal	Kosovo and Albania	IT Architect	MF Property Tax Department
Mehic	Fehrija	BiH	Head of Department of Agri-forestry, fisheries and environment	FBiH Agency for Statistics
Meko	Silvana	Albania	Property Tax Expert	Former USAID
Mijatovic	Srdjan	BiH	Head of Department, Department for Local Economic Development and Strategic Planning	City of Banja Luka
Milanković	Dejan	Serbia	Acting coordinator in General Police Directorate, ILP Program Manager,	MoI Police Directorate
Milojević	Marina	Serbia	Waste management dpt, Member of NG27 WG	MEP
Milošević	Nemanja	Serbia	IMG Project Manager	IMG

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Mita	Kostjel	Albania	Project Coordinator	MF Property Tax Department
Mitrović	Vladimir	Serbia	Head of Section for EU cooperation	Mol
Morina	Fatmir	Kosovo	Director – Department of National Accounts	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Morina	Shkelzen	Kosovo	Director of Property Tax Department	MF Property Tax Department
Nešović	Svetlana	Serbia	Mol/Police Programme cooperation officer	Swedish Embassy
Ninic	Bojan	BiH	Head of Department for Maintenance of KN	RS Geodetic Agency
Öberg	Jonas	Sweden		SPA
Osmani	Arben	Kosovo	Senior Software Developer	Civil Registration Agency
Osmani	Valdete	Serbia	Governance Advisor	OSCE
Pajer	Leonetta	Serbia	Chief of Operations section I	EUD
Perici	Marcello	Serbia	Project manager, JHA sector	EUD
Perović	Slobodan	Serbia	Assistant Minister for Strategic planning and projects and Director of ENVAP project	MoEnvironmentProtection
Pourghazian	Nasrin	Kosovo	Head of Development	Embassy of Sweden
Progonati	Alfred	Albania	Prosecutor	Prosecution
Qeleshi	Joana	Albania	Chief Judge Durres	Courts

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Qevani	Bajrush	Kosovo	Director – Department of Agricultural Statistics	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Racic	Jelena	BiH	Head of Unit for Commercial, communal and expert affairs, Department for Communal Affairs	City of Banja Luka
Radic	Marijana	BiH	Senior Officer for II Instance Procedures	RS Geodetic Agency
Radojković	Zvezdan	Serbia	Assistant Police Director	MoI Police Directorate
Radulović	Dragana	Serbia	Head of climate change mitigation dpt, Head of NG27 WG	MEP
Redžić	Nebojša	Serbia	Head of department	Serbian EPA
Reutersward	Ida	Serbia	Environment and Climate Cooperation programme Officer	Swedish Embassy
Rexhepaj	Edona	Kosovo	Head - Division of National Accounts	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Rexhepi	Naime	Kosovo	Head - Division for Social Statistics	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Ristić	Ida	Serbia	Head of Project Mnagement Department	MoInterior
Rrustemi	Ibrahim	Kosovo	Director – Department of Policies, Planning, Coordination and Communication	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Ruiz	Sara	Sweden		SPA
Rydén	Anders	Sweden		Lantmäteriet

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Sammar	Muhanad	Kosovo	Project Manager in Sweden	Statistics Sweden
Saranovic	Radosav	BiH	Deputy Director	RS Institute of Statistics
Schmidt	Sybille	Albania	Programme Manager - Public Financial Management	EU Office
Selimi	Luljeta	Kosovo	Senior Officer for Health Statistics	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Selimi	Samir	Kosovo	Portfolio Manager	EU Office
Selimovic	Asmira	BiH	Head of Department for Statistical Methods and Coordination	FBiH Agency for Statistics
Senkal	Asli	Kosovo	Public Finance Specialist	World Bank
Šerović	Radmila	Serbia	Head of Waste management, Head of NG27 WG	MEP
Shkurti	Emira	Albania	JJ Specialist	Unicef
Sigurdsson	Bjarni	Kosovo and Albania	Tax Sweden Expert	Tax Sweden
Sikima	Dijana	BiH	Programme Officer	EU Delegation
Söderblom	Hans	Sweden		Lantmäteriet
Spahia	Linda	Albania	Programme Manager	IMF
Sperlić	Sandra	Serbia	Head of Department for EU integration & Secretary of the Negotiating Group CH27)	MEP
Stafsing	Cecilia	Serbia	Senior Advisor ENVAP	Swedish EPA
Stankovic	Jelena	BiH	Senior Officer for Managing International Projects, Funds and Donations	RS Geodetic Agency

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Sufaj	Fehmi	Albania	Deputy Director	Albanian Prison Agency
Supic	Tamara	BiH	Junior Officer in Department for environment, energy and regional statistics	BH Agency for Statistics
Svitlic	Stanko	BiH	Assistant Director for UTKC (?)	RS Geodetic Agency
Tabucic	Denis	BiH	Expert Advisor, Project Manager	Federation BiH Geodetic Authority
Tesic	Biljana	BiH	Senior Officer for Household Budget Survey	RS Institute of Statistics
Thaci	Shemsedin	Kosovo	Head of Property Tax	Municipality of Pristina Tax Office
Tomic	Tomislav	BiH	Expert Advisor for Cadastre	FBiH Geodetic Agency FGA
Ulaj	Ramiz	Kosovo	Director – IT and Methodology	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
Vasić	Tanja	Serbia	SPA Gender advisor in SPAP	SPA
Vocaj	Tonin	Albania	Director of Department of Criminal Investigations	Police
Vučetić	Darko	Serbia	Regional Land Project Steering Committee member and National coordinator	Republic Geodetic Authority
Vuklisevic	Biljana	BiH	International Relations Contact Person	RS Institute of Statistics
Vukotić Djurić	Sandra	Serbia	Deputy senior advisor SPAP III	SPA
Vuković	Gordana	Serbia	Assistant Head of HR Sector	Mol
Westman	Ulrik	Sweden		Swedish EPA
Wikner	Veronica	Sweden		SCB

Last name	First name	Country	Position	Organisation
Xhangolli	Almir	Albania	Inspector in the Juvenile Section	Probation
Zec	Vladan	Serbia	Forensic Program Manager, Deputy Head of National Forensic Center	Mol Forensic Centre
Zelic	Jelena	BiH	CILAP Consultant for FGA	FBiH Geodetic Agency FGA
Zeneli	Isuf	Kosovo	Municipal Performance Department Officer	Ministry of Local Government Administration
Zeqo	Altin	Albania	ProTax Manager and Director of Property Tax - MF	MF Property Tax Department
Zhurka	Ilir	Albania	Specialist, JJ and DV sector,	Police
Zimic	Andja	BiH	CILAP Project Director	Lantmäteriet
Živanović	Maja	Serbia	SPA Project Assistant	SPA
Živković	Bogoljub	Serbia	Assistant Police Director	Ministry of Interior/Police Directorate
Zymeri	Bedri	Kosovo	Director Statistics Department	Central Bank of Kosovo

Appendix 3 – SGAs active in the Western Balkans 1998-2018

Name of Authority	Expenditure (SEK)	No. contracts
Statistics Sweden (SCB)	366,673,628	33
Swedish Police Authority (SPA, Polismyndigheten)	221,659,110	39
Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA, Naturvårdsverket)	209,108,439	22
The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority (Lantmäteriet)	131,214,818	14
The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB)	74,334,674	18
The Swedish Chemicals Agency (KEMI)	64,428,617	10
The Swedish National Financial Management Authority	52,479,587	6
The Swedish Tax Agency (Skatteverket)	49,961,831	11
The Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket)	43,434,680	12
Swedish National Audit Office (SNAO)	40,481,651	23
The Swedish Social Insurance Agency	24,975,833	2
The Swedish Prison and Probation Service	22,937,117	5
The Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment (Swedac)	22,029,779	8
The Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen)	17,296,956	5
The Swedish National Courts Administration	14,745,070	7
Swedish Forest Agency	5,476,055	2
The Swedish Prosecution Authority	4,264,945	1
The Swedish Armed Forces	1,782,976	3
The Swedish Maritime Administration	1,086,369	1
The Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI)	369,514	1
The county administrative board (Dalarna)	226,795	1
The Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA)	139,533	1
The Swedish Transport Administration	81,374	1
TOTALS	2196,712	226

Appendix 4 – Methodological explanation

The research for this evaluation aimed both to generate a greater understanding of the role and effects of Swedish government authorities' work, and to generate lessons learned and recommendations that are relevant, realistic and timely.

In order to achieve this, the methodology had to be robust enough to generate data that would be relevant to the MFA, Sida and all Swedish government authorities active in the Western Balkan countries – and possibly wider. The interpretation of findings – making sense of the data – needed to be rooted in participation and consultation to ensure relevance and meaning for the institutions involved.

As noted above, the scope of work of the Swedish government authorities in the Western Balkans has been broad and long lasting.

The evaluation team has responded to these challenges and designed an evaluation that:

- Theory-based
- Based on selection of a sample of interventions for in-depth study
- Multi-method: combining outcome harvesting, contribution analysis, and thematic analysis; and
- Participatory.

Conceptual framework

Across all interventions, there were some common features, but no explicitly stated common theory of change. The common features included:

- Partnership between similar institutions – Swedish and Serbian police, Swedish and Kosovo statistics agencies, Swedish tax agency and Albanian ministry of finance, and so on.
- Long-term engagement, often up to 10 years or more in successive phases.

- Focus on capacity development and improving the performance of the Western Balkan partner institutions.
- Financed by Sida through the respective Swedish embassies – except for regional projects, which were financed via Sida in Stockholm.

The evaluation team developed a model which aimed to capture the key elements of SGA interventions, and which would provide a framework for research (on the next page). The model is based on the elements of the programme logics found in the available programme documentation, as well as drawing from the team's own experience of design, implementation and evaluation of capacity development programmes.

The conceptual model seeks to identify and represent the range of variables that might affect the Swedish interventions and their ultimate contributions to the intended improvements in government performance, and is flexible and high-level enough to cover all ten case studies, which themselves follow context-specific conceptual models.

There are nine sets of variables collected into three groups:

- **Contextual factors:** the contextual factors and influences beyond the selected interventions themselves. These capture key elements of the environment and were used as potential explanatory factors for understanding the choices made by the Swedish actors during the process of intervention design and implementation, and as contextual information which inform judgements about external contribution factors in the contribution analysis.
- **Intervention:** these elements are the factors that determine the shape of the intervention: how it was selected, designed and delivered. The configuration of interventions components was the primary basis for answering evaluation questions 3 and 4 on cost effectiveness and coordination, and also used as possible explanatory factors for the change captured under questions 1 and 2.

- **Results:** The logic model assumes a linear contribution relationship: that interventions contribute first to agency capacity improvements. These in turn lead to agency performance improvements, and any agency level performance improvements may contribute to overall governance performance improvements. This linear assumption allowed the evaluation team to explore these changes as discrete elements, and to identify evidence of the conditions that enabled changes seen at one step to contribute to the next. The results components of the model were the primary focus for answering evaluation questions 1 and 2.

The bullet points below the intervention and results are indicative checklists of the sorts of factors that need to be examined and explored – though these were considered neither definitive nor exhaustive.

The model was elaborated to include checklists under each of the stages, which were intended to provide guidance for the research to explore the factors which were considered to be important. The selection of these factors was crucial to the robustness of the evaluation findings. They needed to be simple and clear enough to be able to define the research questions for desk and field, comprehensive enough to cover the most likely range of important factors, and flexible enough to respond to changes emerging from desk and field evidence. The checklists were derived from the team's experience and reference models (described in more detail in in Appendix 4).

The conceptual model therefore identified and represented the range of variables that potentially affected the way in which – and extent to which – design and delivery of interventions contributed to outcomes.

The lists of key factors shown in the diagram below are derived from, variously:

- Selection, design and delivery:
 - The team's prior knowledge and experience of institution building processes and evaluation

- The OECD DAC development assistance evaluation criteria⁶¹
- Project cycle management tools and guidelines⁶²
- Agency capacity improvements:
 - The McKinsey 7 ‘S’ model, to inform research into organisation change and agency level capacity development⁶³. This was selected as a capacity model for its relative simplicity, familiarity and the focus on more readily tangible dimensions of organisation that both reports and interviewers could readily identify. More sophisticated models of organisation more closely linked to international development, such as Morgan Baser 2008 “Capacity, Change and Performance Study Report” by Heather Baser and Peter Morgan were rejected because the concepts were seen as too nuanced for easy cross-cultural communication. We do, however, subscribe to the Morgan/Baser definitional distinction between capacity and performance: “...capacity is a potential state. It is elusive and transient. It is about latent as opposed to kinetic energy. Performance, by comparison, is about execution and implementation, or the application and use of capacity. It is this concept that provides the basis for the assumption that capacity improvements are intended to lead to performance improvements.
- Agency performance improvements:
 - Performance was seen as unique to the particular functions of the agency, so assessment depends on agency level performance indicators (not necessarily the same as the projects’ indicators of achievement), as well as stakeholders’ perceptions of the changes in agency performance.

Finally, the assessment of **governance performance improvements** required a slightly different approach. There are many ways of defining governance performance, including, for

⁶¹ OECD 2019.

⁶² Eg Örtengren, Kari, 2016.

⁶³ Waterman et al, 1980.

example, the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators.⁶⁴ However, the SGA financial contribution in the sample countries as a proportion of government expenditure is around 0.02% or less, so the SGA contribution is likely too small to be able to trace significant contributions at all-of-government scale, even if well targeted.⁶⁵

A potentially more productive and informative approach is to examine the sample interventions through the lens of the 'Quality of Government' approach. Rothstein and Tannenbaum's "Making Development Work: the Quality of Government Approach" argues that the quality of public institutions, and in particular, the impartiality with which they exercise their functions, is the driving factor for improving human wellbeing; more so than economic development or democracy – the other common factors that are seen as the keys to development. They argue that, "if the main goal is to promote human well-being, increasing support for the quality of government and the capacity of the public administration would be more justified" [than promoting democracy]. This argument does not suggest that democracy is not a good thing, but rather that the path to building strong democracy is through strengthening public institutions rather than the democratic process.⁶⁶

The key attribute that Rothstein and Tannenbaum repeatedly highlight is *impartiality* in the delivery of government. Impartiality is seen as the 'opposite of corruption', and the quality of government problem is attributed to problems in the social contract between citizen and government. Consequently, improvements in five key areas strengthen the quality of government: a functioning system of taxation; universal education; meritocracy; gender equality; and national auditing.⁶⁷

The final box of the conceptual model therefore references the 'Quality of Government' approach as a basis on which to assess the

⁶⁴ <https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/#home>

⁶⁵ Calculated from the example of Serbia, Government expenditure 2012 (World Bank data), and average annual budget for SGAs in Serbia over the period 2009-2017.

⁶⁶ Rothstein and Tannenbaum 2014 p97.

⁶⁷ Rothstein and Tannenbaum 2014 pp87-96.

contribution of the case study interventions to the overall governance performance improvements. Contribution to EU accession prospects is an additional consideration, dealt with by a specific evaluation question.

The conceptual model therefore identifies and represents the range of variables that potentially affect the way in which – and extent to which – design and delivery of interventions contribute to outcomes. This model proved to be flexible and high-level enough to cover a sample of ten unconnected interventions by five different agencies in four countries, while at the same time providing a consistent framework for research questions and comparison across the sample.

Sample selection

The potential scope of interventions defined in the terms of reference – actions since 1998 and across all 6 countries of the Western Balkans – was too wide to be practical.⁶⁸ In order to populate the model with evidence, the team needed to delve deeply into the design, implementation and results of specific interventions.

To be manageable, it was necessary to make limitations in scope, and within this scope to select a sample of interventions for research. An ‘intervention’ for this research was considered a project or a set of projects that naturally fit together. For example, a series of two or three phases of a programme was counted as one intervention, and these might be made up of a number of discrete contracts.

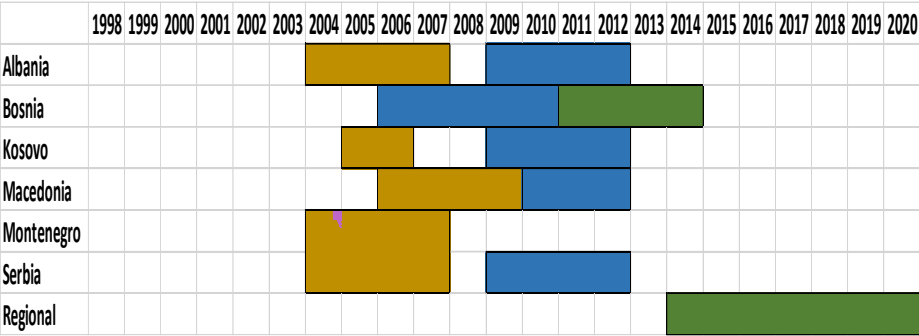
At the inception stage all relevant interventions were mapped which corresponded to the wider scope set in the terms of reference. This was used to identify a manageable sample of interventions for in-depth review that was representative of main dimensions of variation that had possible implications for results, without being

⁶⁸ See Appendix 3 for a list of all SGAs mapped 1998-2018. SEK 1.37 billion and 226 contracts mapped over the period.

statistically significant. The steps leading to the sample selection were as follows:

1. The **timeframe** for study was narrowed to the period 2009—2018 to reduce the risk that key documents, stakeholders and informants would not be available. The chosen period was still significant, providing both a longer-term perspective while at the same time giving a good chance of collecting sufficient data. The period also corresponds to relevant strategy periods for Swedish development cooperation in the region. As illustrated by Figure 5, three countries had strategies that started in 2009. The remaining two had strategies that started in 2010 and 2011 respectively. The regional results strategy runs from 2014—2020. The selected sample covers programmes from 2008 and includes interventions that were still under way at the time of the field visits. We were able to look at both completed interventions and the consequent longer-term effects, as well as at interventions in process – and so explore the current issues related to implementation, management, and future planning.

Figure 14 Swedish bilateral and regional results strategies for Western Balkans, 1998—2020



2. Four **countries** were chosen which had seen most activity by Swedish government authorities – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia. Montenegro and North Macedonia were excluded since both countries had seen limited activity during the selected period. Regional projects were also included in the sample to provide a complementary perspective.

3. Five **authorities** were selected for study. These provide the widest coverage of Swedish investments in capacity development. The mapping showed that seven authorities account for around 93% of the total Swedish investment in the region through SGAs. Of these seven, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) activities focused primarily on emergency response, not host agency capacity building, and was therefore excluded from the study. The National Audit Office (NAO) falls under the jurisdiction of Parliament and not Government, and so is not within the mandate of the EBA. This left five authorities, which cover a sufficient range of thematic interventions – tax, land administration, environment, justice sector and statistics. The selected themes per country fall within priorities highlighted in results strategies and strategy reports and were vetted in dialogue with Sida staff in the various embassies/units.
4. The selected sample allowed for **comparability of results**. In order to help disentangle factors connected to the context from factors connected to the agency, the evaluation team included in the sample at least two interventions in the same country by different authorities and two projects by the same agency in at least two different countries. Environment was the only exception, because it had only one significant intervention where a Swedish authority was involved during the time-period. Environment is however a thematic area that is especially prioritised in the current regional results strategy, and so was included additionally.
5. **Additional dimensions**. The proposed selection also covers activities that are implemented in collaboration between more than one Swedish Agency (police in Albania/Property tax in Kosovo). The proposed selection also includes activities where different authorities are leading in the same thematic area in different countries (e.g. property tax: Lantmäteriet in Albania and the Tax Office in Kosovo)

Based on the above process, ten interventions were selected as the study sample, shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Sample of interventions

Location	Name and dates of intervention	Lead authority	Supporting authorities	Budget million SEK
Albania	ProTax 2018–2020	Swedish Tax Agency – Skatteverket (SKV)	Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority	36.3
Albania	Juvenile Justice 2015–2020	Swedish Police SPA	Swedish National Court Administration Swedish Prosecution Authority Prosecutor General of Sweden Swedish Prison and Probation Service	28.5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Partnership in Statistics 2007–2015	Statistics Sweden (SCB)		37.0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Capacity for Improvement of Land Administration and Procedures (CILAP) 2013–2019	Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority		58.2
Kosovo	Swedish Support to Statistics development 2008–2017	Statistics Sweden (SCB)	Swedish Board of Agriculture	79.0
Kosovo	ProTax 2008–2020	Swedish Tax Agency	Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority	82.0

Location	Name and dates of intervention	Lead authority	Supporting authorities	Budget million SEK
Serbia	Environment Accession Project (ENVAP) 2011–2019	Swedish National Environment Protection Agency		53.4
Serbia	Swedish Police Assistance Programme (SPAP) 2010–2018	Swedish Police Authority (SPA)		91.9
Regional	Regional Statistics Programme 2008–2016	Statistics Sweden (SCB)		58.8
Regional	IMPULS 2014–2019	Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority		39.0
TOTAL	10			564.1

The selected sample provides a reasonable coverage of the total population. Table 11 presents a comparison between the population of interventions included in the evaluation scope and the evaluation sample. The sample includes more than half of all Swedish investment through the modality in the Western Balkans, more than half of authorities involved when the number of authorities is weighted by percentage of the modality investment that they delivered, 66% of the region's countries but 85% of the region's population.

Table 11 Relationship between population and sample

	Total Swedish support	Sample	Coverage
Total value of Swedish investment	SEK 1.1 billion ⁶⁹	SEK 564 million	51.3%
N of authorities involved	20	7	35%
% of total covered by the chosen authorities	100	53	53%
N of countries	6	4	66%
Population in the 6 countries	17,722,992	15,017,689	85%

The selected sample interventions were overall typical of the range of interventions supported by Swedish government authorities in the Western Balkans. All selected SGAs worked with their equivalent counterpart organisations in the Western Balkans. The Swedish Police, for example, worked with the Serbian Police and its responsible Ministry of Interior. Statistics Sweden worked with the partner national Statistics Agencies of Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Swedish Land Agency worked with the geodetic agencies of Bosnia and Herzegovina (and other Western Balkans countries' geodetic agencies for the regional project).

All interventions involved peer-to-peer learning at their core. This is the basis of the 'twinning' idea; that professionals in different countries can learn from each other especially on the assumption that one country is more developed than another, or more advanced in implementing reforms, new technologies, and common legislation and so on. The learning components often consisted of training workshops, in which visiting experts from Sweden would provide training support to their counterparts. There were other configurations of learning too, including support for on the job training, mentoring and coaching, and support from external consultants for specialised tasks.

All projects also aimed to achieve performance improvements in the partner institution, although they varied in the extent to which

⁶⁹ Extracted from IATI d-portal.org March 2019.

these performance improvements were explicitly defined, and in their assumptions about how such changes can be achieved.

Six of the ten sample projects had explicit objectives that aimed to achieve performance improvements across a number of institutions – not only the main partner agency.⁷⁰ These projects set out from the beginning to establish and implement new systems that would be managed and delivered by the institutions involved.

The sampling criteria focuses on being relevant in terms of capturing the SGAs and countries where Sweden has invested the more.

Data collection

Evidence for the evaluation findings was drawn from an analysis of existing documentation, primary field research that was undertaken from May to July 2019 and an online survey in August 2019.

The desk study was conducted using a template based on the conceptual model; data was extracted from documentation to identify as far as possible the nature of each variable in the interventions. Documents available included programme designs, progress reports, and evaluations as well as steering committee minutes and other ad hoc documentation. Together these documents gave a rich picture of each intervention, its selection, design and delivery, and evidence of capacity change and performance change. In rare cases, there was also documentary evidence of contribution to overall government performance. Desk research also drew from more general analysis and data to develop an understanding of context, including, for example, other donors' contributions and government policies.

The result of the desk study was a set of evidence for each of the ten interventions, with identified gaps and questions for further (field) research.

⁷⁰ Albania Juvenile Justice and ProTax, BiH CILAP, Kosovo ProTax, Serbia ENVAP and SPAP.

Field research was conducted in May to July 2019, including visits to Sweden, Serbia, Kosovo, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina. For each of the field visits, two members of the team conducted most of the interviews together, and the pair configuration varied for each visit – meaning that each member of the team had a chance to work with each of the others. This provided a means to ‘calibrate’ field findings and reduce the risk of confirmation bias.

The decision to look at two interventions in each country, and two interventions from each SGA was also intended to provide a means for reasoned comparison.⁷¹ By looking at two interventions in the same country, it was possible to see variations between authorities that were independent of the political, economic and institutional context. Similarly, by looking at two projects from the same authority in different countries it was possible to explore the systematic or consistent factors particular to that authority. The ability to compare approaches between authorities proved a particularly powerful way to identify lessons learned.

The online survey for the cost-effectiveness question was conducted in July - August 2019, and this elicited 117 responses from informants from the SGAs, partner government institutions, Sida, Swedish embassies and CSOs involved in the sample interventions. Just under a half of respondents were from the partner governments, and 51% were female.

Data analysis methods

Outcome harvesting.

Outcome harvesting collects (“harvests”) evidence of what has changed (“outcomes”) and, then, in MDF approach, combines with

⁷¹ In the end it was not possible to have a sample that included two interventions from each agency. Only one intervention from the Environment agency and Swedish police service were included in the sample.

contribution analysis for working backwards to determine whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes.

Outcome Harvesting has proven to be especially useful in complex situations when it is not possible to predefine what change will look like. The outcome(s) can be positive or negative, intended or unintended, direct or indirect. Outcome level changes that are captured need to be evidence based (i.e. objectively verifiable or substantiated by more than one source) while the connection between the intervention and the outcomes should be plausible.

Outcome Harvesting took place according to the steps in the diagram below.

Figure 15 Steps in outcome harvesting



This research has used outcome harvesting as depicted in Figure 15 for steps 1 to 4. Under step 1, the research has used the intervention model to identify the outcome areas to guide the harvest: changes in the organizational and individual capacity of partner government agencies, changes in their performance, and changes in the quality of government.

Following step 4, the triangulation of the outcomes, the research has connected outcome harvesting with contribution analysis as described in the explanation of how it used contribution analysis (below in this same chapter).

Cost-effectiveness benchmarking

We approached the analysis of cost-effectiveness following the meta-analytical framework proposed by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation in “Tools and Methods for Evaluating the Efficiency of Development Interventions” as a guide to choosing methods for evaluating efficiency.⁷²

This paper maps the available methods for the analysis of efficiency by their analytic power (and additional criteria such as the analysis requirements in terms of data, time and skills, its participatory character, etc...), and distinguish three levels of efficiency analysis:

- Level 2, the most potent, is capable of assessing the efficiency of an aid intervention so that it can be compared with alternatives or benchmarks. Level 2 supports the selection of interventions
- Level 1 is capable of identifying the potential for efficiency improvements within aid interventions. Level 1 analyses primarily help to improve interventions operationally
- Finally, level 0 analysis is entirely descriptive and can usually not produce well-founded recommendations. For this level of analysis, recognising the limitations of the findings is critical to avoid proceeding with actions under a misconception of the evidence basis.

The proposed approach to cost-effectiveness aims to cover all major costs and benefits of the projects under review and compare them with alternative ways of delivering the support, which is the definition given for level 2 analysis. Nevertheless, it does not reach level 2 because of a key limitation: the survey does not provide respondents an explicit list of project costs and benefits to be

⁷² Palenberg, M., 2011.

balanced, but relies on stakeholders' knowledge of the intervention for the benefits and real costs.

The evaluation approach proposes a partial mitigation to this limitation, which places it somewhere between level 1 and 2, still able to propose insights for intervention selection but a lower level of certainty and granularity and remaining essentially qualitative, even if ratings are based on numerical scales.

The survey that embodies the evaluation's main approach to cost-effectiveness has followed face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions, where respondents discussed project benefits through the outcome harvesting methodology. The survey reminded respondents of the intervention aims and costs and prompted them to consider all benefits that they might be aware of and compare with other interventions they encounter in their professional life.

More importantly, the survey included respondents that, together, have seen the entirety of an intervention's benefits and costs and a range of relevant comparable interventions, even if no respondent, alone, has seen that total picture. The survey included:

- Intervention beneficiaries in the Western Balkans, who are managers and staff in the central government of their countries. Respondents ranged from the operational level to top management positions, granting them a view on the actual benefits that the project created for their organizations and work, and, likely, costs and results of other interventions that supported their organizations (for example, in Albania, the survey included front-line probation officers, the Chief Judge of Dures, and the General Director of the Albanian Probation Agency);
- Swedish Authorities' staff, who manage the projects under evaluation and, often, other similar projects in the same or other countries;
- Swedish Embassies' project coordinators, who manage projects by Swedish actors across modalities, therefore having close knowledge of costs and achievements from other modalities in the same context;

- External stakeholders that are, often, from alternative delivery modalities themselves (for example, in Albania, the survey included programme managers from Unicef, local civil society, and the EU Delegation).

This stakeholder-based method has the advantage that the analysis is not based on the perspective of a single person, but takes into account triangulated opinions and preferences. Incentives for particular respondents to respond not truthfully are present, but balance out in average results.

The survey also included a set of questions on the underlying reasons for perceived high or low cost-effectiveness so that it could lead to concrete leads for improving the cost-effectiveness of an intervention.

Table 12 shows how survey respondents are divided by category, with the majority being staff or managers in Partner Governments. Respondents from the Swedish Government are balanced by stakeholders not directly involved in the project, such as NGOs, private entities, and international organizations).

Table 12 Overview of survey respondents

Respondent type	% of respondents
Government (national, entity/ provincial or local) from a country in the Western Balkans	47.9%
Embassy of Sweden and/or Sida in a Western Balkans country	10.3%
Swedish Government Authority either in Sweden or in a Western Balkans country	19.7%
NGO / private entity	8.6%
Other	13.7%
N = 117	100.0%

The views of stakeholders were collected using an online survey, conducted using the Survey Monkey platform in July/August 2019. In total, 117 people responded (a response rate of 78%), of which 51% were female.

We have then triangulated the survey's results with a thematic analysis of key informant interviews and an a budget analysis of available financial information.

Contribution analysis

Evaluation questions 1 and 2 are causal questions formulated in terms of contribution to results. They ask the evaluator for an evidence-based judgment on whether the support provided by Sweden is among the likely causes of changes in capacity and performance of partner agencies and of progress towards meeting criteria for EU accession.

As the evaluation questions focus on contribution, we have chosen to adopt a causal realist perspective. It considers causation a fundamental feature of the world rather than something to be reduced to a more fundamental reality (as for example counterfactual dependency or correlation covered by laws).⁷³ It also points the evaluation to consider the intervention as a non-sufficient cause among many other non-sufficient causes, which together can be sufficient in the particular case for bringing about change.⁷⁴ This focus on causation as real but diluted in a configuration of non-necessary causes has important implications for what methods of data collection and analytical steps are admissible.

Because causation is real, it follows that people informed of the intervention can perceive causation when this is operating. This justifies the admissibility of direct stakeholders' accounts of what contribution factors they have seen operating. Clearly, respondents are still fallible in their analytical insights and sometimes prone to be not truthful, but this is a limitation that triangulation can address rather than a fundamental flaw barring them as source of causal information.

The threshold of confidence for judging that the intervention was one of the non-necessary causes is also somewhat lower than for judging whether the change would not have happened without the intervention (aka the necessary condition). It amounts to reviewing that there is a pathway of smaller steps plausibly connecting the intervention to the change and ruling out that any other factor is alone sufficient for change.

⁷³ Beebee, et al, 2009.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Following these two key insights, John Mayne codified a way of conducting contribution analysis in a six steps process:⁷⁵

1. Set out the attribution problem to be addressed
2. Develop a theory of change and risks to it
3. Gather the existing evidence on the theory of change
4. Assemble and assess the contribution story, and challenges to it
5. Seek out additional evidence
6. Revise and strengthen the contribution story.

In evaluation question 1, the evaluation team has followed the John Mayne approach to the analysis of causation as real in the world, perceptible by stakeholders, transmitted through intermediary steps, and diluted in a combination of non-necessary factors that are nevertheless sufficient for the effect, but has added new spins to the six-step process.

Step 1 was already set at the beginning of the evaluation: the attribution problem comes from the evaluation questions in the TOR. The evaluation team based the analysis on a general logic model that could sustain a cross-case analysis of ten separate interventions. This model is not a theory of change in the traditional sense, but fits the requirements for this analysis because it offers the main mechanisms that supposedly transmit change from project identification, to intervention delivery, capacity change, performance improvements, and governance progress. The evaluation team has then described each of the 10 interventions further underneath this model (see case studies in Appendix 3)

The evidence gathering and assembling of the contribution story (steps 3 and 4) are the places where this evaluation innovates on the model proposed by John Mayne. In John Mayne's model, the evaluator collects evidence first on the activities, then on results, then on all the intermediary steps to outcomes, and finally to outcomes, if any. This process has a couple of limitations. On the practical side, it is tedious and long for participants to interviews and FGDs, leading often to problems in those cases, as often happens, when the interview is too short to discuss everything. On the

⁷⁵ Mayne, J. 2008.

methodological side, the process is not well suited for capturing unexpected effects because it traces change linearly with a focus on reaching outcomes as defined in the TOC.

Following outcome-harvesting logic, the evaluation team moved straight away to collecting information from documents and respondents on the main changes and areas of conspicuous lacks of change, inside the boundaries of outcome areas defined in the conceptual model, but with much more freedom to identify additional relevant change.

From there, the evaluators have traced back from the outcomes to the intervention the factors that have contributed or prevented the reported changes or lack of change at the outcome level. The evaluators have cleaned the reported changes and factors that proved relevant or useful from those who did not through triangulation. Consistently with John Mayne's model, the evaluators have included the factors external to the intervention logic and recognised their contribution.

Steps 5 and 6 were essentially in line with John Mayne's model, as the evaluators conducted the outcome harvesting and contribution analysis using documents, then followed up with interviews, and inside interviews refined the evaluation questions as the potential lines of contribution became clearer. One difference in assembling the contribution stories was introducing a 2x2 matrix to classify the contribution factors (Table 13).

Normal practice in the literature on causation admits causes that act to bring about events and causes that act to prevent events.⁷⁶ This distinction is not in John Mayne's model, even though there is nothing in his model that is incompatible with it. John Mayne's model does include a distinction between causal factors that are the internal steps in the intervention change and causes that belong to the assumptions on contextual factors (implicit or explicit). By crossing these two dimensions, we obtain the 2x2 matrix in Table 13.

⁷⁶ Paul, L. and Hall, E. 2013.

Table 13 Classification of contribution factors

Internal to the intervention logic and contributing to progress	External to the intervention logic and contributing to progress
Internal to the intervention logic but preventing progress	External to the intervention logic and preventing progress

Contribution to Government Performance Improvement

The last component of the conceptual model proposes that individual agency improvements in performance should in turn contribute to overall improvements in government performance. Since the SGA interventions are in discrete components of the public sector, providing sufficiently grounded evidence for a contribution to overall government performance was considered unlikely. Instead, we looked for a theoretical basis for assessing the contributions to agency performance improvement as to their likelihood of contributing to governance performance. This theoretical basis we found in the ‘Quality of Government’ approach set out in Rothstein and Tannenbaum’s “Making Development Work: the Quality of Government Approach”.⁷⁷ Rothstein and Tannenbaum argue that impartiality and fairness in the delivery of government functions have a more profound effect on well-being than efforts to improve democratic systems. They prescribe five key areas which would have the greatest impact on strengthening the quality of government: a functioning system of taxation; universal education; meritocracy; gender equality; and national auditing⁷⁸. Using these five areas as a benchmark, the evaluation team explored the contribution of each of the ten sample interventions in terms of their actual and likely contribution to these five areas, and consequently to the quality of government.

⁷⁷ Rothstein and Tannenbaum 2014.

⁷⁸ Rothstein and Tannenbaum 2014 pp87-96.

Contribution to EU membership

In evaluation question 2, the evaluation has followed a different approach that had a better fit with the question. The question asked the extent to which the SGAs' efforts "contributed in bringing the Western Balkan countries closer to the EU in terms of public sector capacity, efficiency, and adaptation to EU standards?".⁷⁹ Given the small scale of the SGAs' work in comparison to the overall support provided to support EU membership, the evaluation team concluded that finding direct evidence of a contribution would be unlikely.⁸⁰ Instead, we used the evidence collected from the field and desk research to assess each intervention on three criteria:

- Strict relevance – the extent to which the intervention fit with national plans for meeting Copenhagen criteria for EU membership
- The extent to which the issue being addressed is a priority identified in the EU progress reports for the country to tackle.
- The scale and scope of the change achieved with SGA contribution.

Based on these three criteria, each of the interventions was scored in relation to each other, and an average value calculated. This provided a ranked list which enabled an exploration of the factors that contributed to a higher or lower score. This in turn enabled us to make some conclusions about the factors that can be determined during project selection, design and implementation which could maximise efforts to support EU membership of the Western Balkans countries.

The collected evidence and initial analysis were **presented to a group of representatives from the Swedish government authorities and Sida** at a workshop in September 2019. The aim of the workshop was to 'make sense' of the collected data; in other words, to discuss and validate (or reject) the findings and to add

⁷⁹ Evaluation terms of reference.

⁸⁰ The EU's Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance II, for example, has a budget of EUR 11.7 billion for the period 2014-2020.
https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en

background, explanation and fill in any gaps in understanding. The workshop also helped to provide directions for the final report recommendations.

Limitations

The research faced a limitation in the number of respondents available that had a memory of events belonging to the earlier period of cooperation. However, this was not an unsurmountable challenge because all our projects had been running uninterruptedly until recently and some of them had already been evaluated by Sida. Therefore, it has been possible to find respondents that had at least second-hand information or to find in previous evaluation rich information on achievements and contribution.

The research has had to be careful in moving from the sample of 10 case studies to claiming conclusions valid for the modality of cooperation through Swedish Agencies, especially with an eye to the future and regions other than the Western Balkans. The careful sample selection has eliminated most of the bias that could be connected to country and thematic contexts. However, some bias remains:

- The sample has focused on the Swedish Agencies and countries that had been involved in and been target of the most international cooperation. Cooperation in Montenegro and Macedonia might work differently, because of the small size of the former and the history of the latter. Cooperation might also work differently for those SGAs that are less experienced in development cooperation.
- The Western Balkans countries are special among other developing countries, including the ones in the neighbourhood regions. The EU accession prospect functions as a unique and large-scale incentive for these countries to put efforts in making progress in quality of government. Because of this, they offer much more space for engagement than other countries of comparable size and level of development.
- The sample deliberately included both completed interventions and interventions in progress, to ensure findings throughout the

results chain. This has resulted in variation between countries. The sample selection for Albania, for example, includes only recent interventions which cannot yet demonstrate longer term results.

- The cost effectiveness analysis relies primarily on survey findings and is generated by findings from people with knowledge of the SGAs but not necessarily of other approaches. It is limited in the extent to which it can provide a benchmark against which to assess capacity development interventions by SGAs against other modalities.

Appendix 5 – Case study summaries

Case Study 1: Swedish Police Authority, Juvenile Justice, Albania

Basic data

Name of intervention	Enhanced capacity of Albanian law enforcement agencies to meet human rights standards in juvenile justice – a comprehensive justice chain approach
Location of intervention	Albania (pilots in Tirana and Durres)
Timeframe	2015–2019
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Swedish Police SPA
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	Swedish National Court Administration Swedish police - Swedish Prosecution Authority– Prosecutor General of Sweden - Swedish Prison and Probation Service
Phase 1 timeframe	2017 to 2020
Phase 1 budget	SEK 28.5million (approximately EUR 2.7 million) ⁸¹
Phase 1 expenditure	SEK 4 164 505 SEK (2018). This amounts to 32 % of 2018. Expenditure to date is 17% of the overall budget for the Programme.

Brief description

The project aims to support respect for the human rights of young people in conflict with the law, for their best interests and for fair treatment. The programme supports the following areas: Drafting of by-laws under the Code of Criminal Justice for Children (CCJ); Strengthening tools, templates, and organizational structures as required to implement the CCJ; Enhanced staff capacity through training and guidelines for implementing the Code; Inter-agency cooperation and coordination.

Overview

Context

In the last 20 years, Albania has made great strides in its efforts to transition from a closed economy to a consolidated democracy with a functioning market economy. The prospect of European integration has been one of the driving forces for the country's democratisation processes and domestic reforms.⁸²

Albania has steadily progressed on the road to EU accession. In 2014, it achieved grant candidate status, subject to wide ranging reforms in the justice sector. Following this, the Government of Albania (GoA) embarked on a wide-ranging review of the Albanian justice sector, out of which came Albanian's most ambitious package of justice sector reforms.⁸³ In 2016, the EC recommended to the Council of the EU to start accession negotiations with Albania, subject to implementation of key measures in the areas of judicial and public administration reform.⁸⁴

Thanks to Unicef advocacy, the GoA included a child-friendly-perspective in the judicial review.⁸⁵ The Albanian juvenile justice system at baseline treated minors as adults concerning arrest, interviews, pre-trial custody, and prison sentences for children. Child protection support for re-integration was also absent. Unicef led consultations on reforms with MoJ, justice-sector implementing agencies, and CSOs, and drafted a new code that constituted a shift in sentencing policy, refocusing on alternate sanctions and diversion measures, revising standard operating procedures (SOPs), and creating dedicated structures for juveniles across all institutions in the criminal justice system.

The Albanian government supported the reform, but did not place it as a priority in the reform agenda in terms of investing enough resources to implement the scope and spirit of the new

⁸² Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014.

⁸³ SPA (2016).

⁸⁴ SPA (2016).

⁸⁵ Interviews with Unicef, June 2019.

Code.⁸⁶ Therefore, Swedish assistance was timely in bridging the gap to implementation.

The Swedish agencies involved in the project had not worked before in Albania, but approached the Embassy directly with the proposal for a programme in the justice sector. An extensive design phase took place during 2015-2017.

Baseline trends and capacity to implement the new Code

At baseline, the number of juveniles in conflict with the law was relatively low, representing roughly 5.7 percent of the overall number of cases handled by the police.⁸⁷ Girls account for less than one percent of juveniles in conflict with the law.⁸⁸ The most commonly cited crimes include petty theft (commonly related to theft of cell phones), driving without a license, and possession of narcotics. Based on anecdotal evidence, the largest number of detained juveniles relate to begging, which is illegal in Albania. Overall, recidivism rates for juveniles was high at 47 percent as of 2016.⁸⁹

Before 2017, in the great majority of sentences, juveniles were first sentenced to imprisonment, then benefited from a suspension of sentence execution, and finally were sometimes released on probation.⁹⁰

Overall, the system had low capacity to coordinate implementation across agencies: cooperation was heavily bureaucratic and top-down.⁹¹ Baseline capacity varied by Agency and connected in large measure to the strength of internal capacity building departments.⁹² A wealth of procedures/guidelines existed across all institutions, which, however, were rarely enforced, monitored, or inconsistently applied in practice.⁹³

⁸⁶ Albanian Agencies, June 2019.

⁸⁷ SPA 2017f.

⁸⁸ SPA 2017f.

⁸⁹ SPA 2017f.

⁹⁰ Interview with Unicef June 2019.

⁹¹ Interview with Albanian Agencies, June 2019.

⁹² SPA 2016.

⁹³ Interviews with Albanian Agencies, June 2019.

Non- Swedish project interventions

In 2018, MoJ launched a new juvenile justice reform strategy with an emphasis on developing new infrastructures and structures dedicated to juveniles, but without making available budget for implementation.⁹⁴

During the course of the programme, the justice sector reform was in full swing, including the vetting of all judges and prosecutors for corruption and the establishment of the High Judicial Council and High Prosecutorial Council.⁹⁵

Based on a review by the Albanian MoJ of all projects within the Juvenile Justice sector, the most relevant non-Swedish interventions were:⁹⁶

Save the Children (StC)'s programme on legal aid for children, which also works on Standard Operating Procedures

The UK's Twinning project in the field of Prison and Probation, which has reviewed the situation of juveniles in the penitentiary; and

Dutch-funded project on juvenile detainees, implemented by the Netherlands Helsinki Committee.

Related Swedish strategy, projects and non-project interventions

Inside Sweden's country strategy for Albania, the project has synergies with support through Swedish NGO's (2,7 MSEK in 2017), the Swedish-Albanian Community Policing Programme (SACP), funded by Sida and implemented by FCG Sweden (2017-2020 for phase 2), and a project with INSTAT implemented by The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ) on crime statistics (2016).⁹⁷

Description of the intervention

⁹⁴ Interviews with Albanian Agencies, 2019/June; Interview with UNICEF, 2019/June.

⁹⁵ SPA 2019b.

⁹⁶ SPA 2016.

⁹⁷ SPA 2016.

This project is multi-component, multi-year, multi-agency, and focused on capacity building support:

- On the entire chain of justice, from when the minor gets in contact with police until release from prison / probation.
- With a wide array of capacity building methods, including trainings, training of trainers, curricula support, mentoring and coaching, and development of guidelines, tools, and templates.
- In working groups with the participation of all agencies.
- Through a case-based and holistic approach which teaches most topics to everyone (for example child psychology to judges and prosecutors)
- Including building infrastructures when necessary (interview rooms)
- Through adapting practices from Swedish Courts and Agencies to the Albanian context.

Design of the intervention

The project was in line with Sweden regional strategy.⁹⁸

During project design, the Swedish agencies developed a feasibility study and proposal (2015), then conducted a deep baseline report with context analysis and discussions of counterparts' needs and priorities, and finally prepared an inception report with the project structures, targets, and approaches.⁹⁹

The project identified work components already at inception, but deferred to annual work-plans the identification of activities.¹⁰⁰ The important issues identified in the baseline report are addressed through specific activities.

The focus on juvenile justice emerged from preliminary interviews with stakeholders in Albania during the early feasibility study (2015).¹⁰¹ The baseline report contains the choice of pilot regions based on the number of juvenile cases, as well as the fact that these are regions which have all counterpart agencies

⁹⁸ Interview with Swedish Embassy Staff, 2019/June.

⁹⁹ SPA 2017f.

¹⁰⁰ SPA 2017a.

¹⁰¹ SPA 2016.

represented and are geographically located in such a way as to enable common activities.¹⁰²

In planning the project, the Swedish agencies have been in continuous contact with other donors such as the Netherlands and the US as well as international organizations, in particular with Unicef and Save the Children.¹⁰³

Implementation arrangement

The Programme has a Steering Committee (PSC), a Programme Coordination Office (PCO) in Tirana as well as a team of Project Leaders from the Albanian and Swedish justice agencies. Financial control of Swedish funds remains with Sweden.¹⁰⁴

During inception, the project employed a Swedish coordinator based in Albania, but removed it early during implementation due to underperformance.¹⁰⁵ Many organisations and stakeholders questioned whether the Swedish programme could effectively provide contextual, speedy, and relevant support with limited permanent staff based in Albania.¹⁰⁶

It took a while to make the programme organisation work:¹⁰⁷

- Firstly, appointments on the Albanian side were delayed.
- Secondly, already in 2017 and 2018, the project was affected by staff rotation.
- Only during 2018, communication between project leaders improved due to the regular joint meetings between all agencies involved and a programme management training.

Programme activities started very slowly. In 2017, the project delivered some outputs, mainly training sessions, then in early 2018 it picked up more speed in delivering training and workshops. The 2018 workshops focused on Diversion and Juvenile Sanctions with

¹⁰² SPA 2017f.

¹⁰³ SPA 2017f.

¹⁰⁴ SPA 2016.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Swedish staff, 2019/June.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Swedish Embassy staff, 2019/June; Interview with Albanian Government Agencies, 2019, June.

¹⁰⁷ SPA 2019b.

a Case-based methodology and active group work¹⁰⁸, trainings for psychologists, police officers (with a dedicated curriculum), probation services, and prisons.

In 2018, the project also established a working group for developing a template and procedure for the Individual Assessment Report of juveniles in conflict with the law called for by the Code.¹⁰⁹

The programme also conducted cross-agency workshops for identifying challenges of respective agencies, which were the first joint discussion sessions that the Agencies had.¹¹⁰

The project expects to increase spending in 2019. A large number of workshops and trainings are planned to be held during the first part of 2019 on implementing the code in the respective agencies (organisational structure, Swedish practice in implementing the law, forensic interview technique, curricula, manual and templates, developing a mentoring and coaching plan, and inter-agency cooperation).

Finally, between 2018 and 2019, the project supported the establishment of guidelines for interview rooms and their use and started the procurement of pilot rooms.¹¹¹

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results¹¹²

Outcome 1: Albanian agencies coordinate better along the chain of justice. Compared with baseline, the Albanian agencies share information better, decide together what activities to work in, participate to joint activities, set common procedures, and understand each other better.

¹⁰⁸ SPA 2019b; Interviews with Albanian Agencies, 2019/June.

¹⁰⁹ SPA 2019b; Interviews with Albanian Agencies, 2019/June.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Albanian Agencies, 2019/June.

¹¹¹ Interview with Albanian Agencies, 2019/June.

¹¹² The evidence for the claims in the following section is tracked through the “source column in the contribution tables”.

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹¹³
A. Swedish agencies had been reflecting on the merits of integrated approaches to capacity development and chain of justice since at least 2013.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interview with Police staff captures that the Police had been looking for a chance to implement the chain of justice approach in the years before the project. 2013 Capacity Development Strategy for Swedish Cooperation emphasized integrated and sector-wide approaches	2
B. The project assessment report identified lack of cooperation between Albanian agencies as a challenge, on which the project should focus (2015)	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Desk review of project documents: the assessment report identifies the lack of cooperation as a challenge	3
C. Weakness in project coordination at inception (because of staff originally hired) (2017)	Internal preventing factor (pitfall)	Interviews from staff on Albanian and Swedish agencies, and project reports mention that the cooperation between agencies was weak at the beginning of the project, due to hiring the wrong expert.	2
D. Project leaders from all Agencies meet twice per years on meetings in which they have real decision-making power (since 2017)	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews with staff from Albanian agencies reported that the meetings happen, and are important for deciding project activities, as the project is not top-down and prescriptive of the activities. The Swedish project coordination takes on board the suggestions from project leaders. Now, the Albanian agencies know what other Agencies are doing, and what their problems and needs are	3

¹¹³ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹¹³
E. Case-based logic, which follows a case from A to Z, gives clear roles to all Albanian Agencies (since 2017)	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews with staff from Albanian agencies show that all Agencies own the project because they see that they have a clear role in it. The case-based approach makes it natural for them to choose joint activities, and work on common training, information sharing, and common procedures and templates	3
F. The Albanian agencies had used an integrated approach on other topics, such as domestic violence. (2015)	External contributing factor (opportunity)	Interviews with civil society show that Albania agencies have recently been involved with other examples of the integrated approach, which might have prepared them to implement it successfully in this case	1
G. Turnover of staff connected to the vetting process and elections lead the people involved in the integrated approach leaving the organisation. (Since 2018)	External preventing factor (roadblock)	Interviews with Albanian agencies and the Embassy has confirmed that turn-over has affected the project.	2
H. Lack of budget from central government for implementing some of JJ code provisions	External preventing factor (roadblock)	Interviews with Albanian agencies and the Embassy has confirmed that the Albanian government has not yet established some organisations or provided enough budget to existing organisations to implement all JJ code provisions.	2

Contribution Claim 1: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that the project contributed in improving coordination among the participating Albanian agencies. The project acted through mechanisms:

- Early identification of lack of coordination as a problem
- Replacing the non-performing coordinator timely
- Offer of a clear role in the project to each Albanian Agency, connected to the Agency's role in case management from juvenile's contact with police to release
- Connecting project leaders regularly through semi-annual meetings, during which they could propose priority activities.
- Building on previous experience in the Albanian Agencies with the integrated approach.

However, the project had to overcome challenging conditions: turn-over in project participants related to elections and vetting process and the lack of budget for setting up some organisations called for by the JJ Code, which are part of the sector-wide approach.

Outcome 2: The Albanian courts are applying diversion to more cases. However, judges from different courts decide on similar cases in different ways and pre-trial detentions have increased in length. Court decisions cannot always be implemented because organisations in the JJ code do not exist yet.

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹¹⁴
A. The trend in reduction of children sentenced to detention had started in 2015 already, before the project. Albanian agencies were undergoing a change in mentality since 2015, as they were already taking in the idea that the JJ should be child-friendly (2015).	Contributing external factor	Interview with civil society The JJ Code is very progressive, follows international standards, and was developed in a participatory way, with the involvement of civil society and the implementing agencies. In 2017-2018, the Government has also developed a juvenile justice reform strategy, with the participation of all stakeholders. Just but being there, the code and the strategy have an effect on the institutions	3

¹¹⁴ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹¹⁴
B. Judges, prosecution, and probation officers are more specialised in juvenile justice due to the project trainings (since 2018). The project improved capacity all along the chain of justice	Contributing internal factors	Interview with Albanian counterparts	3
C. Albanian counterparts are building tools (templates, checklist, and manuals), which work well for all of them (since 2018)	Contributing internal factors	Interview with Albanian counterparts	2
D. JJ provisions in Sweden are not the same but are similar and based on the same standards. Therefore, Swedish practice is relevant. The Albanian agencies understood what they could do instead of their usual practices. They saw JJ from the perspective of Sweden (2017)	Contributing internal factors	Interview with Albanian counterparts	3

Contribution Claim 2: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that the project contributed to maintaining a trend in using diversion that was already under way. The main mechanisms were:

- Showing to Albanian authorities relevant but alternatives ways of working. The Swedish experience was relevant because the JJ code followed similar principles as the Swedish JJ legislation: they are both based on the same international standards. The trend in diversion led to a smaller change in the number of juveniles in prison than expected, because of preventing factors barring a full impact:
- the judicial review's vetting process led to a concomitant shortage of judges and prosecutors and longer trial times.
- Most of the juveniles currently in detention are awaiting trial. Most of them were sentenced for small-scale thefts and are

recidivists because the system has weaknesses in the rehabilitation of the first-time offenders.

Outcome 3: The project led to service improvements along the chain of justice, such as lower number of flagrant arrests of juveniles, better treatment of juveniles in police custody, better prison conditions (children in prisons can now take exams), and more effective probation services.

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹¹⁵
A. A mentality change was already underway in the Albanian institutions, which came from the process of discussing and drafting the JJ code and the child protection legislation.	Contributing external factors	Interview with civil society	3
B. This mentality change was due to the fact that the JJ code was both progressive, and not impossible, even though difficult to implement.	Contributing external factors	Interview with Albanian agencies	3
C. Civil society had advocated for the JJ code and for the child protection agency, and had ensured effective participation of stakeholders in the drafting process	Contributing external factors	Interview with civil society	2
D. Swedish support had funded the first attempts in the 2000s of Unicef and civil society to advocate for a JJ perspective	Contributing external factors	Interview with civil society	1

¹¹⁵ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹¹⁵
E. The Swedish support was able to close rapidly the gap in capacity between the Albanian agencies, and what the JJ code required of them	Contributing internal factors	Interview with civil society, Albanian agencies	3
F. Investing in rehabilitation through social services to juvenile in conflict with the law has been a challenge. Sweden had decided not to invest in this.	Preventing external and factor	Desk review, Interview with civil society, Albanian agencies	3
G. Vetting process influences the number of juveniles in pre-trial detention	Preventing external and factor	Desk review, Interview with civil society, Albanian agencies	2

Contribution Claim 3: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that the project contributed to closing rapidly the biggest gaps between the JJ code and Albanian Agencies' capacity to implement it thanks to the following mechanisms:

- One of the main positive drivers is the change in mentality in the Albanian Agencies brought about by the judicial review.
- The modality of sister agency support was relevant because the legislation in Albania is based on the same principle as the legislation in Sweden, therefore the experience of the Swedish experts in Sweden was relevant for the Albanian experts in Albania.
- The case-based approach to capacity development along the entire chain of justice was highly effective

Contribution to EU membership

The project is relevant to the requirements of EU accession, but with a limited contribution. Juvenile justice is part of Chapter 23 of the EU Accession Criteria on judicial and fundamental rights, but it is arguably a niche part of the judicial sector.

Nevertheless, the project might have a positive contribution to other parts of the judicial sector in case the Albanian Agencies replicate the chain of justice approach and cooperation mechanisms more widely. This is not unthinkable as the Albanian Agencies had already used the chain of justice approach on the topic of domestic violence.¹¹⁶ This project constitutes a second reinforcement of the approach.

Efficient coordination

The integrated approach required extra-attention for in-project coordination, because of many agencies (police, courts, prosecution, probation, and prisons) are involved on both sides.

The Swedish Agencies designed the intervention in cooperation with the Albanian agencies, whose judgement on collaboration with the Swedish counterparts is positive.¹¹⁷ The Swedish agencies collected information on counterparts' priorities and practices during a long scoping phase and designed the project to respond to them.¹¹⁸

During implementation, cooperation is built in the project decision-making. Swedish and Albanian agencies coordinate at two levels: the Steering Group, which oversees and approves work-plans, and meetings of project leaders, who are the points of contact at the respective agencies.¹¹⁹

Civil society was less involved in the project, despite the fact that the Swedish Embassy had in the past funded local NGOs on the topic of legal aid for children.¹²⁰

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

Partner agencies claim that the chain of justice approach is an effective way to improve cross-agency cooperation.¹²¹ They have

¹¹⁶ Interview with Albanian Agencies, June/2019; Interview with UNICEF, June/2019.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Albanian Agencies, June/2019.

¹¹⁸ SPA 2017f.

¹¹⁹ SPA 2017f; Interview with Albanian Agencies, June/2019.

¹²⁰ Interview with local CSOs, 2019/June.

¹²¹ Interview with Albanian Agencies, 2019/June.

learned the importance and need of pushing coordination to actors outside the justice sector, including for example social services responsible for rehabilitating and reintegrating the people finishing their sentences.

Swedish agencies have learned that an integrated approach makes coordination even more challenging, both at the time of designing the project and during implementation.¹²²

Swedish and Albanian agencies learned the critical role of the quality of the legislation to be implemented. Swedish practice must be relevant to implement that legislation, which implies that the legislation should be based at least on similar underlying principles.¹²³ The legislation must also have been developed with the inputs of the Agencies that will be called to implement it and also of civil society. Otherwise, it will be difficult to implement (unrealistic) and now owned.¹²⁴

¹²² Interview with Swedish Police, 2019/June.

¹²³ Interview with Albanian Agencies, 2019/June; Interview with Swedish Agencies, 2019/2019.

¹²⁴ Interview with UNICEF, 2019/June; Interview with civil society, 2019/June.

Case Study 2: Swedish Tax Agency, Albania

Basic data

Name of intervention	ProTax Albania - Implementing Market Value Based Property Tax in Albania
Location of intervention	Albania
Timeframe	Feb 2018 – Dec 2020
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Swedish Tax Agency – Skatteverket (SKV)
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	Lantmäteriet - Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority
Phase 1 timeframe	2008 – 2013
Phase 1 budget	SEK 36.3 mil. (EUR 3.38 mil.) ¹²⁵ USD 4,174,837 ¹²⁶
Phase 1 expenditure	SEK 5.6 mil. (EUR 0.52 mil.) USD 649,086
TOTAL expenditure	SEK 5.6 mil. (EUR 6.35 mil.) USD 649,086

Brief description

The proposed intervention will support the Ministry of Finance and Economy of Albania (MFE) to set up a property tax system that is based on real market value of the properties and achieves an increased collection in each municipality. The intervention is expected to reach a collection that is 0.5 % to 0.8 % of GDP (from 0.32 currently), or in terms of absolute budget figures, adding more than € 50 million into the budget of the 61 municipalities of the country.

Overview

Context

The governing authorities in Albania have recently undertaken painful and large- scale reforms that pertain to the core structure of

state services including territorial reform, education and health care services, state bureaucracy, regulation of illegal building, management of energy sector, and specific issues pertaining to the rule of law.¹²⁷

Albania is moderately prepared in the area of taxation. Some progress was made through strengthening the General Directorate of Taxation (GDT) and the establishment of the fiscal cadastre for buildings.¹²⁸

On property rights, progress has yet to be made towards improving the legal framework for registration, expropriation and compensation. In February 2019, the Parliament approved the Law on Cadastre. Albania should conclude first registration of property titles in all its territory.¹²⁹ In addition, the development of a proper real-estate market has been held back by the lack of a cadastre and the problem of land titles that are burdened by ownership conflicts. This has been a particular hindrance to investment in agriculture and tourism.¹³⁰

Besides Swedish assistance, other major donors involved in the property tax and land reform are Netherlands, Norway, WB, USAID, EU and IMF.

Description of the intervention

Structure and phases of the intervention

The purpose of the project is to contribute to strengthened municipalities in Albania by substantially increase their own source revenues by implementing market value based immovable property tax on buildings (note: land taxation is not part of the project objective).

¹²⁵ SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

¹²⁶ Amounts in USD as per project budget data at openaid.se platform.

¹²⁷ Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018.

¹²⁸ EC 2019c p.75.

¹²⁹ Ibid, p. 27.

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 47.

The intervention will strengthen financially all the municipalities of Albania, which are still highly dependent on the central government funding and with little or under-utilized local resources.

The project has three main development goals that are to be achieved in long term, during and after project close-out:

- To reach 0.5 % to 0.8 % of GDP or more than € 50 million raise in property tax revenues. A long-term goal could be to raise the revenues to as much as 1 % of GDP; one percent for the municipality;
- Establish a fair, efficient, effective, transparent and market value based property tax system;
- Achieve a better functioning economy through improved business environment, better working property market and better working credit market.

Selection of the intervention

Sweden has been leading the international support to the recent Territorial and Administrative Reform in Albania, which consolidated the municipalities of the country from 374 down to 61 municipalities, granting them bigger territories and populations.

The current proposed intervention is a further step in the reform process, aiming to increase the municipalities own revenues as a financial instrument for improving service delivery, in line with EU principles.

A critical factor in selection and design of the intervention has been the experience with ProTax project in Kosovo, which has been adopted almost entirely for the needs in Albania, including some of the key staff members. In 2016, the Albanian Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Finance of Kosovo signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the assistance to be provided from the Government of Kosovo for the Fiscal Cadastre. More specifically, the Kosovar authorities have agreed to assist the Albanian Ministry of Finance with the implementation of the Fiscal Cadastre System (software), training of the staff as well as sharing their experience they have had using the system.

During 2014 the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MFE) in Albania made a study visit to Kosovo to look at their Property Tax System and the newly started project, ProTax2, which included taxation of both buildings and land. The Property Tax System in Kosovo has been developed in cooperation with the Swedish Tax Agency and therefore the Ministry of Finance organized a meeting with the Property Tax Department of Kosovo, the Swedish Tax Agency and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

In the beginning of 2017, the Albanian Ministry of Finance asked Sida to review the possibilities of assisting in the reformation of the property tax system. As a part of that, Sida asked the Swedish Tax Agency to perform a new fact-finding mission in May 2017. After that mission Ministry of Finance requested a version of the project proposal from 2015 to be updated with findings from the latest mission, resulting in a final project document.

The MoU with Ministry of Finance was signed in Feb 2018, marking the start of the project.

Implementation of the intervention

The MFE General Directorate of Taxation was in charge of coordination of the project activities. The MFE Property Tax Office in Kosovo was the key strategic partner in bringing positive lessons and experiences from Kosovo. Staff hired for the project from Kosovo provided the project with expertise in all different areas of designing and implementing the property tax reform.

Sweden Tax Agency (SKV) provided the project with expertise in taxation, taxpayer information and IT-development. Lantmäteriet provided the project with expertise in mass valuation.

In addition, the project has ensured that the beneficiaries benefit from experiences of SKV and Lantmäteriet through a series of study visits to gain in depth knowledge on: how Lantmäteriet and the SKV work in connection to property tax/fee; on valuation methodology and mass appraisal used at Lantmäteriet and the SKV; and on operating, maintenance and development of IT at Lantmäteriet and the SKV.

The intervention was being delivered in two stages:

Stage I (Inception and Specification)

- Create and consolidate a property tax register based on the OSHEE (Electricity Corporation of Albania) register including survey data, implement a centralized property tax IT system and start taxation of buildings (object units).
- Specify a long-term solution for a market value-based property taxation i.e. new legislative framework drafted and new business processes and methods designed.

Stage II (Implementation and Transition)

- Implement a *market value-based* property taxation of buildings (object units) in all municipalities in Albania.
- Prepare a proposal for and preparation of taxation of land (parcels) also.

The project was intended to start in January 2018, and in an inception phase, set the foundations for the project. One important deliverable in this phase was the draft of transitional regulations, the fiscal zone value based regulations, designed to be implementable with consideration of the preconditions: the poor quality data, the collection mechanism of OSHEE as central collection agent, and the project timeline for this transitional phase.

In the remainder of 2018, the Specification phase, the goals were to establish the initial fiscal cadastre database, develop the IT-system with integration with OSHEE and to prepare taxpayers and municipalities for the new system. The main goal of these initial phases was to launch the IT-system in the end of December, to perform the first taxation and billing of 1.3 million OSHEE clients by January 2019.

The idea was to develop the basic necessities to perform tax assessment and collection, and to add more features to the system incrementally as needs arise in the process.

In the coming phases, the new market value-based system was to be established (during 2019) and handed over to Albania for further operation and maintenance (during 2020).

Critical factors

In September 2018, the decision was made to let each municipality control and be responsible for their own collection process, thus the integration with OSHEE as a central collection agent as originally planned was taken out of the project scope. This meant not only that the system lost its collection function and strong enforcement mechanism. It also meant that the fiscal cadastre database could no longer be based on OSHEE client register. For the Property Tax system, this lack of data is a critical obstacle for reaching the taxpayers and retrieving tax payments.

As a result, the initial fiscal cadastre register was of low data quality, created by combining data sources which were in themselves not comprehensive. The project was trying to find ways to improve the register by adding data from yet other sources, for instance IPRO, Aluizni, municipality registers, etc. But many records needed to be completed manually by municipality officers.

The progress in municipality register work has been monitored from the start. Analysis of the registration work shows that the small municipalities have made the most progress. They have verified and added the largest portion of their ownership units. The medium size municipalities have made less progress and the large ones have made no progress at all due to the vast number of entries they have to make compared to smaller municipalities.

However, the overall trend in registration progress is declining, also in the smaller municipalities. Users are not logging in to the system as often, and the updates are fewer per day. The reasons for this decline are yet to be identified.

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

During early summer 2018, the project environment was set up; staff were contracted, a project office was established, and the IT development infrastructure was set up. The methodology was analysed and interpreted, and various analysis of possible data sources was performed.

In September 2018, the initial fiscal cadastre database was compiled by combining data from Adresari 2016 (latest copy available) and Census of 2016. Also, to some extent, data from OSHEE 2018 could be used to fill in some gaps. Combining data from different sources which are not harmonized is a difficult task. Of the 1.5 million records created, the vast majority lack necessary attributes to correctly calculate appraisal and tax according to the complex methodology. And of course, since the register originates from data sources from 2016, many records are not up to date.

In order to give the municipalities a chance to somewhat improve the register quality before the first taxation, the IT-development had to be re-planned and rushed to provide necessary registration tools. Already in the beginning of October, the first version “0.5 beta” was deployed for training purposes. The improved 0.5-version was launched in production in the beginning of November, providing the basic tools for register maintenance. In connection with the production release, a helpdesk function was set up at GDT, with the project acting as back office function, supporting the helpdesk. The project also provided simple but adequate tools to handle and administer incoming support requests.

During November and December 2018, the focus was to develop the version 1.0 of the IT system, with functionality to calculate appraisal and tax assessment and produce tax reports for collection purposes (as the integration with OSHEE was no longer in the scope). In the beginning of 2019, two releases of the PTIS (Property Tax Information System) have been made 1.0 and 1.1 versions with Improvements to registration functionality for mass appraisal and tax assessment.

During October and November 2018, more than 160 officers from all municipalities were trained in the new IT system and around 225 users have been created. To facilitate the trainings, the project provided 11 laptops and equipment for internet access and attended the trainings for tuition and support.

A survey was conducted after the October trainings, showing that users in general found both the IT system 0.5 and the training useful and adequate for their task managing the registers. There were

of course some flaws in this first hasty version of the system, but in general it served its purpose.

The Valuation Component of the project has also supported the GDT in forming a separate team, the Mass Valuation Unit, for securing a permanent, sustainable organization within the MFE as responsible for mass valuation and assessment procedures. The team is at the moment staffed with six persons. The Mass Valuation Component will continue the capacity building of this team.

Contribution to EU membership

The property tax reform is part of a wider public finance management reform in Albania. The progress is closely monitored by the EU and assistance instalments are linked to the achievement of certain benchmarks, one of them being establishment of the fiscal cadastre.

According to the latest EC Progress Report – ECPR 2018, Albania is moderately prepared in the area of taxation. Some progress was made, in particular on legislative approximation with the *acquis* on tax procedures, further organisational development of the General Directorate of Taxation (GDT), implementation of the action plan against informal economy and tax compliance. Revenue performance in 2017 was above 2016 levels (+7.8 %) but slightly below target (-1.7 %), largely due to underperformance of personal income tax and local taxes.

The project is aligned and expected to impact two out of five key priorities in the Albania's integration agenda into the EU. Namely, key priority No. 3 - Fight against corruption, and key priority No. 5 - Fundamental rights - reinforcement of property rights.

Efficient coordination

Other major donors involved in the property/land reform are Netherlands, Norway, WB, USAID, EU and IMF.

Netherlands SPATIAL Project – Western Balkans (2017 – end of 2018); total budget: EUR 530,000. Funded by the Dutch MFA within the MATRA pre-accession program. The MATRA program is operated by the Dutch MFA and aims to give support to the countries of the region of Western Balkans in the process of joining

the EU. The goal of the SPATIAL project is to help the countries in the region in the process of harmonizing and improving the access to available geospatial information. The project has three components: (1) project component of the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre, Republic of Macedonia; (2) project component of the Republic Geodetic Authority, Republic of Serbia; and (3) regional project component (which also includes Albania, BiH, Kosovo and Montenegro).¹³¹

Norwegian Mapping Authority (Kartverket) NMA project in Albania (2013 to June 2017); total budget: NOK 9,663,000. The State Authority for Geospatial Information (ASIG) was the beneficiary of the project, where the NMA was involved in building up the institution from scratch. The overall objective of the project was to support the establishment of a national mapping authority for Albania. According to the NMA, the Albanian government would ensure appropriate staffing, premises and basic infrastructure. For the NMA, their activities consisted of transferring knowledge and help with upgrading of existing core geographic data and make them available for users as well as with aligning the new authority with best European practices and with EU regulations on harmonization and exchange of geographic data.¹³²

World Bank, Land Administration and Management Project (2007-2014); total budget: USD 35 mil. (loan). The objective of the Project was: to (i) improve the efficiency and effectiveness of land administration and management through enhanced tenure security and improved urban planning; and (ii) rebuild physical assets and restore essential services in the flood affected areas in Albania.

¹³¹SPATIAL Western Balkan – Introduction to the project, http://www.katastar.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/en/projects/current/SPATIAL%20Introduction%20to%20the%20project_pub.pdf.

¹³²Kartverket, Albania project 2013-2017, <https://www.kartverket.no/en/About-The-Norwegian-Mapping-Authority/international-development-cooperation/albania-project-2013-2017/>.

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

MFE has moved on in deciding on revenue collection agent OSHEE without consulting with SKV and municipalities, which has proved to be the key problem as the municipalities have rejected the OSHEE and as a result the project had to restart anew, with significant delays in project implementation.

Learning from experience in Kosovo, the SKV has prevented the establishment of the Project Office in MFE premises in order to prevent the project staff from being used to perform regular tasks on behalf of MFE, which is often the case in Kosovo.

The critical lesson learned is the need in ensuring wider consultation with direct beneficiaries, in this case municipalities, in deciding on the revenue collection modality.

Project should be more involved, visit and discuss with municipalities in truly understanding their needs and options. Relying in central level i.e. MFE to do the local coordination and consultation has not proved to be productive so far.

Contribution Analysis

The change observed (Outcome): Delays in project implementation.

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹³³
A. MF delays in starting the project	External contributing	Interview with SKV project manager: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The project was due to start in 2015, but government changed mind overnight in how to approach the project. It avoided SKV as implementing partner in favour of a private IT company to develop the IT system, but still using the Sida money. Sida rejected the idea. With the change of the MF minister, the project was back on track again as per original proposal.	2

¹³³ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹³³
B. Poor property tax methodology	External contributing	<p>Desk research and interviews with Embassy, SKV staff and project manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government drafted the methodology without consulting the SKV. It overestimated the availability of data; it did not take on board the SKV preconditions and recommendations for the methodology, making it impossible to implement. 	4
C. Municipal rejection of OSHEE	External contributing	<p>Desk research and interviews with municipalities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government decided on OSHEE as central revenue collection agent without consulting the municipalities. The municipalities rejected the idea as they saw this decision as an infringement of local autonomy, thus the MF had to back down, which brought the project at a standstill. The assumption was that the tax could continue to be collected by the water companies, but this meant that each municipality would have its own IT system developed, which is impossible. 	4
D. Sida and SKV positioning the project after rejection of the OSHEE	Internal contributing	<p>Interview with SKV project manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the rejection of the OSHEE, the project lost the fundamental component for success, it nevertheless decided to go ahead assuming that municipalities will be proactive in transferring their property registers into a central database, which proved to be overambitious and the process is still lagging behind. This also weakened the relationship of the project with 	3

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹³³
		the ministry, who blame it all on the IT system not being properly developed.	
E. Low municipal incentives to transfer data into the new system	External contributing	<p>Interview with SKV project manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are low incentives for municipalities to cooperate as most of them rely on commercial property taxes which is being collected easily; in addition the mayors are not all that willing to dramatically increase the residential property tax collation due to fear of losing the voter base; furthermore they lack capacities to transfer all the data into the new system. 	4
F. Low MF incentives to push the municipalities to perform	External contributing	<p>Interview with SKV project manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the rejection of the OSHEE, now faced with an enormous task of municipalities needing to transfer their data manually into the new system, the incentive of the MF to push municipalities to complete the data transfer. In addition, the citizens access to municipal services is not conditioned with the payment of the property tax, such as the case in Kosovo, thus citizens have also low incentives to cooperate fully. As such, there's no real reinforcement mechanism in place neither for municipalities nor citizens to fully cooperate. 	4

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that two major factors contributed to delays in project implementation.

First, the missed opportunity to capitalise on OSHEE as the central property tax revenue collection agent. OSHEE - being

Albania's only electricity company has the best property registers in place plus a ready property tax revenue collection mechanism as the tax would be charged in the electricity bill, which was the backbone of the project, with that gone, the project is hardly implementable.

Second, the incentives are very low for all stakeholders to cooperate fully, especially municipalities since they have to bear the burden of transferring their data manually into the new system, although the project is currently exploring ways on helping them with additional workforce to enter the data, which has a high financial cost not foreseen by the project.

Case Study 3: Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Basic data

Name of intervention	Capacity for Improvement of Land Administration and Procedures CILAP phases 1 and 2
Location of intervention	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Timeframe	2013–2019
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Lantmateriet (Swedish Land Administration)
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	n/a
Phase 1 timeframe	2013 – 2016
Phase 1 budget	SEK 28.25 million (EUR 2.64 million) ¹³⁴
Phase 1 expenditure	SEK 27.99 million (EUR 2.62 million)
Phase 2 timeframe	2016 – 2019
Phase 2 budget	SEK 29.96 million (EUR 2.80 million)
Phase 2 expenditure (to Dec 2018)	SEK 22.02 million (EUR 2.06 million)
TOTAL actual expenditure (to Dec 2018)	SEK 50.01 million (EUR 4.67 million)

Brief description

The aim of the project was to make the land administration in BiH more efficient, secure and reliable. It worked with land administration organisations of both the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, contributing to improvements in human resource management, establishing an address register, a sales price register, improving the geodetic infrastructure, strengthening IT systems and establishing a digital archive of key land registry documents. The project also supported the implementation of a World Bank loan to strengthen land registration – the Real Estate Registration Project (RERP).

¹³⁴ SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

Overview

Context

Reform of the land administration system is very relevant to Bosnia and Herzegovina's (BiH) EU accession ambitions. The quality of the land ownership registration in terms of ease of administrative procedures and reliability and security of the land registry. Reliable and efficient land registration is a critical factor for economic development, delivery of public services and public revenue collection.¹³⁵ It is also a key tool in the fight against corruption.

There are two land agencies (geodetic authorities, or GAs) in the country, the Federation Geodetic Authority¹³⁶ (FGA) for the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina, and the Republic Geodetic Authority¹³⁷ (RGA) for Republika Srpska. There are no equivalent state level authorities, although the Ministry of Civil Affairs has a loosely defined coordinating role.

The land registration situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is particularly challenging. Many existing land records date back to the Austrian occupation in the 19th century. The socialist period from 1944 to 1991 involved expropriations of private property which are now subject to restitution claims. The brutal war of 1992 to 1995 saw mass expulsions, destruction and illegal occupation of both residential and commercial properties. And the period after the war saw large numbers of illegal and unregulated construction. By 2012, at the start of the project, 40% of households in the country did not have a proper street address or house number.

Bosnia and Herzegovina have made slow progress in its public administration reform overall. It is hampered by a complex constitutional arrangement which divides the country into two entities (the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska), and the Federation is itself divided into ten cantons. A small state level government aims to coordinate and align public administration standards across both entities. Weak economic

¹³⁵ See for example, www.doingbusiness.org/en/data/exploretopics/registering-property/why-matters.

¹³⁶ Federalna uprava za geodetske i imovinsko-pravne poslove www.fgu.com.ba.

¹³⁷ Republička uprava za geodetske i imovinsko-pravne poslove www.rgurs.org.

development, endemic corruption and a painful brain-drain further undermine progress in the country.

In addition to the Swedish Government, assistance for the reform of land administration was also being provided by the World Bank and the Government of Norway. The Real Estate Registration Project (RERP) was supported by a World Bank credit of USD 34.1 million “to support development of a sustainable real estate registration system with harmonized land register and cadastre records in urban areas of both the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska”. The Norwegian Mapping Authority (Kartverket) was providing support for the BiH land agencies. Both the RERP and the Norwegian project worked closely with the BiH geodetic authorities’ project teams supported by the Swedish Lantmäteriet.

The Lantmäteriet was also supporting a SEK 39 million regional project, ‘IMPULS’, from 2014 to 2019. This project aimed to support the implementation of the ‘INSPIRE’ EU directive in the Western Balkans region.

Description of the intervention

The Lantmäteriet had been involved in reform of land administration in BiH before the start of the CILAP project. A project managed by the German agency GTZ involved a supporting role by the Lantmäteriet until 2010. The experience with GTZ was not entirely positive, and this stimulated the national authorities in BiH to take greater control over the development process. Based on earlier cooperation, they identified the Lantmäteriet as a useful partner and established an intention to work together.

The Swedish strategies for BiH did not explicitly identify land administration as an area for engagement, but did aim to support broader relevant areas such as BiH accession to the EU (2006-2010 country strategy), development of central and local administrations (2011-2014 country strategy) and a focus on strengthened public administration (2014-2020 regional strategy).

The inception phase of the project took around 1 year to complete. It was described as a ‘feasibility study’ and was financed by the Swedish Embassy in Sarajevo. The study period included many meetings, a study visit to Sweden and a participative workshop. The study visit was cited as a critical element; it enabled the land administration officials from BiH to see first-hand some of the mechanisms in place in Sweden which inspired them to adopt and adapt to the BiH context. These included the address register and the sales price register, for which there were close parallels between the Bosnian institutional structures and those in Sweden. Over the year of the inception phase, original ideas for what was needed shifted, and by the end, the plans were seen as more realistic and there was greater agreement between BiH and Swedish officials.

The project was originally designed as one long project but was divided into two phases for reasons linked to the Swedish MFA budget. The project components were therefore broadly similar for both phases. A mid-term evaluation of the first phase suggested some changes for the second phase. The main components of the project for both phases were as follows:

- Organisational strengthening and human resource development
- Legislative development
- Development of geodetic infrastructure
- Development of address register software and implementation
- Development of sales price register software and implementation
- Strengthening information and communications technologies (ICT) both in terms of hardware/software and management and delivery capacities
- Establishing a searchable digital archive of old paper-based documentation

The two phases in total budgeted SEK 58.2 million (EUR 5.4 million)¹³⁸, and actual expenditure to December 2018 was SEK 50 million (EUR 4.67 million).

¹³⁸ SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

The reform of the land registry in Bosnia and Herzegovina had a high level of political commitment, particularly in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This was demonstrated by the willingness of both entity governments and state level government to borrow from the World Bank for this purpose. In addition, the leadership of both geodetic authorities were keen to lead reforms.

The CILAP project was established as a single project with one steering committee but two locations of implementation – in the FGA and the RGA. Each of the geodetic authorities set up an implementation team led by locally contracted experts. The teams were composed of permanent staff, staff on shorter term contracts and local contractors. The aim was to develop staff capacities for managing change projects, although there was a recognition that this could not be done entirely in-house. At the time of implementation there was also a recruitment ban which limited all public sector institutions from hiring new staff.

The project was guided by a **long-term expert** from the Lantmäteriet, a person originally from Bosnia Herzegovina and who had had the same basic education as a surveyor as many of the GA staff.

The Lantmäteriet drew from its knowledge of implementing a similar project in Serbia (which has a similar legal and institutional heritage), and from its prior experience in BiH working with the geodetic authorities on the GTZ project.

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

The project has made a significant contribution to improvements in the municipal level service provision in several areas.

The address register has been rolled out to almost every municipality in the country, and by September 2018, more than 300,000 accurate addresses had been entered in the address register database across both entities.¹³⁹ The roll-out of the address register

¹³⁹ Sörensen et al, 2018.

had been facilitated by local level meetings and events to present the register and its benefits to municipality administrators. The benefits themselves are sufficiently motivating for municipalities to want to implement the system; it enables more efficient delivery and planning of local public services.

In addition, comprehensive address registers are a resource that can be sold to interested companies and utilities generating a modest income stream for the municipalities. The Lantmäteriet and the two GAs carefully designed the revenue model so that it provided positive incentives for continuous development and increasing coverage. While municipalities retain ownership of the digital data for addresses in their territories, the GAs can sell access to the data; 95% of the revenues go to the municipalities, and 5% administration charge remains with the GAs. The incentive structure around the database strongly suggests that it will continue to develop, even without donor support. In a relatively short space of time, it will likely be able to ensure that all households in the country have proper street addresses. Households themselves benefit from more reliable postal services, billing for utilities, and even more rapid emergency services.

The CILAP project's work on gender awareness in both entities and promotion of women's rights to own property can at least partially claim credit for an increase in women's registered ownership of property from 30% in 2012 to 35% in 2018¹⁴⁰. This is partly as a result of legislative change supported by awareness campaigns through women's NGOs.

The development of the sales price register is also solid and sustainable result of the project. The price register enables collection and dissemination of reliable information on the value of property, increasing the transparency and competitiveness of the property market. It has the additional benefit of providing government with accurate information for property tax valuation purposes and valuations for the appropriation of private property for public infrastructure projects. This has resulted in reducing the number of claims in courts and a speeding up of infrastructure projects. It has

¹⁴⁰ World Bank data, interview with World Bank representative, Sarajevo 25 June 2019.

laid the groundwork for a forthcoming property tax system. A private sector demand by banks and estate agents for sales price information provides an incentive for continuing development and promotion of the system.

The improvements to the geodetic infrastructure are not visible to those who are not technical specialists but will contribute to more accurate land surveys – and therefore making construction more accurate and reliable for both public infrastructure and private building. A more accurate measure of land heights can mean the difference between success and catastrophe for flood protection measures, for example.

Finally, the creation of the system for digital archiving has laid the foundation for all land registration and surveying documents to be electronically accessible. The number of paper documents is vast, and the pace of scanning is relatively slow, meaning that a fully digitalised archive will take another 2-3 decades. But the process has started, and some 120,000 documents had been scanned by the end of 2017.¹⁴¹

These sustainable results have been underpinned by two main factors. The first is that the achievements have been mainly system-wide; they go beyond the geodetic agencies themselves, and involve municipalities, government agencies such as tax administration and justice departments, as well as the private sector. The shared interest and benefits create an incentive to continue to operate and develop the new systems.

The second factor is that the project invested in human resources in both GAs. It did this formally as part of the project – developing human resource management procedures and protocols, as well as setting up human resources management departments. It did it also informally, by involving the geodetic agencies' permanent staff in the project design and implementation. This not only ensures ownership and sustainability of the CILAP project's results, but it also equipped both geodetic agencies with the skills and knowledge to manage future organisational change projects.

¹⁴¹ Data from Sørensen et al, 2018.

Contribution to EU membership

The CILAP project is unlikely to have a direct or profound impact on the prospects of Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU membership aspirations. Primarily this is because the challenges facing the country are deeply rooted in the complex constitutional arrangements and the entrenched nationalistic rhetoric that dominates public life. While it can be characterised as a very successful project, given the scope and scale of the challenges facing BiH, the project is nevertheless rather small, and its impact will be felt mainly at local levels.

The CILAP project did work closely with the World Bank-funded Real Estate Registration Project, and the state of land ownership records in BiH is followed closely by the EU. However, over the years from 2012-2019, there have been no major improvements in land registration reported; the EU is looking for the two entities to have “updated and mutually linked cadastre and land register databases [which are] yet to be established”¹⁴².

In part, the limited impact of the CILAP project on BiH's EU membership prospects is a result of the small scale of the project; but it is also a result of the unique and challenging context in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Efficient coordination

Within the land administration sector, the CILAP project was an exemplar of good coordination. This is mainly due to the strong and clear leadership of the two geodetic authorities in BiH, as well as the Lantmäteriet's very good understanding of the political and administrative situation in the country.

A second factor contributing to the positive coordination was that the CILAP project was designed *in order* to complement the World Bank-funded RERP project. At the design stage of the RERP project, it was recognised that it would not be able to fund some core capacity development needed by both GAs. The Swedish government, through the Lantmäteriet was then able to step in and provide the additional support needed. That the GAs were able to

¹⁴² EC 2018d p18.

play a strong role in conception and design of the CILAP project ensured that it remained relevant both to the needs of the GAs themselves, but also supported the implementation of the RERP.

When interest from the Norwegian government was expressed, the GAs led efforts to ensure that its support was complementary to both the RERP and the CILAP projects.

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

As an example of good practice, the CILAP project has provided many lessons learned which can be shared with other projects. The lessons learned presented below are those that are considered to be applicable in other countries and to other types of intervention. It is not a comprehensive list.

CILAP project design paid careful attention to the political economy factors; the organisational systems developed (such as the address register and sales price register) included consideration of financing and sustainability from the outset and not as an afterthought.

The project took a **system-wide approach**. Achievement of sustainable reform required involvement of local government and other government agencies such as tax and justice departments – who would be the ultimate beneficiaries of the new systems. The CILAP project understood that success depended on **involving municipalities on a voluntary rather than coercive or legislative basis**. It used pilot projects to test concepts, and then the successful pilot municipalities were engaged to promote the benefits to other municipalities.

The **Swedish ambassadors** followed the project closely and attended major project events. This gave the project a high political profile; potentially this may also have led to local politicians to also support the project. The geodetic authorities benefitted from this political support, for example, through increased budgets and political support for legislative change.

The role and profile of the **long-term expert** was critical to the project design and success. Trust and mutual understanding were relatively easily built because of her common background with many

of the GA staff. While these circumstances are unique and almost impossible to replicate, it does demonstrate how important the long-term expert is to project success together with his/her cultural understanding and ability to provide direction in a change process.

The use of multi-disciplinary teams embedded within the GAs, comprised of civil servants and contracted staff contributed to the success of the project and the overall capacity of the GAs. The project was successful, because the teams were knowledgeable of their own environments and organisational context, additional skills were brought in if necessary; solutions were then appropriate and acceptable to the context. The teams also learned through practice how to manage change, and this experience will remain with the organisations.

The long inception period gave time and inspiration to the directors of the GAs and contributed to the project design being more appropriate and realistic. The role of the study visits in providing tangible examples of what is possible was crucial; time and opportunities to discuss what is possible and desirable gave a chance to scale down ambitious ideas.

Finally, the strong mutual respect between professional surveyors in BiH and Sweden created bonds of trust and a collegiate atmosphere that is rare in international development projects.

Contribution Analysis

The change observed (Outcome):

Both BiH land agencies (Geodetic Agencies) have put in place improved geodetic infrastructure, address register, property sales price register and have started to scan property registration documents. Municipalities are using the address register system, and the relevant authorities are maintaining the sales price register. Both systems are in use by end users, such as public utilities and public prosecutors.

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁴³
Long inception period led to strong ownership by both BiH land agencies	Internal contributing factor	Key land agency staff report being influenced by study visits to Sweden before design of the project was finalized. Swedish models inspire the priorities and the approach.	4
Same leadership in FBIH agency kept project consistent and focused. Minimized disruption.	External contributing factor	Interviews with FBIH project staff. Importance of consistent leadership combined with political support – means resources available, and no frequent change of leadership.	3
System-wide approach focused on supporting implementation and delivery of benefits	Internal contributing factor	Interviews with project staff. Project leadership understood that a pragmatic rather than legalistic approach was needed for rapid progress. She led efforts to pilot projects in municipalities, and to persuade municipalities to take part. Project benefits then became evident, which led to more benefits.	4
Team structure for project implementation	Internal contributing factor	Project implementation structured around teams of staff, contractors and stakeholders. Full time role for some staff team members. Led to strong buy-in, learning for whole team, and effective implementation	4
Improving HR management addressed systemically, not just individually	Internal contributing factor	Project reports and interviews with staff. HR management addressed by setting up ‘department’ and formal rules and procedures. Combined with leadership commitment to staff (style of leadership unusually open), led to positive atmosphere and motivation.	3

¹⁴³ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁴³
Long-term coordinator speaks local language and has same professional background as partner agency	Internal contributing factor	Interview with long term coordinator, with project teams, local staff and Embassy. Long term coordinator understands the context and how things work, can communicate easily with senior politicians and brings influence from Sweden.	4
Careful approach to close-out likely to increase chances for sustainability	Internal contributing factor	Design documents. Discussions with project team and Embassy/Sida. Some elements of the project need more financial and technical support before being fully sustainable. Investment in the design of the close-out phase is likely to pay off. (not confirmed because in process).	2
Design/ conceptualization of new systems includes arrangements for cost-recovery and income generation. This increases likelihood of sustainability and investment in future development (compare with Kosovo ProTax)	Internal contributing factor	Interviews with land agencies, municipalities. Cost recovery of 5% of revenue generated by municipalities from the sale of sales price register data and address register data provide incentives and some element of cost recovery. Arrangement also recognizes role of land agencies in providing the technical infrastructure necessary.	3
External partners clearly recognize the benefits of the two key elements – address register and sales price register	External contributing factor	Interviews and project reports. Support from other agencies, e.g. ministries of interior, courts, ministry of justice, give the project a high profile and commitment from public administration system	3

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that the project contributed to strengthening public administration and upholding property rights. While overall improvements in the real estate registration system are yet to be realised, the project made strong progress towards that goal. The

project has made a direct contribution to Improvements in municipal administration, utilities and billing, expropriations, and many other areas of both public administration and private business (e.g. construction).

In answer to the question ‘could the land agencies have achieved these same outcomes without Lantmateriet support?’, the answer was: “yes, but 10 years later”.

Case Study 4: Statistics Sweden (SCB), Bosnia and Herzegovina

Basic data

Name of intervention	Partnership in Statistics in BiH Phase I, II & III
Location of intervention	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Timeframe	2007-2015
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Statistics Sweden (SCB)
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	
Phase 1 timeframe	2007-2009
Phase 1 budget	SEK 14,975,600 (EUR 1,439,962) ¹⁴⁴
Phase 1 expenditure	SEK 14,199,635 (EUR 1,365,350]
Phase 2 timeframe	2010-2011
Phase 2 budget	SEK 6,250,000 (EUR 584,112]
Phase 2 expenditure	SEK 5,207,492 (EUR 500,720]
Phase 3 timeframe	2012-2015
Phase 3 budget	SEK 15,751,000 (EUR 1,514,519]
Phase 3 expenditure	SEK 11,610,610 (EUR 1,116,405]
TOTAL expenditure	SEK 31,017,737 (EUR 2,982,475]

Brief description

Partnership in Statistics objective was to provide support to develop prioritized areas in statistics, build statistical and institutional capacity in the three statistical offices (two entities and one state level statistical institution), make statistics correspond to the national needs and EU and international regulations and standards in statistics and support the EU integration process. Further objectives were to contribute to the development of a sustainable statistical system in Bosnia-Herzegovina that facilitates decision-making based on relevant and reliable statistical information that meets domestic demands, supports the monitoring of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Process (PRSP), Stabilisation and Association process (SAp), the Sector development Strategy process and complies with the EU requirements.

Overview

Context

According to the 2003 EU Feasibility Study, necessary statistical data for the BiH level and the entity levels were poor or non-existent.¹⁴⁵ The statistical capacity in BiH in general was regarded as poor in comparison to European standards (2003 Global Assessment), in particular in the areas of national accounts, business statistics, agriculture statistics and social statistics. Data availability was lacking due to poor coverage and frequency of surveys, and to the non-existence of registers that fully satisfy statistical requirements.

Partnership in statistics was supposed to contribute to the development of a sustainable statistical system in Bosnia-Herzegovina that facilitates decision-making based on relevant and reliable statistical information that meets domestic demands, supports the monitoring of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Process (PRSP), Stabilisation and Association process (SAp), the Sector development Strategy process and complies with the EU requirements.

Major donors in the field of statistics were EU, Sweden, Unicef and United Kingdom.¹⁴⁶

Description of the intervention

Partnership in Statistics was established between SCB and the 3 statistical agencies: Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHAS) Sarajevo, including Branch Office in Brcko District, Institute for Statistics of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo (FIS) and Institute for Statistics of Republika Srpska, Banja Luka (RSIS).

¹⁴⁴ Exchange rate used for EUR calculations: SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

¹⁴⁵ EC 2003.

¹⁴⁶ IATI database on d-portal.org at http://www.d-portal.org/ctrack.html?country=BA§or_code=16062&year_min=2009&year_max=2019&year=2019#view=main.

The intervention had three phases from 2007-2015 and covered the following priority statistical areas: Statistical methodology, Labour, Environment, Agriculture and agro-monetary statistics, Business register and business statistics, Energy and Gender statistics. In addition, it had a management component aiming at improving management and HR policies in the 3 statistical offices.

BiH has a complex administrative structure of the statistical system: the two entity level institutions are responsible for data gathering and processing on their territories, while the state level is responsible for compiling and publishing national level statistics. If there are disagreements between institutions on methodology or other policy issues, these can undermine the ability of the state of BiH to publish statistics as a single country. The partnership mainly focused on building statistical and institutional capacity in the three statistical offices and making statistics correspond to the national needs and EU and international regulations and standards in statistics by improving statistical methodology.

Total budget was EUR 3,538,593 and the actual expenditure EUR 2,982,475.

Statistics Sweden's first intervention in BiH was a project in 1998-2001 supporting efficient sampling design (Master Sample), National Accounts (SNA93), supporting IT development and general capacity building. From 2005 to 2007 the BiH counterparts participated in the regional cooperation concerning environment statistics (ES) and survey/statistical methodology. During the Sida country strategy analysis process in 2004 more than 18 studies/evaluations were realised. In the process statistics was identified as one of priority areas. In response to these and other issues, Sida engaged Statistics Sweden to develop a proposal in cooperation with BHAS and other stakeholders for a new national bilateral program in statistics. There was a fairly slow start of the first phase due to pre-assessment of the state of statistics in the various subject fields selected for the project.

The subsequent phases of the Programme were designed based on Results Based Management (RBM) exercises. Design process was based only on the input received from the 3 statistical offices, it focused at the level of organisation, and the participants were

expected to come with a list of topics. During the WS they found the lowest common denominators that all 3 agencies agreed upon as priority areas of intervention, any topic that relied on external stakeholders was excluded. In the subsequent phases there was no comprehensive analysis.¹⁴⁷

The main strategy for achieving the project purpose has been development of knowledge through: 1. engaging a long-term resident advisor, 2. short-term consultancies, providing on-the-job training and mentoring through methodology designing and pilot surveys; the consultancies were conducted by experts from SCB, other Swedish governmental agencies responsible for the official statistics and external experts, 3. participation in study tours, training courses, “summer schools” and seminars in BiH or abroad and 4. trainee programme gave young graduates appropriate work experience with intention to eventually employ most of the trainees on more permanent contracts. The programme focused primarily on the three statistical agency capacity building and not on other actors and stakeholders

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

The main achievement Of the Partnership in Statistics is improved capacities of 3 statistical agencies statisticians to implement surveys in line with international and EU methodological standards. In addition, they improved statistical methodology in the following fields of statistics:

Labour: improved Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Labour Cost Survey (LCS) reporting to EUROSTAT, although still not continuous LFS.

Environment: Water statistics, Green House Gas (GHG) emissions statistics and Environmental Protection Expenditure (EPE) statistics indicators in line with EU standards.

To a certain degree **agriculture**.

¹⁴⁷ Desk research June 2019.

Gender component provided disaggregated data by sex in the project components i.e. mainstreaming.

According to the 2014 evaluation there has been limited progress in the management and HR component.

Due to complex political situation and the fact that one entity did not recognise the results of the last census, there were not any improvements at the state level statistics.¹⁴⁸

Statistical capacity indicator for Bosnia and Herzegovina has increased from 57.78 in 2009 to 68.89 in 2018 according to the World Bank data.¹⁴⁹ It is interesting to note that the highest rating was recorded in 2014 towards the end of the phase III of the SCB project and in 2016 after the EU Support to state and entity statistical institutions Phase VI had ended.

Contribution to EU membership

Following the previously mentioned findings of the 2019 EC report for BiH statistics is highly relevant for the EU integration process particularly for evidence-based policy making and monitoring of the progress. Due to the fact that system wide results are lacking there is little contribution to EU membership.

According to the 2019 EC report:

“Preparations in the area of statistics are at an **early stage of preparations**. Capacity constraints of the statistical offices are exacerbated by increasing demands for statistics, as Bosnia and Herzegovina further progresses on its EU integration path. Special attention needs to be paid to (i) improving cooperation, coordination and decision-making processes to develop the national statistical system; and to (ii) increasing the use of administrative data sources and registers for statistical production. Data exchange between entities and the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to be improved, in particular to ensure sufficient quality of the data received. Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to implement a full and consistent system of national accounts and to

¹⁴⁸ Interviews BHAS, FIS, RSIS, June-July 2019.

¹⁴⁹ World Bank, World Development Indicators, Bosnia and Herzegovina
<https://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&country=BIH>.

apply the European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA) 2010, methodology, in particular regarding government finance statistics. Revenues need to be recorded on the basis of accrual accounting. Bosnia and Herzegovina will need to define its NUTS III regions and prepare for the next population census¹⁵⁰.

Efficient coordination

The intervention is in line with the Law on statistics and the 2005 Agreement to strengthen the coordinating role of BHAS in harmonising methodologies and disseminating State level data. All adopted laws were in compliance with EU and UN regulations and principles. The entity laws are in compliance with the related state level laws. With the intention to establish a unified system for methodologies and standards in statistical production, the statistical offices signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2005.¹⁵¹

Sida mostly leaves coordination with other donor initiatives to project coordinators at operational level - there is evidence of close coordination and planning taking into account other donor initiatives throughout SCB Partnership in Statistics. Sida also co-financed EU support to the BiH census.¹⁵² However, during the interviews it turned out that donor coordination was a problem in BiH since the mechanisms for coordination at central government level were lacking. Some of the interviewed donors were not aware of the SCB partnership with the BiH statistical institutions.¹⁵³

Statistics Sweden (SCB) was also involved in a regional statistics project. The purpose of the regional project was to support regional cooperation within statistics in the Western Balkans in order to strengthen the national production of statistics as a tool in the EU approximation process, and as a means to develop democratic and stable societies. According to the Sida Decentralised evaluation of the reform cooperation in Western Balkans from 2012, the regional project complemented the national projects by sharing best

¹⁵⁰ EC 2019d p. 136.

¹⁵¹ Desk research 2019.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Interviews with Unicef, World Bank, June/July 2019.

practices, enabling learning between the National Statistical Institutes (NSI), helping the national statistical offices to create a statistical system that is in compliance with EU standards and providing the possibility to allocate scarce expertise resources in an efficient way. This was claimed, by SCB, to be important, since the critical mass of technical expertise within many countries in the region was simply too small, making cooperation with others necessary to develop capacity. At the time the Sida-funded Regional Cooperation Project was, along with the EU-funded IPA Multi-beneficiary programme, the only regional project in place in the Western Balkans. The two programmes, were complementary according to SCB.¹⁵⁴

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

There are a number of important lessons learned from the SPAP that can improve future Swedish Government agency capacity development work.

Use of conditionality: Use of conditionality could have resulted in achieving better results in case of Partnership in Statistics. Instead of discontinuing the partnership because SCB concluded that they could not reach a productive collaboration. During the project design, the Bosnian agencies demanded that all decisions as well as activities needed the full participation of all three agencies. When the agency from Republika Srpska then failed to participate, the project was in essence stopped. The same situation also threatened the regional project when the three Bosnian agencies requested three seats on the regional steering committee, where all the other countries had one each. In that case, however, SCB refused and forced them to choose one representative.¹⁵⁵

Political support: Lack of political interest in driving the statistical reform and interference at different levels of governance in the very complex BiH context drove the process in different often

¹⁵⁴ Sida 2013, p.23.

¹⁵⁵ Interviews with BHAS, FIS and RSIS, June/July 2019.

conflicting directions. As a results there is really no progress in building reliable statistical system.¹⁵⁶

Political dialogue: Stronger engagement from the Swedish embassy or Sida headquarters in the political dialogue might have potentially improved the situation.¹⁵⁷

Importance of the system wide approach: had the intervention targeted other actors in the statistical system, both the data providers as well as the users of statistical data) the impact of the intervention might have been much better.

Importance of the comprehensive initial assessments: that must take into consideration wider context of political economy, not just narrow field of intervention.

Contribution Analysis

The change observed (Outcome): Individual staff in the three statistical offices in BiH gained knowledge of the statistical methodology in prioritized areas in statistics in line with EU and international regulations and standards.¹⁵⁸ However, there was not much impact at the level of quality of national statistical data and cooperation between the 2 entity agencies and the state statistical agency, as well as with other agencies and other key actors in providing and/or collecting statistical data.¹⁵⁹

According to the 2003 EU Feasibility Study, necessary statistical data for the BiH level and the entity levels were poor or non-existent. The statistical capacity in BiH in general was regarded as poor in comparison to European standards (2003 Global Assessment), in particular in the areas of national accounts, business statistics, agriculture statistics and social statistics. Data availability was lacking due to poor coverage and frequency of surveys, and to

¹⁵⁶ Interview with BiH Directorate for Economic Planning, BHAS, FIS and RSIS, Swedish Embassy, June/July 2019.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with BiH Directorate for Economic Planning, BHAS, FIS and RSIS, June/July 2019.

¹⁵⁸ Interviews with BHAS, FIS and RSIS, June/July 2019.

¹⁵⁹ EC 2019d.

the non-existence of registers that fully satisfy statistical requirements.

Contributing factors	TYPE	Evidence	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁶⁰
A. SCB provided high level statistical expertise particularly short-term experts	Internal contributing	Desk review and Interviews with SCB, BiH Statistical agencies	4
B. SCB supported the recruitment and training of young graduates which supported the strengthening of HR cadre.	Internal contributing	Interviews with all 3 BiH statistical agencies	3
C. The project focused only on the statistical agencies, and not on other agencies and other key actors in providing and/or collecting statistical data. This way it could only contribute to improving processes inside the institutions, and not the statistics system overall e.g. Survey methods and data, but not administrative data from external sources.	Internal preventing	Desk review and interviews with SCB and BiH statistical agencies	4
D. Design process was based only on the input received from the 3 statistical offices, focused at the level of organisation, and from the list of suggested topics found the lowest common denominators that all 3 agencies agreed upon as priority areas of intervention; any topic that relied on external stakeholders was excluded; there was no deeper analysis.	Internal preventing	Desk review and interviews with SCB and BiH statistical agencies	4

¹⁶⁰ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high)

Contributing factors	TYPE	Evidence	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁶⁰
E. Project approach was focusing on building individual capacities not teams, systems or organization.	Internal preventing	Desk review and interviews with SCB and BiH statistical agencies	3
F. Unfavourable institutional framework: battle over authorities between the state and 2 entity agencies negatively influenced their cooperation	External preventing	Desk review and interviews with SCB and BiH statistical agencies	4
G. Lack of political support – actually political interest/interference at different levels of governance drove the process in different often conflicting directions – e.g. RS did not recognize the last census results and that caused lack of relevant sample survey data	External preventing	interviews with SCB and BiH statistical agencies	4
H. First long-term advisor was very good, subsequent less good, the last one was not satisfactory; Handover stages were not handled well)	Internal preventing	interviews with SCB and BiH statistical agencies	3
I. There was no exit strategy – Sida abrupt decision to close the project due to more4more, less4less new Swedish policy	Internal preventing	Interview with Sida	4
J. Little evidence of using lessons learned, reflection or desire to change donors' approach - more supplicants that active participants	Internal preventing	interviews with SCB and BiH statistical agencies	3

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors we conclude that the Partnership in Statistics succeeded only to improve individual capacities and statistical methodology in the 3 agencies and that there were too many preventing both internal and external factors.

Key factors related to the SCB methodology:

- Lack of sufficient initial assessment and lack of real participatory planning.¹⁶¹
- The main strategy for achieving the project purpose has been development of knowledge through short-term consultancies with on-the-job training and mentoring through methodology designing and pilot surveys, participation in study tours, training courses and seminars in BiH or abroad. The consultancies have been conducted by experts from SCB, other Swedish governmental agencies responsible for the official statistics and external experts. The consultants were not supposed to offer any turn-key solutions, but they could give good advice and share their experience in applying current best methods in the development work. Study visits (to SCB, Slovenia), participation in international conferences, participation in the statistics “Summer school” in Sweden etc. All focused on individual statistical expert capacity building.¹⁶²
- Although the duration of the engagement of long-term resident advisors was increasing in each of the phases, the quality of advisors was decreasing.¹⁶³
- SCB introduced a trainee programme intended to give young graduates appropriate work experience. The 3 offices were deciding on work tasks for the trainees, and these were not necessarily related to the project. Even though not explicitly mentioned the whole idea of the programme was for the BiH statistical offices to eventually employ most of the trainees on more permanent contracts. Restrictions on all offices in hiring new people have prevented the offices to hire the trainees after

¹⁶¹ Desk research Project documentation and reports and interviews with BHAS, FIS, RSIS, June/July 2019.

¹⁶² Desk research Project documentation 2019.

¹⁶³ Interviews with BHAS, FIS and RSIS, June/July 2019.

completion of the trainee programme. However, many of the trainees remain in place and are supporting the strengthening of the workforce, and some replaced the staff who went to retirement.¹⁶⁴

In conclusion, there was a small positive impact at the level of state statistical performance.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

Case Study 5: Statistics Sweden, Kosovo

Basic data

Name of intervention	Swedish Support to Statistics development at the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) – phase 3 and 4
Location of intervention	Kosovo
Timeframe	2008 – 2017
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Statistics Sweden – Statistiska centralbyrån (SCB)
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	Swedish Board of Agriculture (SJV)
Phase 3 timeframe	2008 – 2013
Phase 3 budget	SEK 40 mil. (EUR 3.73 mil.) ¹⁶⁵ USD 4,119,109 ¹⁶⁶
Phase 3 expenditure	SEK 37.5 mil. (EUR 3.5 mil.) USD 3,881,438
Phase 4 timeframe	2013 – 2017 (extended to Dec. 2018)
Phase 4 budget	SEK 39 mil. (EUR 3.64 mil.) USD 3,968,717
Phase 4 expenditure (until Dec. 2018)	SEK 30.5 mil. (EUR 2.85 mil.) USD 3,102,282
TOTAL expenditure	SEK 68 mil. (EUR 6.35 mil.) USD 6,983,720

Brief description

The overall objective of the project was that KAS and the national statistical system in Kosovo are to be characterised by sound statistical methods and practices in line with EU and international standards, focusing on KAS management capacity; economic statistics including agro and monetary statistics; environmental statistics; social statistics; IT development; and on dissemination of statistics/analysis components.

Overview

Context

Accession to the European Union (EU) is an over-arching development priority supported by all major political parties in Kosovo. The Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) between the EU and Kosovo was signed in October 2015 and entered into force in April 2016, which makes Kosovo officially a potential candidate for EU membership. Kosovo proclaimed its independence in 2008, hence 10 years since, despite the progress made, most of institutions are still very much in a formative stage. The post 1998-99 conflict fragility, including lack of full international recognition, continue to hamper Kosovo's growth and development to its full potential.

With regard to statistical capacity, according to the latest EC Progress Report 2019, Kosovo has some level of preparation in the area of statistics. Good progress was made in addressing some of challenges, in particular by amending the Law on statistics in December 2018, improving national accounts and expanding social statistics, notably through the first full-scale survey following the methodology of the EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC). However, KAS continues to suffer from insufficient resources and capacities. Coordination between statistical institutions has not improved much. Significant efforts are still needed, especially to ensure the alignment of macro-economic, business, and environmental statistics with European standards.¹⁶⁷

Besides cooperation with Sida/SCB, KAS has institutional cooperation with other international organisations such as the EU, IMF, World Bank, Unicef, Eurostat, and other organisations that support KAS in increasing the capabilities and skill to the level of European and international standards.

¹⁶⁵ SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

¹⁶⁶ Amounts in USD as per project budget data presented at openaid.se platform.

¹⁶⁷ EC 2019a, p.87.

Description of the intervention

Structure and phases of the intervention

The project was implemented in four phases (Phase 1: 2001 – 2005, Phase 2: 2005 – 2008, Phase 3: 2008 – 2013).

Phase 1: 2001-2005 (not scope of this evaluation): During the period 2001-2005, the Statistical Office of Kosovo (SOK) in cooperation with Statistics Sweden (SCB) carried out the project 'Support for economic statistics and IT in Kosovo'.¹⁶⁸

Phase 2: 2005-2008 (not scope of this evaluation): This project phase was initiated in March 2005. An evaluation of the project was conducted in September 2003. The conclusions and recommendations drawn by the evaluation team were basically agreed upon by KAS and SCB. In short, the evaluation team proposed the stationing of a Long-Term Advisor (LTA) at KAS with the task to become a catalyst for an accelerated data production and to simultaneously strengthen the ongoing capacity building efforts at KAS.

Phase 3: 2008-2013: The third project phase was initiated in July 2008. The project consisted of specific support to statistical products within economic statistics and agricultural economy, energy and environmental statistics and social statistics. The overall objective of the project was to contribute to the development of a sustainable statistical system in Kosovo and for KAS to produce and deliver statistical products in line with international standards. This project phase also had a general capacity building component, focusing on:

- Management and human resource training
- Master plan/national strategy for statistical development
- Statistical methodology
- Index theory and percentage calculations
- English language training
- IT support and training in software

¹⁶⁸ The statistical office has since changed its name to Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS).

- Cooperation with Pristina University
- Improving public image

Phase 4: 2013-2017: The overall objective of the project is that KAS and the national statistical system in Kosovo are to be characterised by sound statistical methods and practices in line with EU and international standards, focusing on:

- Management capacity
- Economic statistics including agro and monetary statistics
- Environmental statistics
- Social statistics
- IT Development
- Dissemination of statistics/analysis component

The total budget of phases 3 and 4 was **EUR 7.37** (EUR 3.73 and EUR 3.64 mil. respectively). The total actual expenditure of phases 3 and 4 was **EUR 6.35 mil.** (EUR 3.5 mil. and EUR 2.85 mil. respectively).

Selection of the intervention

Third phase 2008-2013: Like previous phases, the project formulation of third phase was preceded by a workshop, where priorities in subject matter areas were identified as priorities by KAS staff and management at the time. The project involved close cooperation with DFID, which was covering managerial components. In autumn of 2011 an evaluation was carried out by DFID/Sida. The purpose was to assess results from previous phases of support, and to discuss the preconditions and forms for possible future support, primarily from Sida as DFID was phasing out its support in Kosovo. By the end of 2011 Eurostat took on an Adapted Global Assessment (AGA) mission in Kosovo to assess the country's statistical system. The conclusions and recommendations were used as important contributions to the project extensions implemented during August 2011- June 2013.

Fourth phase 2013-2017: As in previous phases, the fourth phase 2013-2017 project proposal was prepared through a Results Based Management (RBM) model in a workshop to lay out the road

map for the project and its expected outcome. The workshop was held in January 2013 and included managers and staff from different departments of KAS such as Economic Statistics, Social Statistics, Agro Monetary Statistics, Environmental Statistics, IT and Methodology, Planning and Management. The CEO of KAS also participated in the workshop. Three employees from SCB including the resident long-term advisor participated. Activities for all the components of this project proposal were discussed and decided in the RBM workshop.

Although there is no specific mention of a **Theory of Change** in project documents, the evaluation of third phase describes the intervention logic of phase three, which is applicable to the fourth phase as well. In technical cooperation, activities aim to introduce working tools and methodologies that would, if used correctly, result in the organisation using and incorporating them in its own organisational practices (organisational change). When practices change, the project assumes an improved production process of the statistical products to be the primary outcome (improved organisational efficiency). This logic would apply to all technical cooperation areas. In capacity development the basic logic is to strengthen staff capacities in data collection, in the use of IT and computer software, in results-based management practices, etc. Tracing these outputs towards clear outcome objectives is less straightforward as compared with technical cooperation areas, although it is clear they aim towards the overall objective of improved statistics in Kosovo. On the more immediate outcome level, objectives such as staff better prepared for organisational change and international requirements, and strengthening the organisational support functions, suffice as a broad description of outcome expectations.

Implementation of the intervention

The SCB supported KAS primarily through short missions where staff from SCB visit KAS to give hands-on support. Some missions provided courses and sometimes staff from KAS visited SCB. The missions were coordinated by a long-term consultant stationed in Pristina. KAS staff also took part in activities (workshops/summer school, etc.) organised by the Sida Regional Office. The project also

supported a few KAS internal planning and monitoring workshops (such as annual and five-year plans).

The implementation was coordinated through: i) annual meeting of Sida/SCB/KAS, ii) 1 to 2 long-term SCB advisors at KAS during the project period coupled with short term missions from SCB, iii) a steering committee called every three months to plan and follow up the activities coordinated with other donors who operate in KAS.

Fourth phase 2013-2017: Implementation during 2013-2017 followed the regular partnership-based cooperation between our two institutions. Two long-term advisors (LTAs) were placed at KAS until July 2016 to coordinate the project implementation and to act as advisors on specific thematic areas (IT and management) in close consultation with KAS management. The project team also consisted of a project administrator and an IT specialist stationed at the Department of Methodology and IT at KAS.

During fourth phase, the project benefited from 73 short-term missions with a total number of 67 experts from Statistics Sweden and the Swedish Board of Agriculture (SJV), totalling 113 mission weeks. In addition, 7 study visits/working missions were conducted to Statistics Sweden or to SJV. KAS staff also took part in 43 activities (workshops/summer school, etc.) organised by the Sida Regional Office. The project also supported a few KAS internal planning and monitoring workshops (such as annual and five-year plans). Furthermore, the project also supported participation in external project component-related activities in a few cases.

To more closely monitor the status and progress of the project and to discuss project-related issues, quarterly Steering Committee Meetings with participation from KAS, Statistics Sweden and Sida were held, as well as annual meetings.

Third phase 2008-2013: Similarly to the fourth phase, Sida support was primarily implemented through short missions where staff from SCB visit KAS to give hands-on support. There is a strong focus on helping the staff at KAS in completing their surveys in a professional manner and hence there was a strong methodological focus on most missions. Some missions provided courses and sometimes staff from KAS visit SCB in Sweden. The

statistical content in the support varied from how to use a scanner to entering data to advanced calculations of confidence intervals. A lot of time was spent implementing improved methods in Excel and correcting observed errors. The missions were coordinated by a long-term consultant stationed in Pristina. During 2010 there were 20 missions to KAS and four visits from KAS to Sweden. In the 20 missions from Sweden, 22 different experts were involved.

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

Since 2008, the project consisted of specific support to statistical products within economic statistics, agricultural, monetary statistics, energy and environmental statistics and social statistics, as well as in strengthening statistical methods and practices to be in line with EU and international classification standards, and dissemination of statistics.

With the adoption of the law on official statistics in 2011 and subsequent amendment in April 2019, the main responsibility for processing statistical data is with KAS. KAS was also moved from the Ministry of Public Administration (MPA) to the Prime Minister's Office. It is now an autonomous budget organisation. A Statistical Council was established in 2012. According to the new law, KAS has the prime role to conduct and supervise data collection activities in Kosovo and is responsible for drafting a multi-annual work programme for the Kosovo's statistical system.

The main achievements of the SCB-KAS partnership are:

- KAS is getting more and more recognition as a solid producer of official statistics through increased production of statistics and quality of existing statistical products.
- User friendly webpage and improved web-based dissemination of statistics. In 2016, KAS launched its new website, which is a major step forward for KAS in presenting and communicating statistics to users. It provides more information, data and easy access that attracts more visitors to the website.

- Improved planning and management capacities. A key factor with regard to the management component has been the development, use and understanding of the SIPK (Internal Time Reporting System), which is created as a planning and follow-up tool for KAS. All staff report their worked hours every day on various statistical products.
- Higher inter institutional exchange of data. As a result of a productive cooperation with SCB experts, KAS staff were able to build the system for Economic Accounts for Agriculture (EAA) and produce data fully in accordance with Eurostat standards and recommendations. The EAA data is high quality and comparable with EAA data in EU countries. Agriculture data for 11 years was transmitted to Eurostat in 2016, and two reports on EAA were produced and published, with results that were beyond project expectations.

As a result, performance improvements to overall government performance are evident in several areas:

- The budget in the municipalities is distributed based on the KAS data population estimation.
- The Ministry of Finance (MoF) prepares the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) for the medium term 3-year period (macroeconomic unit at government level) based on KAS data.
- The Central Bank of Kosovo (CBK) uses KAS data on import and export for the purpose of producing the Balance of Payment, as a basis for the strategy for the orientation of the economic structure.
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) and the other ministries use the Labour Force Survey (LFS) data survey in drafting the strategy for the reduction of unemployment and concrete employment measures.
- The Ministry of Health (MoH) uses KAS data in drafting the strategy on the avoidance of the causes of deaths, as well as policy to increase the number of maternity care or nurseries based on the number of births.
- Ministries increasingly use KAS data on women and men in achieving equal representation in different institutions.

Contribution to EU membership

Statistics are crucial for negotiating the SAA. In this regard, the European classification of economic activities (NACE Rev.2) continues to be applied in all relevant statistical areas. The statistical business register was improved and is more aligned with the reality of economic activities in Kosovo. Structural business statistics and some short-term statistics are partially in line with the EU acquis, but the availability of short-term statistics is limited. The agricultural holding survey is regularly produced and aligned with acquis standards. Energy and environment statistics are partially in line with the acquis. Demographic statistics are broadly in line with the EU acquis. Despite the progress made, the current discrepancy between the EU and Kosovo's statistical data constitutes a challenge. Effective cooperation under an SAA requires KAS to produce more data on macroeconomic matters, such as trade and employment.

Efficient coordination

Besides cooperation with SCB, KAS has institutional cooperation with other international organisations in the field of statistics such as Eurostat, IMF, World Bank, Unicef and other organisations that support KAS in increasing the capabilities and skill to the level of European and international standards.

Eurostat supports KAS since 2001 through intensive training by participating in different horizontal activities as well as long term training in many subject matter areas considered with priorities for KAS. Also, it supported a pilot EU-SILC in 2014, under the IPA 2012 pilot project.

From early 2008 to early 2011 the DfID project was active. The project implied close co-ordination with the Sida/SCB project. By May 2009, a draft Strategic Development Plan for the years 2009-2013 was developed. The initiative has been concerned with the application and use of the plan as the strategic document it is intended to be, including assistance with donor coordination, an action plan for 2010 with priorities, and training in management and planning (strategic and financial). But the effort is reported as having had difficulties. These included changes of KAS leadership, failures

to secure additional funding (for plan implementation) and an effective halt to many activities due to the work with the census.

Unicef is also contributing to strengthening capacities on data and statistics of KAS. One of examples, is the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), conducted for the first time in Kosovo in 2013-2014, including in Roma, Ashkaeli and Egyptian communities, introducing a data revolution essential for improved forecasting, modelling, engaging and measuring social progress in Kosovo. Unicef used MICS implementation to build the technical expertise of the KAS in survey design, sampling, data collection and analysis.

World Bank's project 2016-2019 objective is to strengthen the production of data and indicators by the KAS in key areas, including poverty, social inclusion, health and informality, as well as implementation of the EU-SILC survey.

In addition, a Regional Project, provided by Sida/Statistics Sweden has been running parallel to the national project and KAS staff participated in most of the activities organised and financed by the Regional Project. There have been workshops and trainings, mostly on methodology and environmental statistics. In addition, a Regional Statistical Committee, with about four meetings per year, was organised under the Regional Project. A summer school was held by the Regional Project. The regional seminars, workshops and other activities have proven to be of great value for KAS. During these events, topics that could be of value at national level were discussed, and interaction with regional colleagues provided opportunities to exchange ideas, experiences, problems and situations regarding data sources, the methodology applied and the data quality. These were of great value to KAS and provided a benchmarking opportunity.

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

KAS ought to have been more strategic and responsive to the SCB assistance offered. The strong focus on improving capacities at output level, despite many improvements in production of outputs, has also led to KAS culture of working in 'silos' and individual capacity development, which hampered the overall progress as an organization.

The SCB support has been primarily carried out through short missions where staff from SCB visits KAS to give hands-on support. There was a strong focus on helping the staff in completing their work competently. However, the abundance and flexibility of short-missions, often left to KAS staff to call ‘at will’ despite producing impressive outputs, has also led to dependency of KAS staff on SCB to complete their work, thus weakening the sustainability of the project.

There is a need to spend more time in design phase and utilise more the in-house expertise rather than relying on short-term experts and focus at outcome rather than output level. Also, to establish clear preconditions for government to fulfil (e.g. in budget and staff increases) prior to engaging in new phases of support.

Contribution Analysis

The change observed (Outcome): Increased quality, production and dissemination of KAS statistical products.

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁶⁹
Increased Government/Ministries and WB/IMF/EU/Eurostat demand for data	External contributing	Desk research and interviews with: KAS and SCB staff/project team, CBK, MEI, EU: Based on Eurostat's calculation, from 2014 to 2018 the number of data points available in Eurostat's database increased from 20,291 data points to 608,432 data points or expressed in relative terms, around 3000% increase.	4

¹⁶⁹ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁶⁹
		<p>The budget in the municipalities is distributed based on the KAS data on population estimation.</p> <p>The Ministry of Finance prepares the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) for the medium term 3-year period (macroeconomic unit at government level) based on KAS data.</p> <p>The Central Bank of Kosovo uses KAS data on import and export for the purpose of producing the Balance of Payment, as a basis for the strategy for the orientation of the economic structure.</p> <p>The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the other ministries use the LFS data survey in drafting the strategy for the reduction of unemployment and concrete employment measures.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health uses KAS data in drafting the strategy on the avoidance of the causes of deaths, as well as policy to increase the number of maternity care or nurseries based on the number of births.</p>	

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁶⁹
		Ministries use KAS data on women and men for equal representation in different institutions, etc.	
Development of user-friendly webpage and improved web-based dissemination of statistics	Internal contributing	<p>Desk research and interviews with: KAS and SCB staff/project team, MEI, MPA/AIS, MIA/CRA:</p> <p>In 2016, KAS launched its new website, which is a major step forward for KAS in presenting and communicating statistics to users. It provides more information, data and easy access, which attracts more visitors to the website.</p>	3
Improved planning and management capacities of KAS.	Internal contributing	<p>Desk research and interviews with: KAS and SCB staff/project team:</p> <p>A key factor with regard to the management component has been the development, use and understanding of the SIPK (Internal Time Reporting System), which is created as a planning and follow-up tool for KAS. All staff report their worked hours every day on various statistical products.</p>	2

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors (see Figure 2 and Table 1 in Annex 7), we conclude that two major factors contributed to increased quality, production and dissemination of KAS statistical products.

First, the increasing demands for quality products from government/ministries and relevant international organizations such as WB/IMF/EU/Eurostat have prompted the KAS and project to focus on increasing the overall number of statistical products, quality and dissemination.

Second major contributing factor is the implementation of the SAA, which requires quality statistical data in a number of areas. Despite the progress made, the current discrepancy between the EU and Kosovo's statistical data constitutes a challenge. Effective cooperation under an SAA requires KAS to produce more data on macroeconomic matters, such as trade and employment.

The change observed (Outcome): Low sustainability of KAS results

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁷⁰
Capacity substitution	Internal contributing	Desk research and interviews with SCB project manager: SCB assistance is primarily implemented through short missions where staff from SCB visits KAS to give hands-on support. There is a strong focus on helping the staff at KAS in completing their surveys in a professional manner. The support varied from how to use a scanner to entering data to advanced calculations of confidence intervals. A lot of time was spent implementing improved methods in Excel	4

¹⁷⁰ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁷⁰
		and correcting observed errors. Only in the last phase, KAS was visited by 73 short-term missions with a total number of 67 experts from Statistics Sweden and the Swedish Board of Agriculture (SJV), totalling 113 mission weeks.	
Low absorption capacity	Internal contributing	Interview with KAS CEO: KAS ought to have been more strategic and responsive to the SCB assistance offered.	3
Lack of formal statistical methodology courses in Kosovo universities	External contributing	Desk research and interview with KAS and SCB staff/project team	2
Inadequate premises and equipment	External contributing	Interview with KAS staff/project team	2
Frequent change of deployed SCB short-term experts	Internal contributing	Interview with KAS staff/project team	2

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors (see Figure 2 and Table 1 in Annex 7), we conclude that two factors contributed to low sustainability of KAS results:

First, the abundance and flexibility of short-missions, often left to KAS staff to call ‘at will’ despite producing impressive outputs, has also led to dependency of KAS staff on SCB to complete their work, thus weakening the sustainability of the project.

Second, the strong focus on improving capacities at output level, despite many improvements has also led to KAS culture of working in ‘silos’ and individual capacity development, which hampered the overall progress as an organization.

Case Study 6: Swedish Tax Agency, Kosovo

Basic data

Name of intervention	Improved Property Tax Collection in Kosovo (ProTax)
Location of intervention	Kosovo
Timeframe	2008-2020
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Swedish Tax Agency – Skatteverket (SKV)
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	Lantmäteriet - Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority
Phase 1 timeframe	2008-12
Phase 1 budget	SEK 26.75 million (EUR 2.50 million) ¹⁷¹
Phase 1 expenditure	SEK 28.30 million (EUR 2.64 million)
Bridging phase	2012-2014
Phase 2 timeframe	2014 – 2020
Phase 2 budget	SEK 53.66 million (EUR 5.01 million)
Phase 2 expenditure (to Feb 2018)	SEK 45.27 million (EUR 4.23 million)
TOTAL actual expenditure (to Feb 2018)	SEK 73.57 million (EUR 6.88 million)

Brief description

The project aimed to improve the system of property taxation, which is a responsibility of local government in Kosovo. The system includes issues of property registration and valuation, billing and revenue collection. The second phase extended the system to cover land taxes, which required a legislation change. BY 2019, an average total of EUR 20 million revenue was being collected annually for all municipalities. A goal of the project was to strengthen mutual accountability between citizens and local government.

¹⁷¹ SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

Overview

Context

Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in February 2008, following a period of provisional self-government since the end of the war in 1999. Building a solid revenue base for local government was an essential component of the state-building efforts. Kosovo's multi-ethnic structure and Serbia's tacit support for Serb-majority municipalities meant that stronger accountability between municipalities and residents was a priority.

The 'normalisation' of relations between Serbia and Kosovo is a condition of EU membership for both countries and is the subject of ongoing, if difficult, negotiations brokered by the EU. The situation of Serbs living in Kosovo was one of the main topics of the negotiations.

Part of the solution was seen in a decentralisation of Kosovo that would i) establish a firm and fair basis for municipal funding regardless of political or ethnic orientation, based on clear and transparent formula for central government transfers to local government, and ii) increase tax collection revenues directly from citizens. The theory behind this is that greater tax payment directly to local government increases accountability of local government.

In 2008, municipalities in Kosovo received only 5% of their total income from property tax, and central government transfers constituted around 80% of revenues. Local IT systems for tax collection were fragmented and incomplete. Ownership of property itself was not always clear and there were many problems with illegal occupancy and illegal construction. Of a total 550,000 properties with buildings, 300,000 had no construction permits or were illegally constructed, and therefore had no possession certificate in the property register and were not billed with property tax. Tax evasion was estimated at 50%.

Description of the intervention

In November 2005, Sida received a request from the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) of Kosovo for investing in a Municipal Property Tax IT system. Subsequently, in January 2007, SIPU International started an assessment for developing a project proposal. Sida approached the Swedish Tax Agency to assess the situation, and a mission from the SKV proposed 4 areas of intervention.

The main owner of the programme was the Ministry of Finance Property Tax Department, which was responsible for the overall policy framework, and hosting of the IT system. Municipalities played the key role in property tax billing and collection.

After the first phase, key issues remained, including the legal framework (e.g. property tax was on buildings but not land), enforcement of tax collection, and the sustainability of the IT systems within the Ministry of Finance.

Between 2012 – 2014 “the local project staff were retained with specific funding as a bridging arrangement, allowing the ProTax 1 system to continue to operate”.¹⁷² The second phase of the ProTax project (ProTax 2) was designed subsequently to enlarge the local tax base to include a tax on land. The aim of this was to promote more efficient land use (agricultural land in use would be exempt from tax). It was also intended to depoliticise the property valuation process and ensure sustainability of the maintenance and support for the system.

Property tax collection was a priority for the Government of Kosovo. The Government of Kosovo Economic Reform Programme Recommendation 3 was: “Modernize revenue collection to reduce reliance on customs receipts by improving property tax collection and strengthening the legal framework for collection of tax and municipal tax arrears. Revisit local government grant financing scheme to incentivise better collection of municipal revenues. Further broaden tax base by introducing the planned

¹⁷² SIPU 2016, p15.

mandatory health sector contributions and reassess planned tax exemptions.”¹⁷³

Sweden was the only international development donor to contribute significantly to local taxation systems.

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

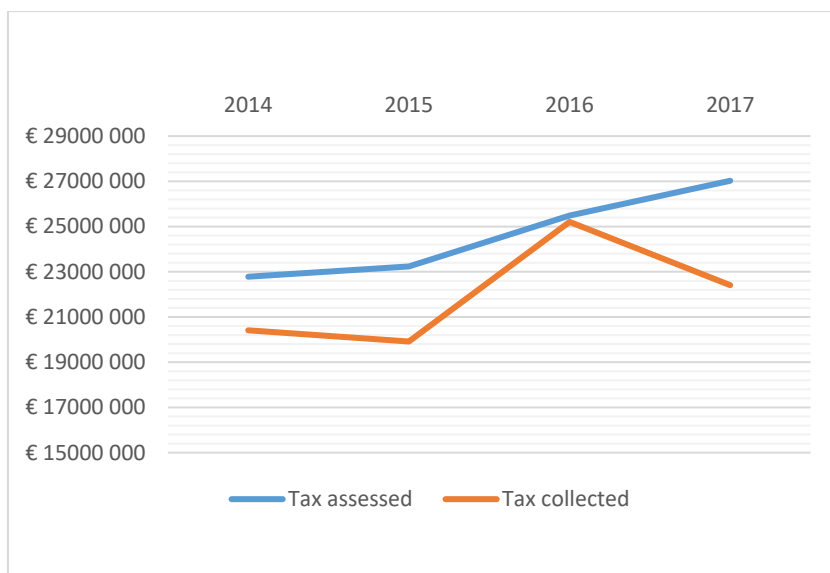
At the outset, in 2008, municipalities received almost no income from property tax. IT systems were fragmented and incomplete. Ownership of property was not always clear, and there were many problems with illegal occupancy and illegal construction. There were weak mechanisms in place to collect taxation, and so rates of non-payment were extremely high (around 50% in 2006).

The Swedish tax agency, with support from Lantmäteriet, designed and developed a centralised IT system to manage the whole system of property tax management. The IT system was hosted/located in the Ministry of Finance but operated by municipalities.

By 2019, the IT system was advanced and well-functioning. Municipalities increased revenues from property tax to an average of around EUR 20 million per year (total for all municipalities).

The project invested in communications with taxpayers to inform them of the benefits of paying tax and information on where their tax money goes, very much in line with the Swedish model. This component was not taken up by the Ministry of Finance, and communications were largely undertaken directly by personnel from the Swedish Tax Agency. There is no evidence – because no research was undertaken – on any changes of attitudes among taxpayers to their local municipalities.

¹⁷³ Quoted in EC 2015b p33.



Source: ProTax 2 project final report

The Ministry of Finance had established a department for mass valuation of property as a means to ensure the fairness of property valuation for tax purpose. Previously, valuation had been a responsibility of local government, resulting in wide variations and irregularities.

The 2-year delay between ProTax 1 and ProTax 2 was in order to obtain the legal conditions for transfer of data from the cadastre agency to the Property Tax Department of the Ministry of Finance.

The Property Tax Department established a project team formally within the Ministry of Finance to design and build the system. The team, however, was made up of contractors, and did not include civil servants in an operational role. It operated largely autonomously of the Ministry of Finance. Study tours and training opportunities were provided to the team, but the permanent civil servants in the Ministry of Finance were less involved. This structure is one of the key issues now facing the Ministry. There is little in-house knowledge of the ProTax IT system, and its sustainability is uncertain unless additional measures are put in place.

The enlargement of the property tax base to include land required legislative change. This was contentious in Kosovo, with voices both for and against the legislation change. Political support from the Swedish Embassy and the Ambassador was necessary to support the passage of the law; continuation of the project was also conditioned on the adoption of the law.

Sales price register and address register components were not so successful, affected by the high rates of illegal construction and occupation. The perception that illegal properties are not taxed undermines the system's overall *fairness*.

In summary, the ProTax system has made a minor contribution at the national level to revenue collection. Its major contribution is at local level, aiming to increase financial independence of the municipalities and strengthen the accountability relationship between citizen and municipality. There is some way to go for property taxes to be a significant part of local revenues, and no evidence has been collected on changes of taxpayers' attitudes. Ensuring sustainability of the system requires further work and institutional commitment.

Contribution to EU membership

The main contribution of the ProTax project would be to the strengthening of municipal autonomy. A stronger financial position for Serb majority municipalities would mean lower dependence on irregular transfers from Belgrade, and this in turn would facilitate the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Ultimately, it would be one small but significant contribution to the normalisation of relations, the key issue behind Chapter 35 of the accession negotiations for both countries.

In terms of overall contribution to the country, property tax revenues in 2018 were approximately 1% of the total tax revenues, and so somewhat marginal. The significance was greater in the municipalities which collected the most taxes. Revenues were used for small infrastructure projects, which contributed to local improvements, but no significant contribution to other chapters of the *acquis* or the political or economic criteria for membership.

Efficient coordination

Sweden was the only donor to provide support to this measure. The project was a clear response to the recommendations of the Ahtisaari plan, which international actors were committed to supporting, and so in line with overall policy. The Government of Kosovo was also committed to building local revenues.

The Ministry of Finance and municipalities were involved in the design and development of the system, but practical development and implementation was largely driven by the project team and the Swedish Tax agency.

There was involvement of the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority, and their experience from Bosnia and Herzegovina was highly relevant. However, there was limited evidence of information- and experience-sharing between the ProTax projects and the CILAP project in BiH.

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

The partner agency needs to be fully engaged in the project in order to ensure sustainability. Concerns about inefficiency led to the effective separation of the project team from the Ministry; however, while involvement of the team in Ministry affairs may slow down project development and implementation, this is a small price to pay for ensuring sustainability. Sustainability should be prioritised over efficiency, not vice versa.

Linked to this, the training and development opportunities were directed at the project team (of contractors), not the permanent civil servants in the Ministry, despite the latter being responsible for the continuation of the system after the project completion.

Political level engagement can help project success. The Swedish Embassy successfully used conditionality as an instrument to achieve legal reform. The land tax law was introduced in 2018 only after considerable pressure from the Swedish Embassy, and the threat to stop the ProTax project (other issues also at play, including property tax arrangements for owners of illegally occupied properties).

Design of the IT system institutional arrangements did not take sufficient account of incentives for maintaining, developing and operating the IT system. All revenues from property taxes go to municipalities; there is no service charge or % of revenues for the Ministry of Finance. Therefore, there are weaker incentives and obligations on the Ministry of Finance to maintain or develop the system further. If municipalities contributed their revenues to system maintenance via the Ministry of Finance, there would likely be more pressure on the Ministry to ensure system quality and performance.

Recognition of institutional incentive is critical to sustainability. The ProTax project sought for many years to have a counterpart in the Ministry of Finance to work on taxpayer information. The Ministry did not provide a suitable counterpart over the ten years of the project. In reality, responsibility and incentive for tax-payer communication for local property taxes is at the level of the municipality. As a central level institution, the Ministry had no real interest to inform local taxpayers.

Project monitoring and evaluation should include consideration of the overall objectives of the project. The ProTax project aimed to increase accountability between citizen taxpayers and municipalities. However, it did not put any monitoring mechanisms in place to track any change in taxpayers' attitudes. Without this data, it was not possible to assess the real success of the project.

Contribution Analysis

The change observed (Outcome):

A new IT system is in place that enables municipalities to manage the process of registering properties and collecting property taxes. Municipalities have increased their revenues from property tax. A new law from 2018 enables municipalities to also collect taxes on land, though this is for now minimal. The aim was to strengthen accountability relationships between local government and citizens, though there is no evidence that this has happened.

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁷⁴
Swedish authority finances a team of experts to build an IT system that the MEF did not have the capability (legal and financial) to do	Internal contributing factor	Project reports; project mid-term evaluation (ProTax 2); Interviews with project team and Ministry of Finance.	3
The Ministry of Finance does not have any financial benefit from managing and operating the ProTax system	Internal preventing factor	Mid-Term evaluation ProTax 2 highlights sustainability concerns Discussion with project team identifies that a discussion took place on a proposal for MEF to take a % of revenues, ultimately rejected. Interview with MEF highlights lack of involvement and interest from Ministry leadership	3
Project did not involve MEF staff sufficiently in training and development opportunities. Focus of development was the (temporary) project team	Internal preventing factor	Interview with MEF staff responsible for Property Tax. Questioned why the IT team received all the investment in personal development, when they would ultimately disperse.	2
Weak project components on sales price register and address register reduce the potential for property tax revenues	Internal preventing factor	Project reports and mid-term evaluation of ProTax 2; Interviews with Lantmateriet in BiH Management of these two components did not conform to the good practice shown in BiH. With poor address register information, registration and collection of property tax is made more difficult. Poor sales price register design means that there is little evidential basis for the mass valuation exercises.	2

¹⁷⁴ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁷⁴
Complex and disorderly property ownership records, contested ownerships, illegal occupations and illegal constructions make for substantial difficulties for a reliable and comprehensive property tax system	External preventing factor	External analyses (eg EU Progress Reports); project reports; interviews with project team, municipalities and MEF. These conditions go well beyond the scope of the project, and the project managed well to avoid some of the pitfalls that could have resulted from this situation. Nevertheless, the actual ownership and property situation restrained the project from achieving more.	2
Embassy took close interest in legislative requirements, and used conditionality to push through law on property/land tax 2018	External (?) contributing factor	Interviews with embassy staff describing the events leading up to Parliament's adoption of the required legislation.	4
Design undertaken by Swedish Tax Agency, focuses on their own competence (i.e. building IT systems, not wider institutional analysis)	Internal preventing factor	Design documents Interviews with project team Interview with Ministry of Finance This shows a focus on system design, and not looking at the wider issues of managing and supporting IT systems within the Ministry	3
Poor financial management by municipalities led to a decreasing proportion of property tax revenue being used for infrastructure investment, and hence lower visibility of expenditures – also impacting on the potential for stronger accountability	External preventing factor	ProTax 2 mid-term evaluation; interviews with municipalities; Municipalities face increasing costs of payroll and administration resulting from politicization and poor management. This reduces the proportion of own revenues going for externally visible projects, in turn reducing the overall impact on municipalities and citizens of the ProTax project.	2

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁷⁴
There was no systematic monitoring and reporting on some critical results information	Internal preventing factor	Project reports; interview with project team member responsible for public information. Focus of monitoring information was on tax revenue generated, which was partially helpful. However, the main purpose of the project was to strengthen accountability of local government towards citizens. No surveys were conducted of citizens' opinions, despite communication with citizens being an important component of the project.	1

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that the project contributed to strengthening municipalities' capacities to generate revenue from property taxes and using this revenue to finance small scale infrastructure. There is no evidence that the project contributed to a strengthening of local accountability. The project acted through mechanisms:

It identified an opportunity for supporting local revenue collection that had the support of government and the international community, and which to date had been poorly managed and supported through fragmented systems.

It developed a single complex and reliable system for all municipalities to manage property taxes.

Hosting in the Ministry of Finance was legally correct, but does not provide an incentive for further development and maintenance of the system.

Poor municipal management and financial management reduces the impact of the project on citizens.

Outstanding property and land ownership issues reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall property tax system.

Case Study 7: Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Serbia

Basic data

Name of intervention	ENVAP1 (Preparations for negotiations related to Serbia's EU accession process), ENVAP 2, ENVAP 3
Location of intervention	Serbia
Timeframe	2011 – 2019
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Swedish National Environment Protection Agency, Naturvårdsverket
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	English and Swedish
ENVAP1 timeframe	2011 to 2012
ENVAP1 budget	SEK 2,4 million (EUR 0,22 million) ¹⁷⁵
ENVAP1 expenditure	SEK 2,4 million (EUR 0,22 million]
ENVAP2 timeframe	2013 to 2016
ENVAP2 budget	SEK 23 million (EUR 2,15 million]
ENVAP2 expenditure	SEK 20,1 million (EUR 1,88 million]
ENVAP3 timeframe	2016 to 2020
ENVAP3 budget	SEK 28 million (EUR 2,62 million]
Phase 3 expenditure (up to 12/18)	SEK 10,6 million (EUR 0,99 million]
TOTAL expenditure	SEK 33,1 million (EUR 3,09 million]

Brief description

The ENVAP project focused on preparations for approximation of Serbian legislation to chapter 27 of the EU acquis. Chapter 27 constitutes a third of the total Acquis and the implementation costs are nearly 40% of the total estimated implementation costs. Another major challenge is the large number of institutions and stakeholders relevant to the work within environment and therefore need to be consulted and coordinated. ENVAP contributes in establishing a process for the work and by providing both experience and expertise in carrying out the preparations.

Overview

Context

In 2008, a European partnership for Serbia was adopted, setting out priorities for the country's membership application, and in 2009 Serbia formally applied. Serbia was granted EU candidate status in March 2012. In September 2013, a Stabilisation and Association between the EU and Serbia entered into force. The European Council adopted the negotiating framework in December 2013 and agreed to hold the 1st Intergovernmental Conference with Serbia in January 2014, signalling the formal start of Serbia's accession negotiations.

The negotiations are organised by 35 sector chapters, with Chapter 27 covering environment. The three ENVAP-projects have all focused on supporting Serbia in the process of preparing negotiations for Chapter 27.

The acquis in this chapter is significant, covering horizontal legislation, water and air quality, waste management, nature protection, industrial pollution control and risk management, chemicals, noise, civil protection and climate change. Compliance with the acquis covered by this chapter in addition require significant capital investments and a structured co-operation among all stakeholders including local authorities, industry and civil society. Moreover, a strong and well-equipped administration at national and local level is imperative for its implementation and enforcement.

The environmental sector has been the focus of a significant number of donor-funded projects over the period 2011 –2018. Sweden is currently the lead donor in the sector and is funding a number of additional projects. Other donors are also active in the sector, especially the European Union through its IPA instrument.

Description of the intervention

The ENVAP projects focus on Serbian preparations for approximation of chapter 27 of the EU acquis. Chapter 27

constitutes a third of the total Acquis and the implementation costs are nearly 40% of the total estimated implementation costs. Another major challenge is the large number of institutions and stakeholders relevant to the work within environment and therefore need to be consulted and coordinated. ENVAP contributes in establishing a process for the work and by providing both experience and expertise in carrying out the preparations.

The main partner in the ENVAP projects is the current Ministry of Environmental Protection, MEP. The first project started in 2011, and the three projects have supported the Ministry since.

The total Swedish commitments for the ENVAP projects is SEK 53.4 million, with an actual expenditure as of December 2018 of SEK 33.1 million.¹⁷⁶

The ENVAP projects were designed and initiated based on previous experiences in Serbia and elsewhere. Sida delegated a programme responsibility for Environmental projects in the Western Balkans during 2005—2012 to the Swedish EPA. During this period cooperation with Serbia grew, from a number of smaller projects ending in the first ENVAP project 2011-2012.¹⁷⁷ It was started in 2011 after a request in 2010 from the Serbian Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP). MESP asked the Swedish EPA for assistance in preparations for EU accession considering Swedish EPA:s experience from similar project with Latvia, Lithuania and Macedonia.¹⁷⁸ The purpose of the bilateral project to enhance the capacity of MESP in view of the forthcoming EU accession.¹⁷⁹ The project design was to large extents tailored from the previous ENVAP projects in these other countries.

The ENVAP 1 project has been followed by two more ENVAP projects, ENVAP 3 was in progress at the time of the evaluation. From Sida's assessments it clear that the Swedish EPA is considered

¹⁷⁶ Swedish EPA 2013b, Swedish EPA 2016b, Swedish EPA 2019.

¹⁷⁷ Sida 2005. Swedish EPA 2013b.

¹⁷⁸ Swedish EPA 2013a.

¹⁷⁹ Swedish EPA 2013c.

as the only option for these projects, “*this is very much a core task for [Swedish] SEPA*”.¹⁸⁰

A wide selection of delivery methods has been used in the projects. The largest projects (ENVAP 2 and 3) build on a project implementation group at the Ministry, in combination with visiting experts and a help desk. The use of external experts has been significant throughout the ENVAP projects. Swedish EPA has contracted a wide selection of organisations, especially other Swedish agencies, to support the projects with specific expertise. As an example, in 2014 a total of 15 external partner organisations provided expertise. It was five Swedish Agencies, three Swedish municipalities and a selection of consultants from both Sweden and Serbia.¹⁸¹ In addition the projects have organised various activities, such as workshops, trainings and seminars. A wide selection of documents and processes have been developed, from a guiding EU Handbook to all the tools needed for mapping, analysing and benchmarking *acquis* areas and to develop positions.

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

The ENVAP projects are special in that they support an ongoing one-time process. While there are tasks in that process that are repeated, the process in itself will end once negotiations of Chapter 27 are closed. As the negotiation process also requires a significantly larger amount of expertise than a normal management of MEP, it is not feasible to build all that capacity within the Ministry. The focus has instead been on building capacity to run the negotiation process itself. There is now a core competence within MEP in this regard, that has also contributed in sharing their experiences with the newly started ENVAP project in Albania.¹⁸²

The ENVAP projects have also contributed to individual capacity building in a broader sense, through a number of activities

¹⁸⁰ Sida 2016.

¹⁸¹ Swedish EPA 2015.

¹⁸² Interview Swedish EPA, 2019.

focusing on the various sub-sections of Chapter 27. Just ENVAP 2 organised more than 100 training events, with more than 1600 participants. Complementing normal training sessions, the ENVAP projects have also included, knowledge transfer through a Help Desk, meetings of experts, mentoring and training on site. Another important tool to prepare Serbian civil servants for the EU accession process has been a series of simulation-workshops for seven sectors, with 250 participants from relevant working groups.¹⁸³ According to the ENVAP 2 'Near-end review' the simulations contributed to Negotiation group 27 being one of the most well prepared groups during the screening process.¹⁸⁴

The Swedish EPA interventions in the Western Balkans were evaluated in 2009 and a key recommendation was that the agency should strengthen their capacity to institutionalise results in their interventions.¹⁸⁵ This has become an important theme in design and risk analysis in project plans in the Serbian interventions, and a significant group of results are new working guidelines/processes, such as gap assessment methodologies and instructions for the screening process (Benchmarking Methodology, Template for Benchmarking Matrix (BM)), and for the preparation for negotiations (NPSD Methodology, NPSD template including Negotiating Position template) were developed.¹⁸⁶

It can be concluded that the ENVAP projects successfully have supported MEP in the negotiation process so far, and it is expected that the Serbian Government will formally approve the Chapter 27 position by the end of 2019. This can be considered the most important piece of Environmental legislation in the country, and it will set a roadmap for the sector for decades to come.¹⁸⁷

At the same time it should be noted that the sustainability of the core competences built within the MEP is very fragile. The coordinating role at the Ministry was initially covered by four staffers, three of them having now left without being replaced. The lack of resources

¹⁸³ Swedish EPA 2016a.

¹⁸⁴ Milieu Ltd 2015.

¹⁸⁵ Sida 2009.

¹⁸⁶ Swedish EPA 2016a.

¹⁸⁷ Interview Sida, 2019.

to the MEP has been raised in evaluations and by Sida in the project Steering Group.¹⁸⁸

Contribution to EU membership

The ENVAP projects are by definition highly relevant to Serbia's EU membership ambitions, as the projects focus completely on the country's negotiations. The fact that Chapter 27 is one of the largest and most complex chapters further underlines the importance of the projects. So far, the process has progressed with perceived high quality, with the deliverables to the European Commission having been well received.¹⁸⁹

At the same time, it should be noted that the work carried out by the MEP and the ENVAP project team is not enough to fulfil all the EU requirements for the sector. The policy reform and regulatory alignment will need to be followed up with very significant capital investment and capacity building efforts for regulatory enforcement. This is also reflected in the EU progress reports that has highlighted these concerns since 2014.¹⁹⁰

Efficient coordination

The ENVAP projects were well aligned with government policies/strategies as well as with country's EU integration plans. Sida has, as the lead donor, an important role in donor coordination for the environment sector and has been actively supported in this role by the ENVAP Team Leader.

A significant result from the work carried out by the MEP with support from ENVAP is that the position developed is becoming the roadmap for environmental development in Serbia. As such, the MEP is now leading sector coordination, pushing donor coordination alignment to the position.¹⁹¹

The coordination with other Swedish interventions in country has been working well specifically in the environmental sector, where ENVAP coordinates closely with KEMI and SKL.

¹⁸⁸ Professional Mangement 2019.

¹⁸⁹ Interviews Sida, Swedish EPA, MEP, EU Delegation, 2019.

¹⁹⁰ EC 2014b, EC 2015a, EC 2016, EC 2017, EC 2018b, EC 2019b.

¹⁹¹ Interviews Sida, MEP, MoEI, 2019.

Coordination with other projects is, however, weak, with no systematic sharing between activities. Information and contacts to other Sida-funded agency projects have been a recurring request from Swedish EPA, but it is not something that Sida has facilitated.¹⁹²

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

There are a number of lessons learned from the intervention that can inform future agency-to-agency capacity development cooperation.

Starting small: The ENVAP projects build upon a number of years of cooperation between the Serbian Ministry and Swedish EPA, through a series of smaller projects. The first ENVAP project was also substantially smaller than the second two, focusing on setting structures in place. This has allowed Swedish EPA to gain significant understanding of the local context, before scaling up activities.

Designing-in sustainability mechanisms: Since 2009 Swedish EPA has included the organisational focus in design of interventions. This means that the MEP, and other sector actors, now have the organisation, processes and tools set up for the negotiation process.

Identifying and attracting relevant expertise – not only from within the Authority: A key success factor in the ENVAP projects has been the Swedish EPA's ability to source relevant expertise. The project has used experts from a wide selection of other Swedish Agencies and organisations and also a pool of local experts that has provided significant value to the process. In addition, the Team Leader contributes with a unique expertise that *complements* the resources from the Swedish EPA by his background from the Lithuanian Chapter 27 negotiations.

Embedded teams to design and implement change – including civil servants: The negotiation process for Chapter 27 is coordinated by the MEP. The capacity to run the negotiation process is thus something built within the Ministry. While it is clear

¹⁹² Interviews Swedish EPA, Sida, 2019.

that there is a risk that this is not sustainable if the Ministry is not funded in accordance with the Government budget, it will be if and when that is the case.

Involvement of senior management and politicians: The ENVAP project has gained significant political support within the MEP, with the State Secretary and Assistant Minister taking very active roles in the project. Especially the State Secretary has explicitly used his role to ensure momentum in relation to other Government Institutions.

Flexibility in implementation: The flexibility of both the Swedish EPA and Sida has been key in ensuring progress in the ENVAP projects. The entire design depends on the Swedish EPA securing expertise to match the about 300 sub-sections covered by Chapter 27, often with short notice. But also in a larger sense, since the negotiation process includes a significant amount of uncertainty. The entire ENVAP2 project did, for example, largely change focus after a request by the European Commission to the Serbian authorities to prepare the so-called 'post-screening report'.

Common interest driving persistence and dedication: The Swedish EPA has been active in Serbia since the mid-2000s. It is clear that this long-term commitment has contributed to the results. It also clear that this commitment is grounded in a real sense of dedication from the Swedish EPA, that in turn is based on a clear value proposition for the Agency that are in line with the instructions governing the Agency. The Environmental development in the Western Balkans is not national issues, but has regional and in the end global impact. In addition the Swedish EPA has clearly identified that the Western Balkans will join the European Union at some stage, and will then impact the Environmental policy as other member states.

Contribution Analysis

With the support of the ENVAP project Serbia (MEP) has established an organisation and process to effectively manage the EU negotiations process for Chapter 27.

It is about establishing that process, and about delivering a wide array of products (such as positions and DSIPs). Each position represents a detailed plan (with gap assessment, implementation and funding plans), and combined they provide a roadmap for the entire environmental sector. Each also represents a sector development plan, having established owners within the government etc.

MEP has so far been able to deliver all required products/documents in one of the most complex chapters. The first ENVAP project started just after Serbia's formal application, and the three projects have provided continuous support since then (2010).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁹³
A. The TL with his political background and strategic background is absolutely crucial for the results so far. With his experiences, having been a civil servant and a Minister he is linking the lessons learned from Sweden and Lithuania to Serbia.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews with MEP, Sida, SEPA, Swedish EPA, EU, etc.	4
B. The local experts pool has been important. It is important for them to work with local experts, to ensure relevance. That is also a crucial outcome from the project, building the local expertise in the sector	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews with MEP, SEPA, Swedish EPA	2
C. Informal meetings with sector experts at the commission. This not something accessible to Serbia as non-member country, and not something that could have been arranged by consultants.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews with MEP, Swedish EPA.	2

¹⁹³ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁹³
D. Political support within the ministry. Initially SS participated in all SWG to ensure that all the groups worked. Pushed the importance of these questions, and also provided experience from parliament re negotiations.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews with MEP	1
E. The resource base at the agency, at the SweEPA. No consultant can get the same resources so quickly. The project draws a lot upon other Swedish agencies to secure the expertise needed, but also uses many local experts and consultants.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews with MEP, Swedish EPA, Sida	4
F. Flexibility is key in this project. The negotiation process is heavily dependent on external actors / factors, so there is constantly a need for flexibility. A good example is ENVAP2, that heavily focused on supporting the screening process. This was not planned but became the focus when the Commission opened that process.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews with MEP, Swedish EPA, Sida.	4
G. The link between the embassy and the Swedish Agency to push on the political level when the Swedish agency cannot move along. Getting the support from high level, Swedish ambassador MFA etc	External contributing factor	Sida	1
H. The government is not providing sufficient	External preventing	Desk review, Interviews with	4

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE	SIGNIF. scale ¹⁹³
resources to the MEP and SEPA. This has affected the long-term sustainability and organizational capacity building.	factor (road-block)	MEP, SEPA, Swedish EPA, Sida EU, etc.	

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that the ENVAP project has contributed to establishing a successful organisation and process for the Chapter 27 negotiations at MEP. The project acted through mechanisms:

- The negotiations require a huge number of various technical experts during a short time period. These have been provided (or sourced) by Swedish EPA, through the use of internal staff or the use of other Swedish agencies or international/regional/local experts. The Swedish EPA has also been able to offer MEP access to EU commission experts, something that is only accessible to member state reps.
- The project is led by a team leader that can not only provide technical expertise but in-depth expertise of leading the same negotiation process in a relevant context (Lithuania). The seniority of the TL also enables ENVAP/MEP to engage with key political stakeholders. The fact that the TL is not also a (de facto) RA has also strongly contributed to keeping the strong momentum in the project/negotiation process.
- The negotiation process is in many cases a very reactive process, and the fact that Swedish EPA has been able to be very flexible has ensured the relevance over time of interventions.
- The project has been supported by a strong political will within senior management at MEP, as well as from the Swedish embassy.

While the project has been very successful so far, the lack of resources from the government is putting the long-term sustainability of the capacity building efforts in significant danger. The leadership and knowledge of the process is centred in a few key individuals at the MEP.

Case Study 8: Swedish Police Authority, Serbia

Basic data

Name of intervention	Swedish Police Assistance Programme, SPAP I, SPAP II, SPAP III
Location of intervention	Serbia
Timeframe	2010-2018
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Swedish Police Authority (SPA)
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	
Phase 1 timeframe	2010-2011
Phase 1 budget	SEK 7,593 ,960 (EUR 709,716) ¹⁹⁴
Phase 1 expenditure	SEK 7,005,331 (EUR 654,704]
Phase 2 timeframe	2012-2015
Phase 2 budget	SEK 43,172,889 (EUR 4,034,849]
Phase 2 expenditure	SEK 32,774,514 (EUR 3,063,039]
Phase 3 timeframe	2016-2018
Phase 3 budget	SEK 41,100,000 (EUR 3,841,121]
Phase 3 expenditure (up to 12/2018) ¹⁹⁵	SEK 38,600,000 (EUR 3,607,477]
TOTAL expenditure	SEK 78,379,845 (EUR 7,325,219]

Brief description

The SPAP programme represents a continuation of the cooperation with SPA initiated in early 2000s. SPAP started in 2010 when the cooperation ascended to a more mature level, responding to the vision of the Serbian Ministry of Interior to transform into a modern, democratic, accountable and efficient service to citizens, guaranteeing security to all and contributing to sustainable development and EU integrations (which is the programme overall objective).

¹⁹⁴ Exchange rate used for EUR calculations: SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

¹⁹⁵ There is a final SPAP III handover phase 2019-2020 with a total budget of SEK 25,000,000.

There were four main programme components:

- development of the police reform strategy and Action Plan and capacities for EU accession negotiation planning
- development of the system for crime scene investigation (CSI) and forensic training
- development of the capacities for intelligence led policing (ILP) and national criminal intelligence system (NCIS).
- gender policies integrated into Ministry of Interior internal policies and structures.

Overview

Context

At the beginning of the partnership with the Swedish Police Authority (SPA), the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of the Republic of Serbia was faced with the following shortcomings: no strategic development plan; poor mechanisms for planning, implementation and monitoring of international donor support; an outdated model of reactive policing, not sufficiently using a criminal intelligence system, and not meeting community needs and expectations; outdated human resources management systems; few opportunities for women for employment and career development on equal footing with men; and low efficiency in all management segments (finances, human resources management, material resources, strategic planning and project management, etc.). A particular problem was the poor results in combating organized crime, which Sweden recognized as one of priority areas of common interest for cooperation in early 2000, that resulted in first cooperation programmes in the field of forensics and intelligence-led policing (started in 2004 and 2005).

Within the EU Accession process, particular importance was attached to Chapter 23 (Judiciary and fundamental rights) and Chapter 24 (Justice, freedom and security), part of the so-called 'Fundamentals First' agenda of the EU.

Major donors in the period 2009-2018 were Sweden and EU, followed by Norway, the United Kingdom and Switzerland.

Description of the intervention

SPAP started in 2010 as a continuation of the cooperation between SPA and MoI initiated in early 2000s and continues until the end of 2020, when the SPAP III Handover phase is supposed to end. It is responding to the vision of the Serbian Ministry of Interior to transform into a modern, democratic, accountable and efficient service to citizens, guaranteeing security to all and contributing to sustainable development and EU integration (which is the programme overall objective).

There were four main programme components: 1. development of the police reform strategy and Action Plan and capacities for EU accession negotiation planning; 2. development of the system for crime scene investigation (CSI) and forensic training; 3. development of the capacities for intelligence led policing (ILP) and national criminal intelligence system (NCIS) and 4. gender policies integrated into Ministry of Interior internal policies and structures.

Total budget until December 2018 was EUR 8,585,686 and the actual expenditure EUR 7,325,219. Budget for the final SPAP phase is EUR 2,336,449.

The importance of developing policing in Serbia to enhance the fight of organised crime was one of the main reasons for initiating the partnership and selecting the priority areas of the intervention. In 2001 SPA conducted a feasibility study to assess a possible future development co-operation programme in the police sector, funded by Sida. This study proposed priority areas of cooperation, which resulted in two individual programmes aimed at supporting respectively forensics and intelligence led policing. In 2009 the Serbian MoI invited Sweden to support developing their long-term development strategy and extend support in the areas of criminal intelligence and forensics, which represent the initial stage of the SPAP programme. The programme design was based on the evaluations of the previous stages of the cooperation and an additional feasibility study (carried out by SPA), followed by a series of participatory planning workshops.

All subsequent phases of the SPAP Programme were designed based on the fact-finding missions, feasibility studies, gap analysis

and needs assessments, findings of external evaluations and involved (sometimes several) participatory planning workshops. The workshops were facilitated by external consultants with the presence of Swedish experts (and observers from the OSCE in the first phase). The project proposals were elaborated by the SPA in close co-operation with MoI. The intervention logic followed the planned and ongoing reform processes in the Serbian MoI. Respective assistant ministers and senior staff from the Police directorate were appointed to participate in the programme planning. Sida used Security Sector Reform (SSR) assessment framework to design the intervention.¹⁹⁶

Most important implementation mechanisms that contributed to the success of the intervention: 1. Long-term resident advisor as well as ILP and forensic advisors, SPA and MoI counterparts and the fact that there were dedicated coordinators and individual teams for each component/project proved to be good organisational set-up to achieve success; 2. peer to peer exchange of experience and learning by doing, excellent and relevant high level SPA advisors who could access and advise top political management as well as assist with highly technical and operational issues, presence of advisors in the country to keep the things moving at difficult times. Highly relevant study visits. Agency to agency work means the same mind-set, same language and better understanding than with consultants. 3. long-term partnership and continuous support (even when there was no political will for ILP component from MoI at the beginning) that is essential for institutionalising the reform and achieving the required change in attitude and behaviour and mainstreaming the changes.

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

SPA change approach targeted:

- Legal framework and internal regulations (revision of laws and bylaws, handbooks, manuals and procedures, assessment tools,

¹⁹⁶ Folke Bernadotte Academy 2007.

- etc) for institutionalising CSI and ILP procedures, developed Guidelines and HR procedures for equal opportunities in police
- Strategy (MoI Development strategy and Action Plan)
 - Systems and Processes (Change of internal working procedures including Quality Management System (QMS) in CSI and new ILP model and Central Intelligence System)
 - Organisational structure and job design (established Forensics Training centre and new training curricula, key departments in MoI, ILP SLG and OLGs, etc)
 - Peoples skills, knowledge (in strategic and IPA planning, ILP, CSI, gender, EU integration, UNSCR 1325, etc through training, mentoring, individual gender coaching, study visits, etc.)
 - Technical capacities (equipment, IT systems and databases, training centre, etc)
 - Strengthened change management capacities
 - Sustainable results achieved at the level of organisational capacity and performance and primarily in the Police directorate: Changes identified:

Change in working processes:

- CSI procedures cannot be reversed to old practices, there are institutional and human capacities sufficiently built (and being built with the Forensic training centre and curricula).¹⁹⁷
- ILP model has been officially institutionalised through the relevant legislation and it is currently high on political agenda and it is being rolled out, however it is still not dealing with big issues of the organised crime¹⁹⁸
- HRM competence-based selection, gender included in HRM procedures, encouraged employment of more women in police and on managerial positions, etc.¹⁹⁹
- Change of attitudes and organisational culture: introduced concept of gender in “previously entirely macho culture” or acceptance of the new concept of ILP although it requires “some officials letting go of their decision-making role and

¹⁹⁷ Interview EUD and MoI, June 2019.

¹⁹⁸ Interviews EUD, 2019.

¹⁹⁹ Interviews MoI, EUD, Swedish Embassy, June 2019.

- depending on other people analysis”, change in leadership and management.²⁰⁰
- Change in skills and knowledge from the management level to the operational level numbers of trained and coached staff in all components. That led to change in leadership that resulted in creation of change agents at crucial positions that led the reform.²⁰¹
 - Serbian police being recognised as a reliable partner internationally (European Network of Forensic Institutes, partnership in the field of intelligence, etc).²⁰²
 - Established operational partnership with the Swedish police that will last beyond aid.²⁰³

Contribution to EU membership

EU Integration is high on the Serbian Government agenda and the intervention has contributed to improving negotiation capacities for Chapters 23 and 24 with regards to MoI.

However, system-wide results are missing because other key actors (prosecutors, judges, health and social workers) were not (sufficiently and adequately) targeted. And at the same time the demand is not there – there is not enough communication of the new processes to the general public and potential victims, and consequently civil society organisations do not have sufficient information to monitor if and how these procedures are implemented and hold the authorities responsible.²⁰⁴ “Serbia has some level of preparation in the fight against organised crime. As regards the track record, there has been little progress in dismantling criminal networks and establishing a track record of proactive investigations, prosecutions and convictions in the fight against organised crime”.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁰ Interviews MoI, CSO AZC, SPA, June 2019.

²⁰¹ Interviews MoI, CSO AZC, SPA, June 2019.

²⁰² Interviews SPA, MoI, June 2019.

²⁰³ Idem.

²⁰⁴ Interview CSO AZC, June 2019.

²⁰⁵ EC 2018b, pp 31-32.

Efficient coordination

Sida and SPA paid special attention to ensure that the intervention is fully aligned with national Government priorities and EU integration plans (Chapters 23 and 24). Feasibility studies and evaluations performed throughout the partnership made sure that the intervention was in line with actual needs and country priorities, as defined in the latest strategic and legal framework.

Coordination with other donor funded projects in this field was done through national donor coordination mechanisms where mostly Sida participated in the exchange of information without involving directly SPA.²⁰⁶ Coordination with other Sida funded projects seems to be working at operational level, however that is due mostly to individual efforts and there is no efficient mechanism for ensuring coordination between Sida funded projects in country.²⁰⁷

The SPA organises an annual gathering aiming at exchanging experience between different projects. There is evidence that the SPA has used the learning from successful projects in the Western Balkans region in other parts of the world: SPA is planning to use the Serbian experience from the gender component and replicate it in Colombia (*"Guidelines for the Implementation of Gender Equality Measures in the MoI of the Republic of Serbia via the Human Resource Management System"* and gender coaching programme).²⁰⁸

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

There are a number of important lessons learned from the SPAP that can improve future Swedish Government agency capacity development work.

Common interest: The areas of intervention were of mutual interest for both partners: the Serbian Government and SPA had a clearly communicated interest to reduce smuggling of small arms and drugs from Balkans and laundering of money originating from Sweden, etc. So both partners were motivated and dedicated to the same goal of improving Serbian police capacities and establishing

²⁰⁶ Interviews SPA, Sida, MoI, June 2019.

²⁰⁷ Interviews with SPA, MoI, June 2019.

²⁰⁸ Interviews SPA, June 2019.

long term operational partnership, which has driven ownership and dedication to the intervention from both partners and resulted in long-term support from SPA²⁰⁹.

Political economy context: Initial thorough technical analysis for every component or new elements introduced in the programme was carried out by SPA experts using available analysis from other partners (OSCE, EUD, etc). However, these analyses did not take into consideration a wider political economy context, which would have probably resulted in a more system wide approach and achieved better impact on the Serbian government performance.²¹⁰

Regular assessment of Swedish agency capacities: Sida did not perform regular assessment of SPA capacities for organisational development work they perform abroad. It seems that SPA do not invest in the specific staff capacity development required for the development work.²¹¹

Starting small and giving stakeholders time to learn: SPA initiated their cooperation with MoI with two smaller projects (CSI and ILP) before launching the bigger integrated programme support. And even then, they allowed for more than a year-long inception phase for the partners and stakeholders to formulate the intervention scope.²¹²

Team set-up and understanding of local context: The organisational set-up, with long term resident senior advisor as well as ILP and forensic advisors, SPA and MoI counterparts and the fact that there were dedicated coordinators and individual teams for each component, as well as use of local experts (gender), proved to be a good set-up for achieving success. When that was lacking (e.g. in the strategic component the SPA did not always know who to talk to in the later stages) there was less ownership from MoI. It is important to stress that all components managed by the General

²⁰⁹ Interviews with MoI and SPA, June 2019.

²¹⁰ Desk research and Interviews SPA, June 2019.

²¹¹ Interviews Sida and SPA, June 2019.

²¹² Desk research 2019.

Police Directorate show strong ownership from MoI and were driven by the Police Directorate top management (ILP and CSI).²¹³

Change agents at high positions: high level experienced police officers that were driving the reform and were able to influence the ministers and decision-making processes were crucial for the success of the reform. The strong messages they were passing down to lower organisational levels (particularly during the pilot phases) ensured roll-out and institutionalisation of the reform.²¹⁴

Gender as a cross-cutting topic: In addition to the introduction of gender sensitive HR policies and establishment of the Women Police Network, of the key success factors was the gender coaching programme provided to key members of senior management with gender coaches from civil society, aiming at reaching the “tipping point “ in the MoI with sufficient number of top managers targeted with the programme. There is now a standard operating procedure for gender based and domestic violence, as well as special physical interview rooms in each region to support these new working practices. Getting the rooms in the regions for gender based violence: a physical manifestation of the importance of the question.²¹⁵ These combined results led Kvinna till Kvinna in Serbia to state that that “The MoI has gone from an absolute zero to a good reception of women in cases of domestic violence.”

Contribution Analysis

The change observed (Outcome): The quality of forensic and crime scene investigations applied by the Serbian police have improved related to GBV and domestic violence and ILP, as the policing model has been applied in the police organization in Serbia.

At the beginning of SPAP Serbian police did not have a Criminal Intelligence system nor methodology and the platform for CSI in Serbia was newly established through the partnership with SPA during the CSI project 2004-2009, through the development of CSI

²¹³ Desk research and interviews SPA and MoI, June 2019.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

strategy document and the Quality Management System (QMS) document. Nowadays, Serbian Police is internationally recognised as reliable partner in European Network of Forensic Institutes.

Contributing factors	TYPE	Evidence	SIGNIF. scale ²¹⁶
A. Very strong ownership and driving of the CSI component from the Mol. Very dedicated high-level staff from the Forensic centre appointed by the Mol minister to manage the component – agents of change that maintained their role for more than a decade. They had a very clear vision of what they wanted to achieve and sent very clear messages to Regional police directorates and local police about the new procedures. In case of ILP once this component was recognized as priority high level officials were appointed to manage it and they even allocated one person full time.	Internal contributing	Desk review and Interviews with SPA, Sida, Mol, external stakeholders	4
B. Political support from the Mol top management in all phases of the reform – the CSI component is related to very specific professional aspect and there was nothing controversial or politically sensitive. In case of ILP the project that preceded SPAP did not have much political support but with the change of management and EU screening it got full support and push from the top	Internal contributing	Desk review and Interviews with SPA, Sida, Mol,	4
C. Lack of the sector wide approach that would systematically be targeting other key actors (prosecutors, judges, medical, social, CSO) resulted in lack of impact at the level of criminal cases prosecuted.	Internal preventing	Desk, Interviews with CSOs, EU delegation	4

²¹⁶ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing factors	TYPE	Evidence	SIGNIF. scale ²¹⁶
D. Long-term partnership with SPA providing high quality expertise and long-term resident advisors as well as peer to peer support	Internal contributing	Interviews with SPA, Sida, MoI,	3
E. The SPAP intervention targeted legislative framework, systems and procedures, organizational structure, knowledge and attitude of staff and leadership, which all contributed to the change of MoI performance and institutionalization of the new CSI procedures, ILP model and gender policies	Internal contributing	Desk, Interviews with SPA, Sida, MoI,	2
F. Clear and openly communicated interest of the Swedish government and SPA to strengthen Serbian police capacities in order to fight crime not only In Western Balkans but in Sweden as well. So, both partners were motivated and dedicated to the same goal of improving Serbian police capacities and establishing long term operational partnership.	External contributing	Interview with SPA	4
G. EU Integration requirements represent an important driver of change.	External contributing	Interview with MoI, EU, SPA	3

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors we conclude that the SPAP project succeeded to improve Serbian police performance in the field of forensic investigation related to GBV and domestic violence. The key factors of success related to this modality were:

Contributing:

Extensive baseline analysis and participative planning of the project and implementation of peer to peer learning

Long-term resident advisor as well as ILP and forensic advisors, SPA and MoI counterparts and the fact that there were dedicated

coordinators and individual teams for each component/project proved to be good organisational set-up to achieve success.

Peer to peer exchange of experience and learning by doing, excellent and relevant high level SPA advisors who could access and advise top political management as well as assist with highly technical and operational issues, presence of advisors in the country to keep the things moving at difficult times. Highly relevant study visits. Agency to agency work means “the same mind-set, same language and understand each other better than with experts.”

Long-term partnership and continuous support (even when there was no political will for ILP component from MoI at the beginning) that is essential for institutionalising the reform and achieving the required change in attitude and behaviour and mainstreaming the changes.

Working in parallel to improve legislative framework, organisational structure, operational procedures, knowledge and skills of the staff and leadership.

Establishment of strong inter-agency partnership and trust that will continue to exist beyond the intervention

Preventing:

Lack of wider political economy and sector analysis at the beginning of the intervention was a problem: establishing new forensic procedures and improving police capacities and equipment without establishing a line of work and obliging other actors (health, social workers, prosecutors and judges, CSO) to follow established procedure did not result in the increase number of gender based and domestic violence cases in court proceedings; introduction of ILP without establishing strict procedure and system/protocol at the level of judiciary that links all key stakeholders (prosecutors and judges) did not result in the increase in the case record.

SPA lack of understanding of how organisational change works: it seems that there is no systematic capacity building of SPA experts in organisational change and change management that will allow much more effective and efficient support. They are all highly

experienced in their line of work but sometimes lack necessary skills to manage the organisational change.

In conclusion, there seems to be significant impact achieved at the level of MoI performance in the field of forensics and mainstreaming of ILP through legislation. The general consensus among the interviewees is that only CSI and Forensics outcomes are sustainable enough in the sense that the working procedures could not be reversed to the old practices because there are institutional and human capacities sufficiently built (and continue being built with the Forensic training centre and curricula).

Case Study 9: Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority, Regional

Basic data

Name of intervention	IMPULS
Location of intervention	Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia
Timeframe	2014 – December 2019.
Lead Swedish Public Authority	The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	State Geodetic Administration of the Republic of Croatia (SGA), being a junior partner
Budget	SEK 39 million (EUR 3,6 million] ²¹⁷
Expenditure (up to March 2019)	SEK 31,5 million (EUR 2,9 million]

Brief description

The overall objective is to support the EU INSPIRE Directive to be implemented in the region, enabling the beneficiary countries to meet the EU requirements in this area. One aim is to ensure interoperable content and services are delivered efficiently, supporting the development of e-government in each country as well as adding value to government and local administration, all being in line with the PSI Directive.

The INSPIRE Directive aims to create a European Union (EU) spatial data infrastructure that will enable sharing of environmental spatial information among public sector organisations and better facilitate public access to spatial information across Europe. The project objective is to provide the basis for how technical interoperability can be achieved, how authorities should disseminate geodata in an electronic format via services and how they should share geodata with other public authorities and also other countries.

²¹⁷ Exchange rate SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

Overview

Context

The INSPIRE Directive came into force during 2007 and full implementation (in the EU) is required by 2020. The INSPIRE Directive aims to create a European Union (EU) spatial data infrastructure that will enable sharing of environmental spatial information among public sector organisations and better facilitate public access to spatial information across Europe. The assumption is that this will support, for example, increased efficiency in data collection and accuracy in collected data, improved basis for reduced air pollution as well as increased tax revenues, increases transparency and prevents fraud.²¹⁸

At the start of the IMPULS project it was concluded that while the involved countries had different capacities in the area of national spatial data, none of the countries yet conformed with the INSPIRE directive.

Some services were in place, mostly ‘view’ services. Each country also had a geoportal or some kind of e-service. The geoportals, as a rule, have been established for serving a particular set or sets of data. The overall level of interoperability between them was low. The creation of cross border services was complicated by incompatibility and inconsistencies of data, for example, by the different coordinate reference systems used in the countries.

Funding for national spatial data infrastructure (NSDI) appeared to be a great challenge in all countries, and most financial support was provided by the state budget. External sources were complemented by own incomes, e.g. by charging fees for spatial data and services. However, there was a lack of clear licensing and pricing policies.

One common major problem in the region was the lack of existing qualified staff at the participating organisations. Generally, this problem was not only in the aspect of knowledge and experience but also in the small number of employed individuals

²¹⁸ Lantmäteriet 2014a.

available to do the work needed to achieve the expected outcomes of this project.

In the Western Balkan region, several donor-funded activities are on-going in the field of land administration and other adjacent areas. Examples are World Bank (WB) funded projects in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, several initiatives by Kartverket from Norway in the regions related to spatial data infrastructure and government IT.²¹⁹

Description of the intervention

The project has focused on building capacity in the area covered by the INSPIRE Directive, and the main activities have been workshops focused on specific technical work packages as well as seminars. The project has also organised activities with the eight directors-generals. The purpose was learning more about the management and control of a public authority, as well as how to develop their organizations.

The project is designed so that the main part of the activities should be carried out individually by each respective participating agency. As formulated in the inception report:

*In the IMPULS project we have agreed that 90% (minimum) of the work is done at the respective beneficiary organisations and 10% (maximum) during workshops and other joint activities*²²⁰

Lantmäteriet is the implementing partner working in cooperation with the State Geodetic Administration of the Republic of Croatia, being the junior partner. Involved in the project is also eight regional agencies, as primary beneficiaries:

- Immovable Property Central Registration Office of the Republic of Albania (IPRO)
- National Authority for Geospatial Information in Albania (ASIG)

²¹⁹ Lantmäteriet 2014a.

²²⁰ Lantmäteriet 2014b.

- Federal Administration for Geodetic and Real Property Affairs of FBiH (FGA)
- Republic Authority for Geodetic and Property Affairs of the Republic of Srpska (GARS)
- Kosovo Cadastral Agency (KCA)
- Agency for the Real Estate Cadastre of the Republic of Macedonia (AREC)
- Real Estate Administration of the Republic of Montenegro (REA)
- Republic Geodetic Authority of the Republic of Serbia (RGZ)

One of the main identified risks/challenges has been insufficient staffing at the participating agencies. To support the beneficiaries in the fulfilling of the IMPULS project activities, trainees were employed in the following institutions: FGA, GARS, RGA, AREC, ASIG and KCA.²²¹

The project budget is SEK 39 million, and at the time of this evaluation (March 2019) the aggregated expenditure amounted to SEK 31.5 million.

The IMPULS project is based on a previous, EU funded, INSPIRATION project. The INSPIRATION project's implementation period was from 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2013 and the beneficiary countries were Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo. As a basis for the IMPULS proposal the beneficiaries and the junior implementing agency developed a Terms of Reference for the IMPULS project, setting out priorities and expectations.²²²

A project proposal was then developed in more detail though a process together with all participating agencies. The work was based in a workshop in Gävle, Sweden. During this workshop the expectations, current states for each agency and a desired state for the end of the project was elaborated. Also work packages, organisation and ways of working in the project were agreed. In addition, the Swedish management team visited as many of the beneficiary agencies as possible during the planned time frame and

²²¹ Lantmäteriet 2016.

²²² Lantmäteriet 2014a.

discussed the proposal and the specific conditions for each agency. The objective for this was to minimise the risks for the project and to ensure full commitment as well as an in depth understanding of the current situation for each agency.

Once commitments were secured, the project started with an inception phase. In this phase the design was elaborated further, through further activities involving all the participating agencies.²²³

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

The IMPULS project has eight participating agencies from different Balkan countries. Throughout the fact that the starting capacity/situation differ between the countries has been emphasised. It has also been clear that the ambitions and results have varied between the participating agencies/countries. While it is clear that none of the countries as of yet fulfil the requirements of the INSPIRE directive, a number of results have been reported.

The most tangible output of the project so far is the fact that most participating countries now have a national meta-data catalogue.²²⁴ This was lacking in the baseline, at project start. The meta data catalogues maps who (Ministries, Agencies, Municipalities, Public Companies, Municipalities, etc.) has what public data. The catalogue is a digital portal with information about where the data is. As national coordinator the responsible agency should know where what data exist.

In addition, a number of national developments have been realised during the project, for example the approval of a specific legislation on spatial data infrastructure in Montenegro and Serbia, approval of a national SDI strategy for the federal level in Bosnia and signed stakeholder agreements in Kosovo.

²²³ Lantmäteriet 2014a.

²²⁴ Interview with Lantmäteriet, May 2019.

Contribution to EU membership

The IMPULS project builds on clearly formulated impact targets that aims at supporting the countries in meeting EU-requirements and to deliver qualitative quality services. One of the impact objectives is to ensure that the *“INSPIRE Directive is implemented in the region, enabling the beneficiary countries to meet the EU-requirements in this area.”*

At the time of this evaluation, none of the countries represented in the project are fulfilling the requirements of the INSPIRE directive.²²⁵

Efficient coordination

As the project is regional, the main responsibility to coordinate the project with external stakeholders has by design fallen to the participating agencies. It was argued that coordination carried out by anyone but the participating agencies themselves would simply become too complex.

To ensure an overall coordination each agency have reported on coordination with other initiatives in their quarterly project reports.

To ensure that the value created in the IMPULS project reaches the intended external stakeholders and end-users a number of activities have been organized with each country. These national workshops aimed to inform stakeholders about the IMPULS project and jointly achieve the goals of the project and initiate development of the spatial data infrastructure in the beneficiaries' countries. National workshops were also a tool for supporting the beneficiary institution in their roles as national NSDI coordinators.²²⁶

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

There are a number of lessons learned from the intervention that can inform future agency to agency capacity development cooperation.

²²⁵ Interview with Lantmäteriet, May 2019.

²²⁶ Lantmäteriet 2016.

Working with a regional partner: The inclusion of the State Geodetic Administration of the Republic of Croatia (DGU) as a junior partner has been a very positive experience. The DGU was able to bring the experience from the country's recent EU accession. This made interventions much more relevant to the participants. The use of a Croatian project coordinator was also very effective. Not only was communication much better but the coordinator understood the context much better and could provide that to the project.

Analysing ownership and incentives: The assumption going into the project was that the partner agencies would work to fulfil the INSPIRE Directive, with or without Lantmäteriet. But in practice that is not the way it worked. Once the project got the funding, there has low momentum at most of the participating agencies. It was clear that they did in fact not perceive the scope of the project as a priority.

The lack of a regional resident advisor: Lantmäteriet concludes that a regional resident advisor could have been a strong asset, being more available to the all the partner agencies. Traveling around the region to sort out problems at the agencies, keeping the momentum up. Many agencies needed support with smaller tasks to keep work going, and a resident advisor could have supported in that.²²⁷

²²⁷ Interview with Lantmäteriet, May 2019.

Contribution Analysis

Most countries have a national meta data catalogue. This was lacking in the baseline, at project start. The meta data catalogues maps who (Ministries, Agencies, Municipalities, Public Companies, Municipalities, etc.) has what public data. The catalogue is a digital portal with information about where the data is. As national coordinator the responsible agency should know where what data exist.

The meta data catalogues are however not truly openly available, and therefore they are not yet providing the intended impact in the larger context. There are no use cases. The development of the meta data catalogues varying in degree of progress (Kosovo/Albania -> Serbia -> Bosnia (federal) -> Bosnia (RS)).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ²²⁸
A. The inclusion of Croatia as a junior partner has been a very positive experience. They were able to bring the experiences from the country's recent EU accession. This made interventions much more relevant to the participants.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interview with Lantmäteriet project manager.	3
B. The use of a Croatian project coordinator was very effective. Not only was communication much better (speaks the language) but she understood the context much better and could provide that to the project.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interview with Lantmäteriet project manager.	1
C. A regional RA could have been a strong asset, being more available to the all the partner agencies. Traveling around the region to sort out problems at the agencies, keeping the momentum up. Many agencies needed support with	Internal preventing factor (pitfall)	Interview with Lantmäteriet project manager.	3

²²⁸ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ²²⁸
smaller tasks to keep work going, and a RA could have supported in that.			
D. Varying degrees of ownership. The ambition was that the partner agencies would work to fulfil the INSPIRE Directive, with or without Lantmäteriet. But that is not the way it worked.	Internal preventing factor (pitfall)	Interview with Lantmäteriet project manager. Desk review.	4
E. Only a few staff from the Land Agency want to go on missions. That has slowed the project.	Internal preventing factor (pitfall)	Interview with Lantmäteriet project manager.	1
F. It turned out that many of the participating agencies did not have sufficient capacities to effectively participate in the IMPULS projects, including basic skills to set-up a server. Most lacked dedicated staff or resources (except for ASIG and RGA).	Internal preventing factor (pitfall)	Interview with Lantmäteriet project manager.	4
G. The IMPULS project has provided hands-on workshops, joint development and sharing of experiences etc. The project is designed so that the main part of the activities should be carried out individually by each respective participating agency.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interviews and desk review.	3

Contribution Claim: Based on the analysis of contributing factors we conclude that the IMPULS project contributed to the establishment of meta data catalogues in the region. At the same time, it is clear that a number of factors contributed to the fact that the catalogues are not as developed as was previewed. The project acted through mechanisms:

It provided expertise and activities to support the participating agencies in their efforts to establish national meta data catalogues needed to fulfil the requirements of the INSPIRE Directive.

- It supported the participating regional agencies not only with Swedish expertise but with highly relevant regional expertise from the junior partner from Croatia. A regional coordinator also helped push things along.
- During implementation of the project it became clear that a number of the participating agencies did not have the required skills or capacities to effectively participate in the project activities. In addition, there was also a lack of internal ownership, and several agencies did receive enough support to push the development ahead by themselves.
- The challenges with lacking capacities and ownership could likely have been mitigated had Lantmäteriet had a regional Resident Advisor available fulltime, to ensure that all participating agencies had momentum in their national implementation. This was however not identified in the project design phase. In addition, Lantmäteriet has had challenges recruiting experts for the project.
- The project has had greater success in supporting those participating agencies where capacities/resources were already available, and staff could effectively benefit from the activities.

Case Study 10: Statistics Sweden, Regional

Basic data

Name of intervention	Regional Statistics Programme 2008 – 2012 Regional Statistics Programme 2013 - 2016
Location of intervention	Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Serbia (also North Macedonia and Montenegro since 2014)
Timeframe	2008-2016
Lead Swedish Public Authority	Statistics Sweden – Statistika centralbyrån (SCB)
Other Swedish Public Authorities involved	NA
Phase 1 and 2 timeframe	2008-2016
Phase 1 and 2 expenditure	The total cost of the regional project between 2008 and 2016 was SEK 58.8 million (approximately EUR 5.6 million) ²²⁹

Brief description

Regional – “Regstat” Regional Statistics Sweden Cooperation project
Since 2008, Statistics Sweden has been working across the Western Balkans region, establishing and working with a Regional Statistics Committee. The overall objective of this cooperation was to achieve developed statistical systems in the region supported by sound statistical methods and practices in line with EU standards. Specifically, the cooperation has aimed to achieve the following results:

- Relevant staff from the national statistical institutes (NSIs) are able to conduct good quality surveys
- NSIs are able to report on environmental statistics to relevant international agencies such as Eurostat and the UN
- Improved quality of data collected
- Improved NSI communication plans and strategies
- Professional networks in the region share best practices and learning
- Environmental statistics indicators are in line with EU requirements: produce new indicators, and develop existing ones

- Harmonised statistical methodologies and processes according to EU regulations
- Regular production and dissemination of gender-segregated statistics for greater gender equality

Overview

Context on statistics and good governance

The transition to democracy and a market economy in the region fundamentally changed the conditions for statistics production. Before 1990, statistics were primarily a tool for planning and control, based on produced facts. In a modern democracy, they are required to be official statistics based on principles of openness, representativeness, statistical confidence and international comparisons.

The old way of working is still present in the attitudes of many representatives in the statistical offices and among important users in the public sector. In the regions, politicians influence what statistics are produced and disseminated. Changes in governments led to changes in top-management of statistical offices and disrupted continuity and independence. Political appointments are common in all countries. Political processes also determine when the national statistical institutions (NSIs) undertake censuses and surveys.

Statistics are part of Chapter 18 of the EU acquis and also a component of other chapters, which call countries to monitor progress on dimensions relevant to accession criteria. Additionally, the EU defines the basic conditions, procedures, and general provisions governing official statistics as well as the division of responsibilities between national and EU statistical authorities. Confidence in official statistics in the EU depends on the respect of the widely accepted guidelines laid down in the European statistics Code of Practice.

The EU acquis in the field of statistics requires the existence of a statistical infrastructure, clear legal basis, and methodologies and

²²⁹ Exchange rate SEK 10.7 = EUR 1.

data requirements in different statistical domains. As the system is dynamic and changes over time, the statistical systems of enlargement countries must be strengthened in order to maintain their level of harmonisation and to incorporate any change in the EU acquis. Eurostat's methodological requirements are mainly concentrated on: economic accounts, reporting on regulations, waste and hazardous substances, water statistics, air emission, and physical energy flow accounts.

Overall, performance in statistics in the region has shown mixed signs of progress and gaps remain against the EU requirements. Western Balkans countries were (and remain) at different levels of starting capacity. Problems encountered, aside from political influenced mentioned above include:

- Low resources for collecting, cleaning, and analysing data with high frequency
- Poor theoretical knowledge in survey methodology, as there are few university courses in statistics and statistical methodology is not included in assistance programmes implemented by other donors
- Gaps in NSIs in organising in-house tailor-made capacity development
- High staff turnover and/or organisational changes
- Reliance on traditional data collection techniques
- Low priority for producing statistics in sectors such as gender and environment.

Non-Swedish project interventions

The EU funded IPA Multi-beneficiary programme is the only other regional statistics project in the Western Balkans. It aims at improving the availability and quality of statistics on foreign trade, migration statistics, agriculture statistics, national accounts, consumer price indices, and purchasing power parities as well as business and energy statistics.

Regarding bilateral programmes, the EU is by far the biggest donor, with Eurostat implementing substantial programmes in all the six Western Balkans countries involved in the Sida-funded

regional programme. Other development partners include the IMF, Unicef, OECD, and World Bank.

Related Swedish strategy, projects, and non-project interventions

Since January 2005 (and up until 2016), SCB is running bilateral projects in all Western Balkans countries. The Statistical Agency claims that as long as there are bilateral projects funded by Sida in all countries there will be a need for a regional project funded by Sida because of the complementary nature to the bi-lateral programmes as well as to both the national and multi-beneficiary IPA projects.

Description of the intervention

The rationale for a regional statistics project is the possibility for NSIs to learn from each other, as they share the same problems, but are at different stages in solving them. The main project characteristics are:

- Focus on a few sectors, for example gender and environment
- Use of workshops, tailor-made trainings, and summer schools
- Demand-driven cooperation, focused on the needs and priorities of the recipient countries
- Long-term cooperation
- Synergies and cooperation with bilateral projects
- Supporting counterparts in producing statistics according to EU standards
- Aiming for sustainability of results by delegating much of the project ownership to the beneficiaries through the Project Steering Committee.

Project design

Regional co-operation is a result of dialogue initiated in 2001. At that time, Sida identified needs in reliable statistics for Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and the Stabilization and Association (SA) processes. This Sida initiative resulted in the signing of a Regional Cooperation Project (RCP), in November 2002. Hence,

SCB developed a regional strategy and recruited a regional coordinator. SCB opened a regional office in Belgrade in 2003 (the Balkan Project Office, BPO) to handle the regional project and bilateral projects.

In 2004, Sida and SCB signed a new authority agreement for 2005-2008 based on a revised Swedish objectives for development cooperation. Sida proposed the focus on environmental statistics, gender statistics, and statistical methodology, which will remain valid until 2016.

In 2008, Sida, SCB, and counterparts reconfirmed programme focus, but introduced the authority of the Regional Steering Committee for approving activities. In 2013, partners reconfirmed the focus and strengthened the RSC involvement.

SCB has identified the risk of working in statistics in the region and especially at the regional level as:

- Political interference
- Staff turnover and brain drain at beneficiaries weaken institutional memory
- Absorption capacity
- Availability of experts from SCB to conduct activities at mutually acceptable periods
- Coordination with other projects (especially in the IPA regional)
- Structural barriers to the actual use of knowledge and statistics
- A lack of resources to maintain and develop the standard of the statistics produced.

SCB tailored its approach to some of these risks, but left unclear how it planned to work around others.

SCB prepared the 2008-2012 and 2013-2016 phases through a Results Based Management (RBM) workshop that laid out the project's road map and its expected outputs and outcomes. In 2013, Sida required more details on baselines, targets, and milestones for output and outcome indicators. Therefore, SCB called for a second RBM workshop, out of which came the inception report.

The project did not conduct an explicit and external analysis of needs before the 2008 and 2013 phases. Instead, it identified needs

based on the previous phase' experience and in collaboration and dialogue with the counterparts.

Project design identified key components for cooperation, but left the task of identifying activities for implementation. Since 2008, the Regional Statistics Committee (RCS) has a prominent role in identifying the activities. The RCS is composed of members from the statistical offices (one member per country and the BPO Team Leader) in the Western Balkans. From 2009, the chairing of the Committee has been taken over by NSI members. The RCS agreed/approved regional projects, which are financed from the Regional Statistics Fund (RSF). During the 2013-2016 project period, the RSC also established an annual operational plan. SCB has performed financial follow-up both on an annual basis as well as accumulated for project cycle.

The structure of the programme allowed to mix regional and national funds, and aimed at connecting capacity building to actually doing things. The project has used the following instruments:

- Training courses, mainly in survey methodology
- Summer schools, initially run in Sweden, and then devolved in the region, engaging experienced statisticians from the region as lecturers and facilitators
- Workshops/seminars with one or two facilitators/lecturers from Statistics Sweden. Participating countries present their situation on the topic for the workshop. BPO together with ICO recruit the consultants used as facilitators/lecturers.
- Study visits, which mostly took place in Sweden, but also in other countries.

Intervention delivery

Between 2008 and 2012, the project:

- trained 113 young statisticians from the region in methodology, writing, presenting, and debating thematic papers by attending the Balkan Summer Schools in statistics. The Summer School has been met with overwhelming approval and appreciation by all the NSIs in the region

- trained 48 young statisticians from the Western Balkans region (3-4 staff per NSI) in all phases of survey methodology through a three-week regional courses that took place in 2010 and 2012. During the 2012 course, four experienced statisticians from offices in BiH and Serbia contributed to the last course week by covering some course topics.
- Organised additional demand-based trainings
- Worked on methodologies related to gender statistics (time use, gender-based violence), energy statistics, censuses, and waste statistics.

Between 2013-2016, the project conducted 33 activities with at least 618 participants, 402 women and 216 men. The ad hoc seminars seem to be the most popular activity with 146 participants while the survey methodology has had 47. The most frequent institution is INSTAT (Albania) who has sent almost one hundred participants and SSO (North Macedonia) has sent the least only 22 participants. The activities within the regional programme, mostly seminars, workshops, training and also occasional study tours have aimed to provide a transfer of know-how and building of competence at the individual level. SCB moved towards a coaching approach: Statistics Sweden's staff does not do the training or develops methodology, but rather coach local trainers and support local experts in developing methodology or statistical products.

Post 2016 period

For the period post 2016, the 2016 evaluation recommended that Sida funds another phase of the Regional Statistics Cooperation, adopts additional capacity building methods (coaching and mentoring) and implements an exit strategy that also considers organisational and management issues.

Findings against evaluation questions

Contribution to sustainable results

Outcome 1: NSIs in the region collaborate better.

Contribution Claim 1: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that two project-related mechanisms contributed to increasing cooperation between NSIs from the region:

- Firstly, having NSIs technical staff participating to joint project activities. As learning opportunities, these activities have been valuable as the NSIs shared the same goals in meeting EU accession requirement but were at different level of capacity and experience: some countries could teach others. More marginally, the project has built the capacity of NSIs staff to discuss statistics in English.
- Secondly, the NSIs participated jointly in a decision-making body, empowered to decide on activities (2009), annual plans, and reporting (2013). This required high level staff in the NSIs to meet regularly and reach agreements. Discussions were supported by the Regional Advisor, who were working full time to smooth over divergent interests inside and between NSIs.

Outcome 2: By the end of the project, the partner NSIs:

- improved in their production of statistics at EU standard level in social and gender statistics, census, and environmental statistics. The overall trends are not conclusive, as countries progressed at different paces, from different starting points, and according to specific sectors, but there are signs of progress
- had produced new statistical products that met the EU methodological benchmarks
- remained at different level of capacity and performance
- retained systemic weaknesses in available budget and resources and capacity for learning statistics in the region.

Contribution Claim 2: Based on the analysis of contributing factors, we conclude that the project contributed only partly to solving the systemic weaknesses of NSIs. The main reason is that it did not work on issues of budgeting, resource availability, and political challenges. The project did have a positive effect in combination with the bilateral projects in improving performance in producing statistics at EU standards. In achieving this:

- the coaching approach likely played a role, where Swedish experts did not do the work in place of the NSIs experts, but build their capacity
- The involvement of the counterparts in designing activities contributed to make them relevant, even if Sweden retained a focus on its national core values of environment and gender
- Methodological quality of short-term experts from Sweden.

Contribution to EU membership

Capacity building in the field of statistics relates to the EU approximation process in several ways. Firstly, statistics is one chapter of the *acquis* and has to be implemented in the pre-accession period. Secondly, statistics provide the data needed for other chapters and policy areas. Statistics play a central role when it comes to decision-making and monitoring. Thirdly, the national methodologies need to be harmonised with EU requirements to ensure comparability of statistical information within the region and with the EU Member States.

The project contributed to approximation in the field of statistics mainly by building NSIs' capacity to apply methodologies harmonised with EU requirements.

The project contribution to overall government performance included providing additional data on gender-statistics, such as pay gap and time-use between men and women, which is relevant across government, improvements in producing environmental statistics improve the performance of Environmental Ministries and Agencies.

Efficient coordination

The focus on gender and environmental statistics was introduced by Statistics Sweden, as these themes were (and are) core values of its cooperation. Apart from this, activities have been designed in close cooperation with counterparts. Since 2009, focus areas and activities are approved by the regional Steering Group. Since 2013, the steering group has responsibility for work-planning.

The project coordinated with the EU IPA project as they both aimed at filling gaps in availability of methodologies and data for producing statistics according to EU standards and worked at a regional level. The IPA EU support was much larger. Therefore, coordination took the form of SCB adapting to cover what the IPA EU was not already doing.

The regional project is itself an instrument for coordinating NSIs from the region.

The regional project closely with bilateral statistics projects. Coordination with other Swedish agencies was ad hoc (with sectoral expertise).

Lessons learned to inform future cooperation

The regional agencies have learned: 1) new methodologies on statistics in the target sub-sectors, 2) how to discuss statistics in English.

Swedish agencies have learned that: 1) resident advisors are crucial for success in coordinating regional projects; 2) regional projects can connect well with bilateral projects; 3) how to design project effectively is still a learning process, especially how to design outcomes and indicators for outcomes that actually allows measuring the results in relation to a theory of change; 4) a regional network might not be that sustainable, as NSIs do not have funding for continuing regional activities.

Additional lessons learned come from comparison with our other case studies: 1) it is important to use fresh perspectives during inception to explore the context, 2) lacking a system-wide approach might limit success at in building organisational capacity, 3) thinking-about sustainability mechanisms is important, 4) experts

need to be on the ground and have the local knowledge and the expertise to manage change not just technical expertise; 5) there is a strong value in the ‘peer to peer’ relationships; 6) it can be hard to get real buy-in for gender.

Contribution Analysis

Outcome 1

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ²³⁰
A. Participating to joint events	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Desk review reports that members of all NSIs participated to events, such as workshop and the summer school in Sweden and in the region	3
B. Participating in a joint decision-making body, to which the project transferred responsibilities as an explicit strategy	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Desk review reports that since 2009, the SRC had the authority to adopt activities under the programme component, and since 2013 it has been responsible for planning and reporting on activities	3
C. Resident Advisors are crucial for real success. It cuts through the many competing interests in the partner agencies, which are just not staffed enough to ensure momentum in activities without active support full-time.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Interview with Swedish staff	2

²³⁰ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high).

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ²³⁰
D. Building capacity in using English as a working language, (Summer School)	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Desk research reports that the Summer School was conducted in English and challenged participants in writing and presenting in English.	1
E. The regional projects focus on generic issues, common challenges for the region. The Western Balkan countries all aspire for EU integration.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Desk research AND interview with Swedish staff	3
F. Different levels of capacity in the region (such as for the census operations).	Contributing external factor	Desk research, with Serbia more advanced in statistics, and Albania, Bosnia, Albania, and Kosovo.	3
G. The workshops enabled the participants to learn from each other and to find new ways to implement when returning to work.	Internal contributing factor (mechanism)	Desk research	3

Outcome 2

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ²³¹
A. Lack of formal statistical methodology course in the universities of the Western Balkan	Contributing external factor	Desk research: the lack of methodology courses was identified in 2005 as a need, and again was not solved by 2016	2
B. Lack of budget to keep the Summer School funded without Sweden, and to resource and staff NSIs appropriately	Contributing external factor	Desk research	2

²³¹ Significance scale is from 1 (low) to 4 (high)

Contributing FACTORS	TYPE	EVIDENCE Signs/facts	SIGNIF. scale ²³¹
C. Coached the local experts, which we identified based on their performance during courses or through the counterparts. We designed activities so that Statistics Sweden's staff does not do the training or develops methodology, but rather they coach the local trainers and support local experts in developing methodology or statistical products.	Contributing internal factor	Desk review, and interview with Sweden Agency staff	2
D. Resident Advisors are crucial for real success. There are so many competing interests in the partner agencies, and they are just not staffed enough to ensure momentum in activities without active support full-time.	Contributing internal factor	Interview with Sweden Agency staff	2
E. Different starting capacity in the NSIs	Contributing external factor	Desk review	
F. Connection with the bilateral project for applying the new skills and knowledge	Contributing external factor	Desk review, and interview with Sweden Agency staff	
G. Political problems slow down cooperation and data exchange in Bosnia	Contributing external factor	Desk review, and interview with Sweden Agency staff	
H. Lack of budget in the NSIs to staff and resource their work appropriately	Contributing external factor	Desk review, and interview with Sweden Agency staff	

Appendix 6 – Analysis of Contribution Factors

In this appendix, we have divided contribution factors mentioned in the contribution tables of the case studies according to whether they are internal / external, contribution / preventive factors. We report the frequency of each factor in brackets.

Contribution factors internal to the project logic

Type of contribution factor	Projects that had a strong contribution to performance and governance change	Projects that did not have a strong contribution to performance and governance change
Contribution factor internal to the project logic; with N of instances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit-for-purpose LTA or TL (6) • Long and careful inception phase (5) • Integrated approach (4) • Mixed delivery teams of civil servants and external experts (4) • Support from the Embassy (4) • Providing incentives for sustainability (2) • Swedish agencies face the same underlying problems or legislation as the partner agency (2) • Case based approach to training (2) • Working in parallel on strengthening structure, process, tools, and people (2) • Involvement of high-level management and politicians (1) • Long term partnership (1) • Internalizing findings from a previous evaluation (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality subject experts from the Swedish agencies (3) • Presence of an LTA (2) • Presence of a joint decision-making body across government (2) • Working on human resources (facilitating hiring people at the partner institution) • Presence of a junior partner with relevant expertise

Type of contribution factor	Projects that had a strong contribution to performance and governance change	Projects that did not have a strong contribution to performance and governance change
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to mobilize a large number of experts (1) • Flexibility to respond to demands from the partner (1) 	
Contribution factor external to the project logic; with N of instances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reform was a priority or had the support of the partner government (5). • Quality of the legislation to be implemented (developed in a participatory way and presented an approach that can be realistically implemented (3) • Positive change in mentality in implementing agencies connected to previous legislative change (1) • Counterpart had some experience in applying the approach earlier (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for the service to be delivered • The reform was a priority or had the support of the partner government;
Preventing factors internal to the project logic; with N of instances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of wider political economy analysis at the beginning (2) • Lack of incentives to cooperate or maintain the function • Lack of integrated approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of an integrated approach (2) • Project designed with limited inputs from beneficiaries (2) • Decision to close the project without an exit strategy • Working in silos on products • Abundance of short-term missions at will led to lack of strategic thinking in the partner • Lack of LTA • Lack on an approach to political economy analysis • Lack of a focus on organizational capacities

Type of contribution factor	Projects that had a strong contribution to performance and governance change	Projects that did not have a strong contribution to performance and governance change
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No incentives for decentralised and central entities for sustainability
Preventing factor external to the project logic; with N of instances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner country political process make some key beneficiary unavailable for function Lack of budget or wider lack of capacity in other parts of the partner agency to discharge the function (2) Lack of partner experience with organizational change (2) Staff turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rejection by participating agencies of the project approach Poor legislation to be implemented Staff turnover Lack of basic capacity for the implementing agency to conduct the function to be strengthened (2)

Kill factors: not present in successful factors but present as preventing factors in unsuccessful projects

- Project designed with limited inputs from beneficiaries (2)
- Lack of basic capacity for the implementing agency to conduct the function to be strengthened (2)
- Poor legislation to be implemented (legislation cannot be realistically implemented)
- Lack of a focus on organizational capacities

Key factors for success: present as contributory factors internal in successful projects, but not in unsuccessful ones.

- Fit-of-purpose LTA or TL: a long-term advisor with leadership quality and strong knowledge of context and subject matter (6)
- Long and careful inception phase (5)
- Integrated approach (4)
- Mixed delivery teams of civil servants and external experts (4)
- Political support from the Ambassador (4)
- Providing incentives for sustainability (2)

Positive factors that do not guarantee success: internal and external contribution factors that have also been present in the project that were not successful

- High quality subject experts from the Swedish agencies (3)
- Presence of an LTA (2)
- Presence of a joint decision-making body across government (2)
- Working on human resources (facilitating hiring people at the partner institution)
- Presence of a junior partner with relevant expertise.

Negative factors that can be overcome with the right approach: external preventing factors present in successful projects:

- Partner country political process make some key beneficiary unavailable for function
- Lack of budget or wider lack of capacity in other parts of the partner agency to discharge the function (2)
- Lack of partner experience with organizational change (2)
- Turn-over

Appendix 7 - Interview structure guide

This is just to provide some consistency across our interviews. In general, interviews will be based on the desk reviews – and the issues highlighted that emerge from these. This is intended to be a short aide memoire.

Context – what are the key external events and trends that a) inspired intervention development b) affected implementation of the intervention

Design

- how were the projects/interventions designed?
- who did the analysis and design work (and who was involved).
- to what extent were the analyses accurate – did they truly understand the root causes?
- to what extent were the designs appropriate for the problem/opportunity?

Implementation

- what was the structure of the organisation established for implementation?
- Who was driving implementation (partner civil servants/permanent staff, contractors or Swedish agency staff?)

Outcomes

- What signs/evidence is of changes that have been achieved?
- What changes have been achieved, and provide examples/stories to provide evidence that shows these changes have actually happened

Contribution analysis

- From outcomes identified in the previous question, ask interviewees to select the (up to 3) most significant achievements/outcomes.

- What actions and events contributed to the achievement of each selected outcome? [we will then categorise contributions according to the contribution analysis format]

Impact

- What changes to communities, society, economy, overall quality of government (e.g. reduction in corruption, fairness of service provision, etc) has the intervention achieved?

Sustainability

- To what extent are the outcomes/achievements likely to continue?

Appendix 8 – Desk review guide

Introduction

Intervention Summary

Country:

Theme:

Swedish Agency(ies) involved:

Partner Agency(ies) involved:

Interventions covered:

Dates:

Budget/actual expenditure:

Description of the programme

Brief factual description of the programme(s), phases, objectives, stakeholders, etc.

Context (Green Boxes)

Relevant factors to the theme/country

Political economy factors

[e.g. elections, changes in government, depth of political influence in civil service, key factors driving reforms, key factors restraining reforms]

Trends in key indicators

[see <https://data.worldbank.org/> for many appropriate indicators, (e.g. ‘statistical capacity index’), may well be other sources, too]

EU negotiations

[EC progress reports]

EU dialogues

[not sure where the main source will be – probably interviews with the delegation, may be mentioned in progress reports]

Sector baseline

What were the key issues in the sector before the intervention started (or at least, at the beginning of our period under review – 2008)? Probably get this from earlier EC progress reports and/or assessments in preparation for membership negotiations.

Non-Swedish project interventions

Which other players were involved? E.g. World Bank (likely for statistics), OSCE (likely for policing), EU (for everything), other bilateral donors

[search either OECD DAC or IATI databases for related interventions. Use DAC 5-digit sector codes to find EUR values of related interventions, sources, etc.]

Briefly describe other projects: scope, objectives, dates, finance, etc.

[probably source from other orgs themselves, maybe IATI etc.]

Related Swedish strategy, projects and non-project interventions

What were the applicable Swedish strategies? Country, regional, sectoral, etc.

Aside from the intervention in focus, what related interventions did Sweden support (e.g. contracted projects, seconded staff to OSCE (in the case of policing), dialogue and diplomatic activities, etc.

Pay attention to the timing of other interventions – were they simultaneous with the focus intervention, before, after, etc.

The Intervention (blue boxes)

Intervention selection

How was the programme(s) selected? How relevant is it to the needs?

Use the following list as a series of prompts for questions to answer:

Analysis of needs – country level [was it done? Was it thorough? Accurate?]

Alignment with national planning and priorities

Coordination with other donors/actors

Assessment of Swedish strengths/capabilities

Political commitment from partner country

Relevance to ‘Quality of Government’ approach

Learning from previous interventions

Intervention design

How was/were the programme/s designed? Look for critical factors in the design process that could have contributed either to the programme’s successes, or areas in which the programme did not succeed (as applicable)

Participation and leadership of partner agency

Identification of stakeholders

Analysis of needs – agency level; how were the partner agency’s needs identified? Who was involved in this process, and to what extent did the needs assessments accurately reflect the real issues?

Assessment of partner agency capacities: how were the partner agency’s capacities assessed? Who was involved in this process, and to what extent did the capacity assessments accurately reflect the real capacities and constraints?

Assessment of Swedish agency capacities for support – was there an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the Swedish agency, and did this influence the design of the intervention (e.g. recognition of low capacity in one area led to identifying the need to contract consultants with the required skills, etc)?

Selection and design of programme objectives and components – how were the programme objectives designed, who was involved, to what extent did both Swedish and partner agency agree on the objectives? Where was any area of disagreement? (e.g. we heard in

Stockholm that often partner agencies wanted Swedish support across a much broader range and with more ambitious, but unrealistic objectives).

Choice of agency function(s) to target – linked to objectives – how were the choices made about the scope of the programme, and what changes it would try to achieve?

OD model/change approach – what were the approaches selected (e.g. training, mentoring, etc)

Theory of change – did the programme have an explicit theory of change? If yes, what was it? If no, try to reconstruct the ToC from the programme documents. What were the assumptions about how the change approaches would lead to the desired changes? E.g. how would training staff lead to improvements in services?

Choice of modality (i.e. to what extent were options other than Swedish Agencies considered – e.g. consulting firms, budget support, etc.)

Drivers of change – identified and utilised in design – to what extent were drivers of change identified at the planning stage, and were the proposed programme components/actions in line with these drivers of change?

Learning from previous interventions – to what extent did programme documentation identify lessons learned, and adapt the design to accommodate these lessons. Give examples if possible.

Intervention delivery

How was/were the intervention/s delivered? What factors in the way in which the intervention was delivered led to its success? What factors reduced/constrained its success?

Model(s) of delivery e.g. PIU, visiting experts, secondments, etc.

Activities and methods/techniques – study visits, classroom training, o-t-j training

Efficiency of delivery – costs, durations, level of effort

Costs – breakdown if possible by inputs, person-hours, cost per hour, etc

Relationship with partner agency

Coordination with other stakeholders

Drivers of change – identified and used during implementation

Monitoring, assessment, learning, feedback, adjustment

Results (orange boxes)

Partner agency capacity improvements

Outcome harvesting: What changes can be identified and captured?
Note sources of information (e.g. project reports, evaluations, interviews, etc)

Have any changes occurred in the following?

Mandate/regulation

Leadership/strategy – formal and informal – can include actual written strategies – identify substantial changes – and also important strategic factors such as political will, public opinion, etc. that directly impact on the work of the agency (may be more important for eg policing and land reform than statistics)

Resources – budget, numbers of people, information, etc.

Work physical environment (inc. equipment, etc)

People (skills, motivation, job design, attitudes, organisational culture, etc.)

Processes (direct and support); this will also include e.g. new IT systems, new ways of doing agency's work, changes in management practice (e.g. introduction of employee performance reviews, new annual planning processes, etc)

Structures (departments, teams, roles and functions, etc (typically recorded in the 'sistematizacija' document); can include e.g. introduction of new functions (e.g. human resources management, strategy/policy department, etc)

Outputs – what does the agency deliver that is different (e.g. new or improved statistical report or data, special police services for women victims of violence, etc)

Agency's environment – political, social, economic

Strengthened change management capacities – this is crucial aspect of sustainability – if the agency can now better initiate and manage organisational change by itself, without international support.

For each of the changes identified, provide information, if possible, on the actions, activities, etc that the sources suggest contributed to these changes. Assess the likelihood that these actions did contribute to the reported changes. Is it clear what the mechanisms were that led from actions to changes achieved? Are these mechanisms feasible?

Do the mechanisms reported correspond to the mechanisms proposed in the programme design theory of change (identified in section 0).

Partner agency performance improvements

Did the changes reported in the partner agency lead to any identifiable improvements in quality, effectiveness etc of services/activities? Refer to the theory of change developed in 0 – what evidence is there that the expected changes have been achieved? What plausible evidence is there that the Swedish programme contributed to these changes?

[this is unlikely to be reported in final reports – more likely in evaluation reports; we will also have to rely heavily on perceptions of external stakeholders/users of the services]

Who are the actual users of the improved services/activities? Are they internal/external to the partner agency? Do these actual users correspond with the users identified in the design?

Delivery targets and performance indicators – are there any performance measures that the partner agency uses to monitor its own performance? If so, what do these measures indicate in terms of improved performance?

Stakeholders' perceptions – what do the users of the partner agency's services think about the agency's services? Have they improved? If so, in what way? And is there any evidence/stories that would suggest that the Swedish interventions contributed in any way to the improvements?

Changes in secondary functions: are there any improvements in the way the partner agency manages its secondary functions (i.e. the functions that are supporting the main activities – e.g. planning, financial management, human resources, IT support, facilities management, etc) and are there contributions in these changes to the Swedish interventions?

Positive/intended Outcomes – what has resulted from these improvements in the agency's performance? What impact e.g. has there been on the property market as a result of the Land agency's property sale price register? How have certain statistical products improved policy making or business decisions? Has improved gender-sensitivity in policing made the lives of women victims of domestic violence safer? Etc. etc. From these outcomes, try to identify stories that link Swedish interventions to organisational changes that then lead to these positive outcomes.

Negative/unintended outcomes – also look for outcomes that were not intended/planned by the programme or the agency. Unintended outcomes do not have to be negative – they can be positive but unintended; likewise, negative outcomes might also be planned but overseen (e.g. increasing running costs leading to cuts in other areas).

Multiplier effects – have the outcomes achieved led to additional outcomes in other areas? E.g. improved gender-sensitive policing has led to greater confidence in the police for other crimes e.g. lgbt hate crimes, crimes affecting ethnic minorities, etc. Has improved land registration led to better situation for women's inheritance, reduced poverty, etc.

Cost-effectiveness – 1) how much did the actions cost? If possible, break down by major budget components; 2) what were the results achieved for which the Swedish programme can be said

to have directly contributed? 3) Does this represent value for money? [q3 for the post-field work survey].

Additional methodologies:

Survey of interlocutors – cost effectiveness

Interviews with CSOs and related international orgs, etc

Government performance improvements

The ‘quality of government’ approach is basically concerned with the fairness with which government discharges its responsibilities. It is not related to the actual policy content, but more to the absence of favouritism, nepotism, and corruption. As an example, favouritism and nepotism in the recruitment of government employees (e.g. in the health service) leads to a reduction in quality of service provision, and a loss of confidence of the citizens in the ability of the government to do what it should.

[it’s worth reading the EBA report on quality of government <https://www.dropbox.com/s/r1vctwo35ihosmw/Rothstein%20Tannenbergo%20Quality%20of%20Government%202015%20SSRN-id3023883%20%281%29.pdf?dl=0>]

Contributions to Quality of Government – are there any identifiable changes that the partner agencies’ improvements have made to the way the Government as a whole delivers its services? (e.g. improved policing might lead to improved conviction rates in corruption cases, improved statistics contribute to more evidence-based policy-making, etc)

How have the agency’s performance improvements contributed to SE/Sida objectives (country and regional)

How have the agency’s performance improvements contributed to national objectives? E.g. national strategies (most likely there will be national strategies for EU accession plus sectoral strategies. What are the relevant objectives; if there are indicators, have the outcomes of the Swedish programmes contributed to the indicators?

How have the agency’s performance improvements contributed to EU accession? (Copenhagen criteria – economic and political

criteria plus the chapters of the acquis. (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copenhagen_criteria); key source here is the EC progress reports for each country; year on year relevant progress.

Summary of Tentative findings/conclusions

What are the main results achieved?

To what extent did the Swedish programme(s) contribute to these results? Which results?

What features/factors in the Swedish programme were significant in achieving these results?

What features/factors in the Swedish programme were significant in preventing results from being achieved?

What were the key lessons learned? (e.g. if you had to do the programme again, what would you do differently?)

What are any tentative recommendations? (e.g. if you were doing a similar programme in another place and time, what are the main DOs and DON'Ts?)

What are the hypotheses that need testing during the field phase? E.g. strong participation in design phase leads to more realistic programme design and more successful programmes; How might these hypotheses be tested?

Appendix 9 – Thematic Analysis of Cost Effectiveness

Alongside the online survey, the evaluation conducted a thematic review of budget information contained in projects’ financial reports, of notes from key informant interviews with project stakeholders, and of efficiency and cost-effectiveness judgements contained in previous evaluations.

This section uses the same methodology presented in the lesson learned section, which involves comparing the different factors at play in more and less effective projects. Table 14 presents a summary of the findings.

Table 14 Summary information on cost effectiveness

	Projects that achieved strong performance or governance changes	Projects that did not achieve strong performance or governance changes
Performance on cost-effectiveness	Stakeholders report that no other modality would be associated with increases in efficiency (2) Triangulated information on outcomes justifying costs (1)	
Performance on efficiency	Presence of delays in the project (1) Presence of underspending (3)	Presence of delays in the project (4) Presence of underspending (5) Presence of overspending (1)
Contribution factors to efficiency	Replacing consultants with local staff and Swedish Agency consultants (1) Mixing activities conducted by regional experts and Swedish experts (1) and Implementation through a local partner (1)	Training young trainees that are retained in the partner agency is a low cost and effective activity (1) Replacing missions of Swedish experts with Skype activities or

	Projects that achieved strong performance or governance changes	Projects that did not achieve strong performance or governance changes
	<p>Government generates additional revenues through support to tax (1)</p> <p>Direct government funding in the project (1)</p> <p>Projects able to use all capacity development instruments (1)</p> <p>Collegial relationship between civil servants catalyse buy-in from counterparts (1)</p> <p>Budget flexibility allows meeting the needs of the partner (1)</p>	<p>activities by counterpart staff to diminish costs (1)</p>
Hindering factors to efficiency	<p>Underperformance of project coordinator (1)</p> <p>SIDA requested budget increases unrealistic for the absorption capacity of the partner agency and management capacity of the Swedish Agency (1)</p> <p>Elections (1)</p>	<p>Need to redesign the project shortly after inception because stakeholders did not agree with key project elements (1)</p> <p>Underspent due to not conducting all planned activities (1)</p> <p>Swedish agency cannot send more experts because of management costs (1)</p>
Elements of efficiency that are not associated	<p>Length of the project (measured as being above the average length for our sample)</p> <p>Size of the project (measured as being above the average length for our sample)</p> <p>Use of consultants (measured as assignment costs being an important component of costs)</p>	

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Varje år förmedlas mer än 500 miljoner kronor av det svenska utvecklings-samarbetet genom statliga myndigheter. Denna utvärdering studerar de lång-siktiga effekterna, hållbarheten och kostnadseffektiviteten i dessa insatser inom kapacitetsutveckling.

Every year more than SEK 500 million of Swedish international development assistance is directed through government authorities (SGAs). This evaluation focuses on the long-term effects, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of these capacity development initiatives.