

Swedish Country Cooperation Strategy with Serbia 2009 – 2012

Management and Results

In 2009, SADEV was asked by government decision to conduct a series of evaluations of Swedish cooperation strategies. This evaluation focuses both on the management and the results of cooperation with Serbia.

Preparation and implementation of the strategy followed Paris Declaration principles

High relevance of the contribution portfolio

Support has contributed to democratization and rapprochement with the EU

Too early to assess results on environment

Results reporting not used for strategic decision-making

The objective of Sweden's development cooperation with Serbia is to strengthen democracy and sustainable development in order to improve the conditions for accession to the EU. The strategy identifies two sectors for cooperation: Democratic Governance and Human Rights as well as Natural Resources and the Environment. Eight interventions in each sector have been assessed. Primary data has been collected through review of documents and interviews in both Stockholm and Serbia.

KEY FINDINGS

The contribution portfolio has *high relevance* to the objectives of the cooperation strategy and to Serbian goals and priorities. Of the two perspectives in the Policy for Global Development (PGD), the *rights perspective* is better reflected in the portfolio than *poor people's perspective on development*.

Effectiveness of the completed projects varies. In Democracy and Human rights objectives have been met to a lesser extent than in Natural Resources and the Environment. The prospect for goal attainment at completion of on-going projects is considered good in both sectors.

The results in both sectors have contributed to democratization and rapprochement with the EU. It is too early however to see any significant results in improved physical environment as the focus has been on strengthening the administrations capacity for managing environmental issues.

Sustainability has been taken into account to a large extent. There are several efforts that promoted strong ownership and where knowledge and practices have been institutionalized.

The Paris Declaration principles of *ownership, alignment* and *mutual accountability* have been followed during the preparation of the strategy and during its implementation. The strategy contributes to aid effectiveness and has potential to promote relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability.

Harmonization has been limited. Some donors withdrew from cooperation with Serbia and there was a lack of response from other donors to support a PBA. Swedish support is appreciated for its flexibility and it has complemented the IPA assistance.

The quality of *reporting results* from partners varies largely. The usefulness of the results matrix is questionable. At the two geographical consultations, little or no time was spent discussing results, implying that it was not used as a strategic management tool.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- All relevant sections of the Embassy should contribute to development cooperation. Presence from the Embassy at the geographical consultations is recommended.
- Consider public financial management (PFM) an area for support. Strengthen the Embassy's capacity to discuss PFM.
- Continue support to develop partners' ability to manage for development results. Assure that project proposals consider how Swedish government's thematic priorities can be implemented.
- Continue support to capacity building of central institutions, such as Public Administration Reform. Strengthen civil society organizations and involve them in projects supported by Sweden.
- Assess sustainability of completed projects in order to draw lessons for future action. Have a dialogue on Serbian practice of politically appointed officials.

SOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

This SADEV Evaluation Brief is based on the report *Swedish Country Cooperation Strategy with Serbia 2009-2012*, SADEV Report 2011:2. This and other SADEV publications are available at www.sadev.se