

Democratic development and increased respect for human rights

Guatemala, Kenya and Serbia

In 2009, the Swedish government commissioned SADEV to conduct an evaluation of the results of development cooperation of which the principal objective is democratic development and increased respect for human rights. The purpose of the evaluation is to contribute to learning regarding Swedish support to democracy and human rights and to provide input for future government policy development. Results are interpreted in light of country cooperation strategies, country contexts and policies governing the period 1997-2010. *Change for Freedom*, the 2010 government policy on democracy and human right, serves as a principal point of departure.

Trust is important for achieving sustainable results

Broad-based dialogue is a key aspect

Positive institutional building has been made possible by reform minded management, political will and international pressure

Three country studies were conducted as part of the commission. The countries each represent one of the three main country categories within Swedish development cooperation: (1) long-term cooperation, (2) reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, and (3) conflict and post-conflict countries. Kenya, Serbia and Guatemala were selected to represent these.

Kenya is a country recognized by ethnical division affecting the foundation of the society including the political arena. Civil society has played a significant role in democratic development. Sweden has provided continuous support to the Kenya civil society since the 1990s. After the 2002 elections Sweden combined support to civil society with support to the government reform programmes. Nevertheless, corruption and impunity hinder institutional development and access to justice on a broader scale.

Sweden initiated its long-term development cooperation with Serbia in the early 2000s after the end of the wars and the introduction of the first Serbian democratic government. The principal objective for Sweden is to support Serbia in its democratic development in a way that improves the prospects for EU membership. While results vary, Sweden has made significant contributions.

Guatemala faces daunting challenges from organized crime, the drug trade and arms trafficking. Systemic corruption, impunity and alarming rates of armed violence threaten the very foundation of the Guatemalan democracy formally established by the 1996 peace agreement. Despite this, Sweden has contributed to strengthening the rule of law and to a lesser extent public administration.

General findings and recommendations are summarised below. Some are more relevant in some country contexts than others, but illustrate key aspects of democracy and human rights support.

FINDINGS

- Long-term cooperation and commitment from Sweden has built trust with partner countries and stakeholders. This is important for achieving sustainable democracy and human rights results.
- Broad-based dialogue is a key aspect of Swedish democracy and human rights support. The increased use of intermediary organisations for pooled funding affects the opportunities of Sweden to maintain a bilateral dialogue with the partner organisations.
- Some progress can be noted in individual state institutions where Sweden has provided significant and focused support. Positive institutional building has been made possible by reform minded management, political will and international pressure.

- Deeply entrenched divisions, e.g. along ethnic lines, pose challenges for Swedish support to democracy and human rights. These are not always adequately addressed in risk analyses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure flexibility to respond and adapt Swedish support to rapidly changing circumstances in partner countries.
- Prioritise risk analysis, including the identification of drivers of change, and hindrances, as a tool to prepare, conduct and follow-up Swedish support for democracy and human rights.
- Engage with national stakeholders through continuous dialogue in the implementation and follow-up as well as promotion of a cross-ministerial political dialogue.

SOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Democratic development and increased respect to human rights - Guatemala SADEV Report 2012:1.2

Democratic development and increased respect to human rights - Kenya SADEV Report 2012:1.3

Democratic development and increased respect to human rights - Serbia SADEV Report 2012:1.4

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