

Democracy and Human Rights

**An evaluation of Sida's support
to five projects in Georgia**

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Patrik Jotun**

**Department for Central and
Eastern Europe**

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Sida Evaluation 01/11

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Eastern Europe**

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Executive summary

After a turbulent first half of the 1990s, with two shifts of regimes, a major civil war and total economic collapse, the overall conditions in the Georgian society have slowly improved. Basic law and order were restored in 1994–95, and a new constitution was adopted in 1995 providing a basis for the consolidation of democratic institutions. President Shevardnadze was re-elected and a new parliament was elected in the same year. Democratic structures and policies have been gaining ground ever since. In this difficult process the serious economic situation, the widespread corruption, and the threat of resumed conflicts constitute the main obstacles and risks.

The notion of international democratic governance and human rights was unfamiliar in Georgia during the Soviet era. At the time of independence in 1991 there was hardly any knowledge of international normative human rights standards and mechanisms. In 1996, the first Swedish cooperation project in Georgia was started in the field of democracy and human rights, in support of the newly elected Parliament's management and administration. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the achievements of this and four other projects for the promotion of democratic governance and human rights in Georgia's economic and political transition process. The projects are:

- Management and Administration in the Parliament of Georgia, Phase I and II
- Mainstreaming Gender Equality into the Government Institutions
- Support to the Development of Local Self Government in Georgia
- Capacity Building at the Public Defender's Office in Georgia
- Human Rights Training

The five projects are implemented by three Swedish consultant partners – Raoul Wallenberg Institute, SIPU International and the International Development Agency of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities (SALA/IDA) – who all have previous experience from activities in former Soviet republics.

This evaluation examines the relevance, results, effects and sustainability of these five projects. It also presents proposals and arguments for a possible continuation of each project. The projects have met their overall objectives to a varying degree but have in general been rather successful. Study visits to Sweden, Lithuania and Poland gave useful insight into the routines and functions of various structures that monitor and promote democratic governance. In general the support has widened horizons, and participants in all five projects can keep in touch with international networks in their own area of work, thanks to the IT development. However, the projects also have some problems in common.

In view of the previous isolation of Georgia, and the general lack of experience of international work in the field of human rights, Sida should have allowed for a more thorough preparation of the projects, especially as Georgia is a new recipient country of Swedish aid. Some of the projects have had a very slow implementation rate. This could probably have been avoided if the preconditions had been more carefully examined. Participants in seminars and workshops and their superiors must be engaged already at the planning stage in order to avoid the pattern of sporadic attendance, which has been a recurrent problem. The important co-ordination between donors was neglected in some of the projects, causing unnecessary duplications and also missed opportunities of synergy effects. The question of sustainability must be emphasised by Sida, as most of the projects have insignificant local financial support. Local support, even if small, should be provided on an increasing scale.

Furthermore, the solution to finance the support to the Public Defender's Office through a Trust Fund arrangement with UNDP has proved most unsatisfactory, causing confusion and unnecessary costs. Any continued support should be provided directly through the Raoul Wallenberg Institute that has a long and extensive experience of such cooperation.

As to continued cooperation, all five projects have a potential to develop further in their respective areas. However, in the case of support to local self-government, the outcome of the local elections in November 2001 should be awaited. Three of the other projects – the Public Defender's Office, Human Rights Training and the Parliament – have constructive and well-motivated proposals for continued cooperation. The Gender Project requires a more detailed discussion of various alternatives.

1 Democratisation and human rights in Georgia

All of the five aid cooperation projects, subject to this evaluation are, within the field of democratisation and human rights in Georgia. Both the projects and this evaluation is therefore highly dependent on the development of democratisation and HR in Georgia after the independence of Georgia from the Soviet Union.

When Georgia was a Soviet republic, the political situation was tightly controlled from Moscow until *glasnost* led to the surfacing of political opposition in the late 1980's. The opposition largely took the shape of Georgian nationalist movements. This provoked reactions from both the Communist Party and from the various ethnic minorities in Georgia. From 1989 to 1995 Georgia witnessed two shifts of regimes, a major civil war among Georgians, several other conflicts and an economic collapse (the drop in terms of GDP per capita between 1989 and 1994 was 83%). This is the greatest economic decrease measured in all of the former Soviet Union.

In addition to the absence of democracy during this period of war and upheaval, most political and military actors abused human rights on a massive scale. Furthermore, the already notorious corruption in Georgia became even more severe. This is one of the most serious problems for democracy and human rights as well as economic recovery in Georgia today. As a policeman (or doctor or professor) cannot feed his family from his salary (in average US\$ 10–30 per month), it is commonly accepted to demand bribes for services.

Since the adoption of a new constitution in August 1995 and the free and relatively fair elections to parliament and president in November 1995, the prospects of improved democracy and human rights have slowly improved. Under the leadership of President Shevardnadze democratic structures and policies – not unchallenged – are gaining ground. In this difficult process the serious economic situation and the widespread corruption constitute the main obstacles. There are constant challenges to the Shevardnadze regime in form of military rebellions due to failure to pay the soldiers, riots in Tbilisi by internally displaced persons (IDP's) from Abkhazia and threats from various ethnic minorities (Abkhazians, Armenians in Javakhetia, Kisti-Chechens in Pankissi) which give most human rights projects a low priority.

In this context, the Swedish aid cooperation projects have an important role to play. The assistance is much needed, but the current problems in Georgia also constitute challenges. The economic situation affects the projects through the poor infrastructure (e.g. electricity for no more than a few hours per day) and the weak state finances of Georgia (the government can not contribute more than symbolically to several important projects). The low salaries of civil servants bring corruption into the aid cooperation.

In spite of these problems, there are positive signs in Georgia in the field of democratisation and human rights. Firstly, the government of Georgia has an open attitude toward democracy and human rights compared to most governments in the post Soviet republics. Secondly, the media is free and to a large extent independent in Georgia. Thirdly, a number of political institutions are gradually reaching more stability and maturity. Positive examples in this area are the Parliament, the Public Defender's Office and the increasing role of the elected assemblies at local level all over Georgia.

In addition, in the 1990s human rights received increased attention in international aid cooperation. It is brought into focus in government-to-government dialogue, and the ratification of the major human rights instruments constitutes a common platform, making human rights an integral part of aid cooperation policies. As signatories, states have the obligation to respect human rights, and consequently such respect can be seen as a development indicator. Furthermore, states – in this case Sweden – have international obligations to promote human rights globally.

2 Purpose and scope

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the relevance, results, sustainability and effects of the Swedish support provided to five different projects within the field of democracy and human rights in Georgia (Appendix 1). As the time allocated by Sida for the evaluation exercise was short, the assignment did not include a cost-efficiency analysis. It is the first evaluation of these projects, and the achievements have been assessed taking into consideration the Georgian determination to promote democratic governance and human rights in the present political transition process. Opportunities for future cooperation will be analysed in the following three areas: 1) assessment of the suitability of the Georgian partners, 2) long-term effects on democratisation and human rights in Georgia, and 3) need for co-ordination with other donors. The Division for Russia/C.I.S. in Sida's Department for Central and Eastern Europe is in charge of the support under evaluation.

The three Swedish implementing partners – the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, SIPU International and SALA – all have experience from activities in former Soviet republics. Their role is analysed with regard to their functions as advisors and facilitators. In this context the aspects of supply-driven choice of projects, project layout and procurement of goods and services are also commented upon. Two of the projects are part of larger UNDP initiatives and the administrative implications of such multi-/bilateral arrangements are examined. The evaluation also defines the relationship to other donors, active in these developments.

After ten years of independence, Georgia is still abjectly poor. The implementation of reforms and democratic governance under these economic circumstances is commented upon, especially with regard to sustainability. Special attention has been paid to administrative routines in connection with agreements, division of responsibility and reporting.

Under each project heading, an assessment is made of proposals and arguments for a possible continuation of the project in order to provide Sida, the implementing parties and the Georgian counterparts with a basis for consideration of future support and cooperation. These discussions are summarised in the chapter "Conclusions and Recommendations" followed by our recommendations. General observations for future cooperation are given in the following chapter "Lessons Learned".

3 Methodology

The evaluation concerns five different projects, of which the first started in 1996. References are made to various project documents presented by the three Swedish implementing partners, and by Swedish and Georgian authorities. The most significant documents are listed in Appendix 3.

The assignment included a journey to Georgia, with a field visit to the Shida Kartli region. Close to 70 persons were interviewed (Appendix 2) in the course of the evaluation, of whom more than 45 in Georgia alone.

The two members of the evaluation team, Ms. Birgitta Berggren and Mr. Patrik Jotun, together represent knowledge of democratic governance, human rights and general conditions in Georgia.

The visit to Georgia was restricted by Sida to comprise only nine working days, including a weekend. This left less than two days of meetings per project. As very few visits could be arranged in advance, due to poor telecommunication facilities, an inordinate amount of time was spent in Georgia arranging the programme. This restriction made it impossible to obtain a sufficiently complete picture of the project results. It also limited the possibilities for exhaustive discussions with the Georgian counterparts about possible future support.

4 The projects

The five projects subject to evaluation in this study are of very diverse types. They are being implemented by four different Georgian counterparts (the Georgian Parliament, two different departments at the Georgian State Chancellery and the Georgian Public Defender's Office) and supported by three different Swedish implementing agencies: Swedish International P U (SIPU), the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI) and International Development Agency (IDA) of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities.

4.1 Management and Administration in the Parliament of Georgia

Background

A new constitution for Georgia was approved in 1995, providing i.a. for a unicameral 235-seat Parliament. To fulfil its role in Georgia's transition process the Parliament needs a reliable and modern administration representing a new democratic, open model of civil service. The administrative unit of the Parliament has a staff of 600 people.

In 1995, together with the Swedish consultancy group SIPU International AB, the Parliament prepared a project proposal for the improvement of the administration and management. This proposal was presented to Sida at the end of 1995. In May 1996 a final and more detailed plan was submitted. A decision was taken by Sida on May 20, 1996, to provide Swedish support during one year, 1996, to the project *Management and Administration in the Parliament of Georgia* at a cost of SEK 1.430.000, with SIPU as implementing partner. Two years later, on January 30, 1998, another decision by Sida provided for a reallocation of some remaining funds and an additional amount of SEK 85.000. A *final report* was presented in July 1998. In the same month a proposal for a Phase II was presented to Sida, and was approved on August 28, 1998 at a planned cost of SEK 2.280.000 and for a duration of one year, 1998/1999.

Achievement of Objectives and Relevance

The main objective of the project was *to promote democratic governance* in Georgia through improved managerial and administrative structures of the Parliament, including increased openness and information to the public. Through seminars and workshops, study visits and short-term practice in Sweden, combined with support to the development of policy and systems in close dialogue with the leading staff, SIPU was to support the modernisation and restructuring of the Parliament administration. The work was to focus on three selected areas: *Management Development, Human Resources Planning, and Information Technology*. In view of the efforts on the Georgian side to establish a democratic system of government, the project must be regarded as highly relevant.

Phase 1

The activities planned for Phase I took place according to plan, with the introductory study visit to Sweden giving the project a good start. A series of seminars in Georgia, several in cooperation with the Riksdag, gave useful insight into the routines and functions of a western Parliament administration and the structures of a parliamentary democracy. The first IT consultancies took place to lay a basis for the IT component, including nine seminars and important co-ordination with USAID. Then came an inexplicable period of inaction in the autumn of 1997 and most of the spring of 1998.

Phase II

This phase started with two Management and Team Building seminars and workshops in the autumn and winter of 1998/1999 with eleven and eight participants respectively. A planned third seminar in the series had to be cancelled as it would have collided with an EU/TACIS event (see below). A consultancy to develop a policy for the Management of Public Relations and Transparency was part of the Management Development component. In May 1999, six IT seminars took place. Then followed two study visits in Sweden, one for staff in the Public Relations, IT and International Relations Departments, and one for the heads of these departments and the Chief of Staff. After that, the project was brought to a halt, pending the completion of the IT component (see below), and was not reactivated until January 2001.

EU/TACIS

While Phase I of the Swedish support was being implemented in 1996–1997 by SIPU, the EU/TACIS Programme for Georgia prepared a major project, “Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of the Staff of the Parliament”, to be implemented in 1998–1999 at a planned cost of ECU 1 million. The contract between the Parliament and EU/TACIS was signed in January 1998. In spite of repeated assurances from both the Parliament administration and SIPU that there would be no overlap (“These areas and subjects have been discussed and chosen in consideration of the EU/TACIS project”), this still occurred. In a comparison between the Terms of Reference of the TACIS project and the project to be implemented by SIPU the layouts were strikingly similar. The main objective was identical, and so was the direct target group. Both projects aimed at the promotion of an independent, non-political staff of civil servants.

There were two important differences, however. The TACIS project also had a component emphasising the improvement of the legislative process in Parliament, and the SIPU project had a more comprehensive IT component.

With regard to *achievements*, to judge from interviews with persons dependent on the services of the Parliament’s administrative unit, administrative routines have improved. The staff could influence the planning of the Swedish support from the very beginning. The Public Relations Department in its present shape was inspired by its counterpart in the Riksdag and has introduced a new and much appreciated openness towards ordinary citizens and media. The IT component is highly valued, although much delayed, and is complementary to the support from other donors in the sector. The Parliament is very dependent on a well functioning IT system, and it has a competent Informatics Department. The overall benefit from the training of the administrative staff is obvious: they all talk with professional confidence about their work, and they take pride in having introduced new models of management and personnel policies. “Parliament sets a model for the rest of the public service.” There is, in other words, a noticeable strengthening of managerial and administrative structures.

The support from a number of donors – not only EU/TACIS and SIPU were involved – forms a jigsaw puzzle, in which the specific contribution of the financially comparatively small Swedish support is at times difficult to distinguish. Also to the staff in the Parliament administration it must be difficult to recall, after four intensive years of reform and innovations, from which consultancy group they received a specific advice. However, the presence of the Swedish project has provided a valuable opportunity for the top level administrative staff to compare different models of management and training, and it also gave them one more dialogue partner when confronted with important choices of long-term impact.

Efficiency

As to *efficiency* both project phases were inordinately extended. Each phase was planned to be implemented in one year, but the first phase lasted for two and a half years, and the second for almost three years. It appears that this was caused partly by lack of experience, both at Sida and in SIPU, of working in the Caucasus region, as this was the first Swedish project support to Georgia. It was difficult for SIPU and the Parliament to agree on a suitable timetable, elections in 1999 and 2000 caused considerable delay, and the IT specialists were not available. There is also the problem inherent in the present socio-economic conditions in Georgia: Many civil servants must have jobs on the side to make ends meet, at times leading to sporadic attendance in training sessions. But it is also difficult to avoid the impression that there was not enough commitment on the part of the consultants.

A *mid-term report on Phase I* was submitted by SIPU in January 1997. The project was by then, according to Sida's decision in May 1996, drawing to a close. The agreement between SIPU and the Parliament was due to expire in March 1997. However, the report had only some general remarks about future cooperation and did not mention anything about the need for an extension of agreements. The project continued with practice in the Riksdag for the Head of the Finance Department in May–June 1997. Other SIPU reports mentioned that the project was completed in the autumn of 1997. In January 1998, after two years, Sida took a decision on an additional seminar in Georgia as part of Phase I.

In July 1998 SIPU presented a *final report on Phase I* which also contained the *project proposal for Phase II*. By then the *EU/TACIS project* had started but no mention was made in the report of any overlap in activities. This became apparent, however, at the end of 1998 and was brought to Sida's attention in January 1999 by SIPU. As a consequence, the important Human Resources Management component of the SIPU programme had to be abandoned. This was undoubtedly due to poor co-ordination between donors, and insufficient co-ordination of various donors by the Parliament administration. A decision had to be made by Sida on the alternative use of appr. SEK 500 000. A brief Sida memo from June 1999 indicated that the funds would be used for more emphasis on the IT component in support of Management Development. This was later confirmed in a report by the IT consultants in October 1999. Then the whole project lost momentum and came to a standstill for a year and a half.

Sida repeatedly contacted SIPU during the autumn of 2000 in order to bring the project to a close. Eventually the agreement between SIPU and the Parliament was extended until September 30, 2001 to finalise the IT support. Two visits by the IT experts will take place in June and September 2001. Internet access as part of the law-making process has first priority. The consultants will also assist in the procurement of goods and services on the basis of a recently finalised tender process for the improvement of the Parliament's data network.

Sustainability

The major problem with regard to sustainability in the Parliament administration is the general economic situation in Georgia, seen together with a rigid and old-fashioned system of financial administration of the public sector. A particular negative factor in this context is the high staff turnover, although this might slow down thanks to improved personnel management. The low salaries in the civil service contribute to the loss of qualified staff, especially in competition with a growing IT market. However, the Parliament itself shows a growing administrative professionalism, and an openness and determination in its legislative role. Moreover, the Parliament is the most organised and stable among the four local counterparts.

Gender aspects

The project reports do not give information about gender aspects in the seminars. In the Parliament's administrative service the number of women Heads of Department is surprisingly high, and there is

also an overall majority of women among the staff. The low salary levels are probably one explanation. In contrast, out of 235 Members of Parliament, only 17 are women, i.e. 7 per cent.

Continued Cooperation

Priorities for a possible Phase III of the Swedish-supported project have been expressed by the Parliament administration. The IT sector is given absolute priority, including some practice in Sweden for the Head of the Informatics Department. An IT programme, supported by USAID and the US National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), established a list of priorities for the various units in the house to be implemented gradually. This list would serve as a basis for continued discussion. In addition, access to Internet, internal communication, access to databases, development of a law database and systems to support the central administration would be important components of the IT programme. High IT competence is available in Georgia, and the staff in the Parliament's IT unit is well qualified.

There is also a wish for continued training in Management Development, and for seminars for the Organisational Department, i.a. in the arrangement of plenary sessions. Training of Heads of the Standing Committees is also requested.

As to Phase III, SIPU suggests to support continued IT Development closely co-ordinated with Management Development, including Finance Management, and also training of Members of Parliament. The model for the continued training would be the same with seminars, study visits, consultancy work and more opportunities for practice periods in Sweden.

4.2 Mainstreaming Gender Equality into the Government Institutions in Georgia

Background

Already in 1994 Georgia ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) – “the international bill of rights for women”. In 1998, a *State Commission on Elaboration of State Policy for the Development of Women* (hereinafter called the *State Commission*) was established and *National Action Plans for Improving Women's Conditions in Georgia* provide ample guidelines for the implementation of the government's policy on the issue of women, gender and human rights. Thus there is no lack of intention at the executive and legislative levels. The implementation, however, leaves much to be desired.

In 1996 the Swedish Parliament stated that a “gender perspective” should be applied to all projects supported by Sweden in *Central and Eastern Europe*, and a number of Swedish initiatives were taken to that effect. There was, however, scant interest among the partner countries concerned. In the former Soviet republics the issue of equality between women and men reminds people of what was perceived as “forced emancipation” of women by the state. Evaluation reports confirm that the initiative has mostly remained with Sweden. To day, revised *Sida-East guidelines* on equality between women and men, adopted in November 2000, affirm that the economic and social development of the region depends on the contribution by both women and men. The responsibility for such a development rests with the partner countries and their citizens.

At the request of the Government of Georgia and UNDP, Sida agreed in August 1999 to finance a *project identification mission* at a cost of SEK 80.000 for a proposed Swedish participation in a second phase of a large UNDP project on “*Gender in Development*” in Georgia. In November the same year, Sida decided to fund a bilateral project during one year, starting in December 1999, at a cost of SEK 780.000 on “*Mainstreaming Gender Equality into the Government Institutions of Georgia*” in close co-ordination with UNDP. SIPU International had carried out the preparatory mission and was also selected by Sida

to implement the project with the Georgian State Commission as opposite partner. Due to unforeseen delays the contract period was extended half a year to the end of June 2001.

Achievement of Objectives and Relevance

The project proposal was prepared by SIPU, mainly in cooperation with the State Chancellery, the State Commission, UNDP and the Gender in Development Association (implementing agent of the UNDP project). SIPU was only given one week in Georgia for this assignment. In hindsight, more thorough discussions with some more ministries, other donor agencies and NGOs would probably have resulted in a more realistic planning. During the implementation of the project there was too little time for contacts outside the actual training sessions.

The overall objective of the project was to increase gender equality between women and men through the strengthening of the government's institutional capacity in implementing the *National Plan of Action for Improving Women's Conditions (1998–2000)*.

The project started on a successful note with a study visit and a seminar in Sweden in December 1999. The 14 participants representing future gender focal points in the Georgian government administration met representatives of various Swedish ministries and public institutions. From these they learnt how the *gender mainstreaming method* was applied in practice and could discuss problems and solutions. The participatory approach in the planning of the coming seminars in Georgia, using the LFA method, not only introduced them to a new planning mechanism but also drew attention to their own experience and training needs. Some of the proposed project objectives in the original project proposal of October 1999 had to be revised, i.a. due to budgetary constraints. The two main project objectives – 1. to start an organisational development process with the State Commission as the main co-ordinating body, co-operating with gender focal points in the administration, and 2. to introduce the method of gender mainstreaming – were achieved, even if the impact could have been greater.

Two follow-up seminars in Georgia took place in June 2000 and (after a postponement) in April 2001. Already in the first of these seminars the important chain of continuity was broken, as only ten of those participating in the training in Stockholm were among the 23 participants, this in spite of careful planning by the consultants in cooperation with the head of the State Commission, the official co-ordinating body. Instead, various ministries had sent new representatives. In accordance with wishes expressed the consultants emphasised practical methods and pedagogical instruments for gender mainstreaming. Possible entry points were identified, and the method to develop an Action Plan – using the State Commission as an example – applying a so-called SWOT analysis was explained. (SWOT = Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats).

The next seminar was not held until April 2001 (which rendered an extension of the agreement necessary until June 30, 2001), at the recommendation of the State Commission, as Georgia had a severe energy crisis for several months during the winter 2000/2001. Some training exercises for the participants were planned as preparation for the seminar but they did not carry them out. A number of group discussions took place on methods for gender analyses, official gender policy documents, entry-points, checklists and possible training needs. There were 38 participants, including some representatives from the media and NGOs. Seven of them had taken part in the visit to Stockholm.

As to the *general achievement of the project objectives* it appears that four of the proposed gender focal points in the government administration attended all the three seminars, and eight attended two seminars. There is a *Work Plan* for the State Commission, thanks to exercises in the seminars, albeit in draft form. The informal *gender focal points* have not yet been formalised and have no specific mandate for gender work in the government structures. As to *guidelines for training* they have not been written, but various methods which can be applied in training had been demonstrated and discussed. No ministry has

accepted a *gender action plan*. To draft such plans was one of the ambitions for the April 2001 seminar that instead focused on the Work Plan for the State Commission.

On the positive side it should be noted that some men did indeed participate, and there is more mention of their role now. In 1999 the President signed a *Decree on Measures to Strengthen the Protection of Human Rights of Women* and in 2000 a Presidential Order was issued approving an *Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women*. The new *National Action Plan for Improving Women's Conditions (2001–2004)* displays increased knowledge and determination, and a more tactical approach. Slowly, the gender question has become visible in the Georgian society. There is a growing awareness of issues related to equality between women and men, and of the need for measures to bring about change. The project has a clear relevance as an introductory intervention to reinforce a government endeavour. SIPU has in all likelihood contributed to this evolution within the government structure.

Efficiency

The gender project as such was of good professional quality and was carried out according to the initial – somewhat revised – plan, save some adjustments in the last seminar. However, the original intention to create a cadre of a dozen well-trained persons who together could form the nucleus of a network of gender focal points proved not to be realistic and did not materialise. Instead, for various reasons, a larger, more loosely composed group of approximately sixty persons gained a general knowledge of the gender mainstreaming concept. This was what could be achieved under the circumstances.

It is probable that the outcome of a more thorough preparatory phase with sufficient time for discussions with cooperating partners and the intended target group (and their superiors!) would have been a different and more realistic project layout, paying more attention to the prevailing conditions in the Georgian government structures.

Sustainability

Like many other projects in support of Georgia's efforts to reform the government administration, the gender project suffers from lack of finance, high staff turnover and difficult socio-economic living conditions. Much will also depend on the present women leaders' capacity to involve the younger generation, as the process will require a long-term commitment.

To judge, however, from the determination and conviction of the women involved, the legal structures at hand will be used for continued efforts to bring about greater equality between women and men within the government administration. The approach that SIPU applies makes a strong point of the need for policy development, strategies, tactical planning and restructuring. But it is also important to have a continued involvement of other parts of the administration, such as the Public Defender's Office, which monitors the human rights of women and children, and the State Department for Statistics. As to the latter it is important that the production of *Gender Statistics* which the Department developed together with Statistics Sweden in 1998–2000 should continue (the project was recently evaluated by Sida and received much praise).

Continued cooperation

As to continued cooperation, the Georgian partners advocate more support to initiatives in the various regions, where people are said to be more open to cooperation. In the central circles, it is said, there is no response to gender issues. The question is whether such a regional approach is the right way to bring about the necessary change of attitudes and promote reform.

The alternative would be continued strengthening of the gender work in the central administration. SIPU is prepared to discuss a project at a slightly lower level involving a small group of ministries.

Only those ministries whose leadership show a genuine interest and are ready to earmark some resources would be suitable to join such a group.

A more viable alternative would be to focus on women parliamentarians and NGO's, i.e. to leave the official administrative structures and its hierarchic structures and attitudes. A cooperation with women politicians and NGO's would in the long-term help to create a pressure on the public administration and most probably engage more young women than the now terminated project. This is an approach that has met with some success e.g. in the Balkans.

4.3 Support to the Development of Local Self-Government in Georgia

Background

The system of local government in Georgia is currently in a process of major changes. The first election to local assemblies (*sakrebulo*) in the districts (*rayon*) was held in November 1998. Parallel with the *sakrebulo*s, each district also has an executive body (*gamgeoba*) lead by the *gamgebeli*. The president of Georgia appoints each *gamgebeli*. The power of the *gamgebeli* in each district is very great, whereas the elected *sakrebulo* has no real power at all. It can only make suggestions to the *gamgebeli*. The *gamgebeli* himself appoints the other members of the *gamgeoba* (5–11 members).

Local elections will be held in November 2001. In June, the Parliament will decide on changes in the law governing these elections. The parliament favours a rather far-reaching decentralisation as part of the on-going democratisation process, whereas the executive, i.e. the State Chancellery, would prefer a more limited devolution.

Some of the political parties oppose the decentralisation, and there is also a split within the major party, the Citizens' Union of Georgia, on the issue. A decentralisation would tilt the balance of power away from the President, which might weaken the democratisation efforts. In addition, the conflicts between the ethnic minorities and the government make further decentralisation rather hazardous.

As to the role of the powerful *gamgebelis*, various options are discussed. They could either be elected in direct elections, or by the *sakrebulo*s, or continue to be appointed by the President. The future role and the political power of the *gamgebelis* are important elements in the decentralisation debate. Considering the intricate pattern of domestic politics, it is difficult to predict the effects of continued decentralisation reforms. It is therefore important to make sure that any Swedish assistance would benefit the elected *sakrebulo*s and not just strengthen the power of the *gamgebelis*.

Achievement of objectives

The aim of the project is to support the development of local self-government in Georgia. This aim was divided into eight specific objectives, most of which are very vague:

1. to define a common frame of reference for the basis of local self-government
2. to define specific problem areas and priorities for future cooperation concerning financing and information/communication
3. to clarify roles and responsibilities of the elected representatives at regional, district- and local levels, and provide access to basic information concerning their new roles and responsibilities
4. to clarify the division of roles and responsibilities between the elected and the officials
5. to clarify the division of roles and the need to cooperate between regional, district and municipal levels
6. to identify the need to communicate between different levels within the local administration, as well as between the elected and the citizens

7. to enhance knowledge and skills within specific areas, vital to local governance, including finance, information and communication
8. to investigate the interest of and possibilities for creating a national association of local assemblies

Based on these objectives a programme consisting of four components was developed:

1. Workshops and Fact Finding
2. Education of newly elected members of the *sakrebulo*
3. Sector support (finance, information-planning, communication and legal advice)
4. Support to the creation of an association of local assemblies

The first component was a preparatory phase in which three Swedish experts collected information in Tbilisi, Gori, Kaspi and a few villages in Kaspi district (rayon), and arranged two workshops with the Swedish experts and representatives from the State Chancellery and local authorities in Kaspi. The fact finding and concluding workshop established a more detailed programme for the rest of the project.

The second component covers some of the main activities, consisting of three seminars in Georgia, the writing of a handbook for newly elected representatives, and two study trips to Sweden and one to Poland. One of the seminars took place in Kaspi and the other two in Gori. All three lasted for two days and were planned for 30 participants. The interpretation was not very good at the first seminar, but was satisfactory at the seminars in Gori.

The plan to publish a handbook for newly elected members of *sakrebulo*s had to be changed, as two such books had already been written. The project was therefore changed into writing a book for ordinary citizens and possible use in schools. The project has been delayed, but the book is about to be published.

The first study visit to Sweden took place in December 1999. Five women and eight men from the State Chancellery, Kaspi and the Shida Kartli administration visited local administrations in Halland and Göteborg to study municipal finance, information planning, and communication.

The second journey covered both Poland and Sweden and took place in June and July 2000. The intention was to have the same participants as in the first trip, but for personal reasons there were several changes. Twelve men and only three women participated this time. The visit in Poland and the seminar at Sigtuna in Sweden provided an in-depth information on local government structures in Poland and Sweden. Several people whom we meet in Kaspi spoke very appreciatively about the visit in Poland and the Polish expert in the program.

The third component – sector support – at first included local government finance, information planning and communication/computerisation. By supplementary decision (Sida Öst 579/99 on 30 November 1999) legal issues were also added. The component consists of a preparatory phase, seminars in Georgia and workshops with Swedish and Georgian experts, as well as the joint writing of reports by the experts.

Seminars were held in Kaspi concerning Local Government Finance in May 2000 and information planning and communication in September 2000. The seminars were not well planned and participants were 'recruited' the day before the seminars. The Swedish experts have written several reports on the seminars and workshops in which they participated together with Georgian experts. In the legal field the cooperation has been extensive and apparently of great value to the Georgian counterparts. This work was done in close cooperation with the Swedish expert on finance.

The fourth component – support to the creation of an association of local assemblies – was not executed according to plans. An organisation of that kind – the Communities Association of Georgia (CAG) – was formed already in 1999 with support from USAID.

Relevance

Projects in support of local self-government are of great relevance, but the problems mentioned under “Background” are evident and caution must be taken not to disturb the fragile decentralisation process.

Efficiency in the project implementation

The overall efficiency of the project seems to be satisfactory. However, certain parts can be improved. Several of the Georgians involved in the project commented on the close and good cooperation between the Swedish and Georgian experts. During the seminars, the Swedish experts were often too theoretical. More practical knowledge was needed. The participants were also satisfied with having the seminars in the form of dialogues instead of monologues. The use of Poland as an additional model was also greatly appreciated. The first seminars suffered from poor translation, but this improved as better interpreters were used.

The Swedish experts were given too little time for preparation before they went to Georgia. They would have needed more time to get acquainted with the situation in Georgia, to be able to provide the right kind of training at an appropriate level.

The project intended to focus on the local self-government, the *sakrebulo*. However, a lot of the training, seminars and the trips were directed towards the officials at the *gamgeoba*, the representative of the central government. It is questionable if this strengthens democracy at the local level. Furthermore, some of the *sakrebulo*-members, who participated in most of the training, were given positions as officials in the *gamgeoba* after the study tours. The *gamgebeli* controls the district (rayon) and can take advantage of the Swedish assistance by ‘promoting’ members from the powerless *sakrebulo* to his own office.

There was a constant lack of planning on the Georgian side. For several seminars, which had been planned months in advance, they tried to find participants in the evening before the seminars. However, they were also flexible and managed to solve most problems as they appeared.

The handbook has been much delayed, even taking into account that the contents and purpose of the book has been changed. It will be printed in 3500 copies and the State Chancellery will endorse the distribution to schools, libraries etc all across the Shida Kartli region.

Conditions for sustainable effects of the projects

Due to the current changes concerning local government and the upcoming local elections in November 2001, the sustainability of this initial project is somewhat in doubt. On the other hand, parts of the project – in particular legal issues – were intended to be of support in the transition process, and assist in the promotion of the legal reforms of the local self-government. There is a need for and an interest in continued cooperation in legal advice, also before the elections.

However, due to possible major changes in the structure of the local government and the possible change of personnel in Kaspi after the November 2001 elections, several parts of a continuation of the project ought to wait until after the elections. The training of representatives in *sakrebulo*s should not take place until after the elections. The various parts of the sector support might also be of a low relevance if they take place before the elections. The possible cooperation with CAG should also wait until after the election. The CAG structure may undergo major changes. However, *initial* contacts during the fall would most probably be valuable to future cooperation.

Gender aspects

As in the other projects, the Georgian context makes it difficult to integrate gender aspects in the programme. The reason for this is a widely spread view among both men and women that Georgia does not have any problems concerning gender issues.

SALA/IDA has seen it as important to try to integrate a gender perspective without interfering too much with traditional values, since this often provokes a negative attitude from the Georgian counterpart. The project has integrated gender issues in the following ways:

1. To use both female and male consultants/experts in the project
2. To include the few women who are staff members or local politicians in the training, study tours and other activities
3. To include gender issues in the curriculum for different activities, including the specific needs and requirements of women citizens
4. To raise the gender competence of the consultants/experts who serve in the project
5. To identify obstacles for gender neutrality in the project

These objectives have been discussed in a specific gender analysis in January 1999, but they have not been completely fulfilled. Even though two female experts participated, the majority was male. The inclusion of women in the training was mostly successful, but only three participated in the study tour to Poland and Sweden. Gender issues were only marginally included in the training courses. We have not seen any results of the identification of obstacles to gender neutrality in the project.

Even though all the objectives have not been met, it is clear that a serious effort was made to integrate gender aspects in the project.

Opportunities for continued cooperation

It takes time to establish a project concept, and the State Chancellery was a valuable partner during the initial stage of this endeavour. However, it represents the executive power structure and thus one of the main contenders in the political controversy on the issue of decentralisation. In a future cooperation the CAG would be a more suitable local counterpart to SALA/IDA on its own level and in the same field of competence. If the project continues, both the State Chancellery and the Parliament will remain important partners in the future decentralisation process.

With CAG as the main counterpart in the future, the project would gradually gain a more Georgian identity. From a sustainability point of view this would be of great advantage.

In a future cooperation any geographic extension has to be treated with caution. The State Chancellery has tentatively mentioned the part of South Ossetia transferred to the Shida Kartli region as a possible addition to the present project area. This should be avoided, as it would imply a Swedish engagement in a potential minority conflict zone.

The Swedish experts have established a valuable relationship with their local counterparts. Their experience was of good use in the local development in Kaspi and contributed to the legal work in Tbilisi. In addition, it is of value to the Georgians to be able to compare different self-government solutions in various countries. In Georgia the American influence is fairly dominant, and the Georgians have appreciated the possibility to be able to compare the US model to a Swedish alternative. The greatest impact of this project is probably that it evokes ideas and starts discussions about human rights and democratisation. It does not provide any simple answer, but it raises the awareness both at central and local level.

In the future, it is important to co-ordinate Swedish activities better with those of other countries, e.g. Tacis, DFID, World Bank, USAID and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). It is of course important not to become part of another country's project but to convey one's own perspective.

From an aspect of sustainability local consultants play a positive role. In the IT sector there is much local competence, both in private firms and e.g. in the IT department of the City of Tbilisi. In addition, local consultants are more aware of local needs and resources, and their services are cheaper.

4.4 Capacity Building of the Public Defender's Office in Georgia

Background

In line with the so-called "Paris Principles", laid down at an international workshop in 1991, the Government of Georgia established the Public Defender's Office (PDO) in 1997 as an independent institution for the promotion and protection of human rights. The Constitution of Georgia (1995) sets the framework for the Public Defender, and a Law on the Public Defender of Georgia was passed in 1996. Similar institutions were established in a number of countries during the 1990s, with varying success. It is evident that new national human rights institutions in countries in democratic transition face specific problems when trying to implement their mandates.

A well functioning national human rights institution can play a crucial role in consolidating democratic governance and in strengthening public and official respect for human rights. This requires good working relations with both the civil society and state structures, and openness to the public and media.

The first Public Defender (also called ombudsman) was appointed in 1997 and took part in the early stages of this project. He resigned in the summer of 1999 to participate in the election for parliament. The assistant PD became acting PD and ran the PDO for one year. No important changes or decisions of political significance were made during this time. The result was almost a standstill of PDO's cooperation in external aid programmes.

In June 2000 a new PD was appointed. The most radical groups wanted a PD who was prepared to fight against what they perceived as conservative and corrupt elements within the political establishment. However, a new PD was appointed who is more moderate than radical, but who nevertheless does criticise the power structures quite harshly.

The UN co-ordinator suggested to a Sida delegation visiting Tbilisi in October 1997 to support the UNDP in supporting the capacity of the newly created PDO. The newly appointed PD was invited to Sweden in January 1998 (in accordance with decision Öst 20/98) and a project was formulated during the spring and summer of 1998 (Öst 393/98).

Achievement of objectives

The overall objective of the project has been to promote human rights within the Georgian state apparatus by strengthening the capacity of the PDO. This should be achieved by support to the following four components:

1. HR training for the staff of the PDO
2. Establishment of a HR library in the PDO
3. Translation and publication of HR documents into Georgian
4. Introduction of a computer based management system in the PDO

All four components have almost been achieved. Components three and four will be completed during 2001. The reasons for this delay are discussed below under *Efficiency in the project implementation*.

The staff of the PDO has been trained in HR as specified in the contract, and this component has been completed. During our interviews with staff members who participated in the training it was evident that the training was highly appreciated. Several of the participants discussed various parts of the training in great detail and how it was of great use in their work.

The expected result of the first component was that all personnel in the PDO – app. 80 people according to the decision – should have completed basic HR training. It has not been possible to obtain the exact number of staff members who received HR training. The number appears to have been less than 80, but most of the staff did attend.

In addition to the HR training in Georgia, this component included study visits and seminars – in Sweden as well as in Frankfurt an der Oder – for PDO staff.

We visited the small and well-organised HR library, located in a room of the PDO, and discussed the use of the library with the librarian. The library has HR literature and documents in both English and Georgian. Most of the visitors can only read Georgian, therefore the third component of the support is very important. The library has between 5 and 10 visitors per week, on average. The library also has a computer connected to the Internet, which is of great assistance to many visitors.

The translation of documents into Georgian has been delayed and is therefore not yet completed. The process is underway, but it is not possible to assess the future achievement until the translations have been completed.

Concerning the computer based management system, much has been done, but the final software development for the PDO will take place during the summer (it will be finished by the end of August according to the plan). The hardware has been procured and installed. Most of the staff was trained to use the computers, which was appreciated and needed. The expected result according to the project decision – to install basic computer equipment and train personnel - has thus been achieved.

Relevance

The relevance of the project to the democratisation and HR of Georgia is undoubtedly great. The major problems facing Georgia at the moment concerning democratisation and HR are corruption, the abuse of authority of the so-called power ministries, and the difficulty for ordinary citizens to fight abuse of power. The PDO in Georgia is an important part of the structures established to tackle those problems. Like many other government agencies in Georgia, the PDO constantly lacks government funding. The project is therefore relevant as it provides both financial support and external knowledge.

Another factor of relevance to the project is the Abkhazian question. The staff of the Abkhaz PDO also receives support from Swedish project, since the Abkhaz PDO and the Adjarian PDO are parts of the Georgian PDO. Although support to the PDO is not of a nature that can be used offensively in the conflict in Abkhazia, it is still questionable if Sweden should support one part in an ongoing civil war. The Abkhaz side regards the so-called Abkhaz PDO as a part of the Georgian effort to recapture the breakaway republic.

Efficiency in the project implementation

In spite of the overall good results of the project, several aspects of the implementation have been quite problematic. One small problem concerning the first component – HR training – is the high turnover of the staff of the PDO. The staff has varied between 60 and 80 employees until April 2001,

even if only a small portion of these has been working full time with the PDO.¹ Many employees move on to better-paid jobs after working with the PDO for some time. A reorganisation of the PDO in April 2001 brought the number of employees down to 30. Thus, the number of new employees in need of the basic HR training each year should be considerably lower in the future. Secondly the HR training of employees who go on to other positions in Georgia is not a waste of resources, as HR training is needed also in other parts of the Georgian administration.

The main efficiency problem for the second component – the HR library – is that only between five and ten visitors per week use the facilities. For the library to be used more frequently, it is important to spread information to the public about its existence.

The third component – translation and publication of HR documents – has been delayed. It has taken a long time to find earlier translations and to evaluate their quality, and to decide which ones should be re-translated. However, the extensive work to find and select the documents for translation could have been foreseen and time for this should have been included in the project. In addition to this, the component has been further delayed due to confusion about the contracts. This will be elaborated upon below.

Parts of the fourth component – computer based management system – have also been delayed considerably. This was due to the April 2001 reorganisation of the PDO. The development of software could not take place until the new PD had taken a decision on the organisational changes.

Implementing parties

For the overall project, there has been a problem due to the number of implementing parties involved, which has led to confusion and ineffectiveness concerning money transfers, contracts and contacts between the parties.

There is one contract between the UNDP, the Georgian Government and the PDO to strengthen the capacity of the PDO (henceforth referred to as the UNDP-PDO-contract). The UNDP, Denmark and the Netherlands support this project. Sida has a contract with UNDP to support the project by parallel financing. The UNDP has a third contract with RWI as implementing partner for Sida's support to the project. All these three contracts are of different duration. The UNDP-PDO-contract is valid until the end of 2002. The UNDP-RWI-contract is valid until the end of 2001. The UNDP-Sida-contract was valid until the end of 2000. As Sida's support is part of the UNDP-PDO-project, it is of no problem that the UNDP-PDO-contract has a longer duration than the other contracts. But the fact that the UNDP-Sida-contract ended one year before the UNDP-RWI-contract has led to considerable problems in the implementation of the project. When UNDP Tbilisi and RWI noticed the discrepancy of duration between the two contracts, an additional contract was written in October 2000 and another one in February 2001 between UNDP Tbilisi and Sida for components 2 and 3 – the HR library and the translation of documents – to extend them to the end of 2001.

In addition to the parties mentioned above, the UNDP Tbilisi had established a Project Support Team (PST) at the PDO, whose staff is employed by the UNDP. The PST is assigned to assist the PDO in the implementation of the UNDP-support to the PDO, including the Swedish project. This has contributed to the confusion about the contracts, since the PST wanted a special additional contract concerning component four. Instead UNDP Tbilisi and Sida extended only components two and three. The

¹ A situation that is quite common in Georgia, as the salaries are so low that the employees can not manage on only one salary. The ordinary salary within the PDO is \$50 per month. The reason for this is the constant lack of government funding – which is shared with most government agencies.

relations between the PST and both RWI and Sida have also been somewhat problematic concerning the use of funds and changes of the project plan.

Another inefficiency due to the arrangement with Sida - RWI - UNDP Tbilisi - PST - PDO is the number of monetary transfers. The funding from Sweden is transferred from Sida in Stockholm via a UNDP Trust Fund in New York to UNDP Tbilisi, and further from UNDP Tbilisi to RWI in Lund and either used there or – when used in Tbilisi – transferred from RWI in Lund back to UNDP Tbilisi /PST. This chain of transfers includes at least 7 transfers between banks (i.a. two transfers between New York and Tbilisi). This does not only cost a lot in bank fees, but it also makes the transfer of money administratively cumbersome and time-consuming.

The second overall problem of the project concern handling of delays and changes of plans within the project. Several parts of the project have been delayed. Most of the delays have quite legitimate reasons, such as the absence of a PD for almost one year. However, with the very tight terms in the contracts this has led to problems.

Conditions for sustainable effects of the projects

The conditions for sustainability are overall unsatisfactory in Georgia due to the political and economic situation, the ethnic conflicts and the current international environment. There is a high risk that most progress concerning HR and democratisation will come to an end due to political upheaval and internal violent conflicts. On the other hand, projects in HR and democratisation can also be very important factors in guiding Georgia in a more secure direction and may help the country to avoid yet another severe conflict in which HR will be brutally violated.

Under these circumstances, however, the PDO-project has a fairly high degree of sustainability. The PDO has a clearly defined role in the current political environment. The main problem is the lack of finance. A high share of the financial resources is provided from abroad. The state budget does allocate a small amount of money, but this rarely reaches the PDO. For the PDO to become a stable partner, it is important that the Georgian government covers at least a small share of its budget. If the foreign aid stops, the entire PDO is in danger of collapsing.

A new decree by the president from December 2000 has increased the powers of the Public Defender in relation to other government agencies. The PDO and other organisations consider this an important step in the observance of HR in Georgia, which increases the credibility of the PDO.

Another issue of importance to the sustainability of the project is how the Public Defender is viewed within the Georgian political community, which was mentioned above in *Background*. It is our opinion that the debate around the PD is a sign of openness and freedom of expression.

Gender aspects

Gender aspects do not have a prominent position in the project, neither in the planning nor in the implementation. However, to a limited extent gender issues have been taken into consideration in the content of the seminars. Vulnerable groups and women have been a topic at one of the seminars. There is not a very thorough integration of gender aspects in the project.

Opportunities for continued cooperation

The PDO is a fairly weak organisation, even by Georgian standards. It is possible that the re-organisation in April 2001 will strengthen the PDO, but they have a long way to go before they can be considered a strong partner in either organisational or financial terms. On the other hand, this weakness is the reason for the need of this entire project – Capacity Building of the Public Defender's Office. The presidential decree from December 2000 was helpful in strengthening the role of the PDO.

The focus of the PDO on media is a promising and important project that can be supported in the future. It is very relevant for Georgia to come to terms with HR in the media sector as a basis for further progress in other areas concerning HR. Other tangible goals are the “training of trainers” in HR, which was started already in 2001 with support from Sida via the RWI. Among the plans of the PD the extension of the PDO to various regions of Georgia is of high priority. For financial reasons this does not seem possible within the foreseeable future. We do not believe that Sweden should support a project like that until the Government of Georgia can provide at least a substantial part of the funding.

The complex situation concerning the relations between the PDO, the PST, UNDP in Georgia, UNDP in New York, the RWI and Sida is definitely another organisational weakness of the present and continued cooperation.

During the evaluation it became apparent that the need for co-ordination is of great importance and that the arrangement with UNDP, PST and PDO has not been efficient. It is therefore important to find other forms of co-ordination if support to the PDO is to continue, possibly with another partner, such as the Council of Europe.

4.5 Human Rights Training

Background

See section 4.4.

Achievement of objectives

The objective was to contribute to insight in how the international community views HR and how these are implemented in a democratic state (Sida Decision Öst 374/98). This was to be achieved by training approximately 100 people in HR for one week. The participants were to be policemen, prison officers, judges and prosecutors. The training was conducted during two weeks in the fall of 1998. Police, security officials and prison officers were trained during 14–18 September and judges and prosecutors during 30 November – 4 December. Both courses were held at the PDO in Tbilisi.

The objective was reached, but only just, which was due to several factors, such as power cuts, bad planning and bad discipline in attendance among the participants.

Relevance

The relevance of the project is high and is partly identical with the relevance of the preceding project, see *Relevance* section 4.4. The only addition is the questionable support to the Abkhaz² structures. This project did not support only the Abkhaz PDO, but also i.a. the Abkhaz Ministry of State Security (ex KGB) of the Georgian structures.

Efficiency in the project implementation

From several aspects the efficiency of the implementation of the project was low. Firstly the cost of two one-week training courses held in Tbilisi was far too high. Compared to other projects in this evaluation, this amount of money for the small amount of training was highly questionable.

Secondly the seminars did not work well for several reasons: frequent power cuts, poor attendance by the participants and bad discipline during the seminars. Out of 50 supposed participants at the first seminar and 60 at the second, only around 75% showed up. Of these, many participants did not stay for the entire week.

² This refers to the structures of the Abkhaz Government-in-exile, i.e. the Georgian structures for the breakaway republic. These are active in Tbilisi and Georgia proper close to Abkhazia, but not in Abkhazia and does not include ethnic Abkhaz people, only ethnic Georgians.

One reason for the poor attendance was that the selection of participants was made without involving the employers. Due to this, many participants had a conflict of interest between their ordinary duties and the participation in the seminars. The schedule of the seminars was made with far too little time for breaks. This, together with the bad discipline of the participants, led to repeated delays and cancellations of lectures. In addition, the interpretation was of poor quality, which meant longer lectures and led to the collapse of the planned schedule. At the first training, two out of four planned lectures by local resource persons were cancelled.

On the positive side, there were good and lively discussions during the seminars and those who attended seem to have appreciated them. The RWI has also made a thorough and critical final report and identified the problems. In the following activities – both within the PDO-project and a new HR-training project taking place during 2001 – changes have been made to avoid the problems mentioned above.

Conditions for sustainable effects of the projects

Due to the quite troublesome conditions of the project implementation and the small scale of the training (one week for less than 85 people), the sustainability is difficult to appreciate. During our interviews with participants in Tbilisi, one lieutenant colonel from a prison spoke warmly about the course. He told us that he did not know anything about HR before the course, and how he after the course had been able to implement HR-considerations at his prison. As a result of the one-week-training-course, the prison had created a new position of Deputy Head of the prison. This person was only responsible for taking care of the rights and complaints of the prisoners. Even though the well-prepared accounts show that they after more than two years remembered and appreciated the training, it is difficult to assess the real impact of the training.

Gender aspects

The gender aspects are observed (according to Decision Öst 374/98) by including 'gender issues in the judicial system' in a lecture in the seminars. This was a weak integration of gender aspects into the project.

Opportunities for continued cooperation

The strengths and weaknesses of the PDO, tangible results and long term development effects as well as the need for co-ordination with other institutions and other donors are elaborated upon in section 4.4. What is special concerning the HR-training is that a continuation already is underway during the spring and summer of 2001. This current training-of-trainers seems to have avoided most of the problems of the HR-training in 1998.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

All five aid-cooperation projects evaluated for the first time in this study concern various democracy and human rights initiatives. They all contribute to the process of change in Georgia towards open and more accountable state structures. The Georgian constitution provides a basis for this reform process. The five projects together form a constructive combination of initiatives at the central and regional level with training in human rights and gender issues as complementary elements.

These democratisation efforts are exposed to the insecure economic and political conditions that characterise the transition phase of the former Soviet republics. In an aid context this often implies scant, if any, local financial support, exposure to corrupt administrative practices, state structures unaccustomed to international relations, and a great gap between constitutional ambitions and their implementation.

The notion of international democratic governance and human rights hardly existed in Georgia during the Soviet era. At the time of independence, there was very little knowledge about international normative human rights standards and mechanisms. It is obvious that the institutions receiving support are at the very beginning of a long-term reform process.

Under these circumstances, the five projects have met their overall objectives, but to a varying degree. The support has given the participants in the different projects a wider frame of reference, and they have learnt new methods of work in contact with colleagues abroad. They have also found international networks in their own areas of competence with which they can stay in touch thanks to the IT development. They take pride in having introduced new models of management and personnel policies. They recognise the importance of interplay with the general public and of familiarity with practical methods to promote greater equality between women and men. The Public Defender has received support in her pioneering work of establishing a national human rights institution. In addition to general human rights education, police and prison officers have received training in international standards and norms related to law enforcement and the treatment of prisoners; judges and prosecutors have learnt about investigation of crime, and about grounds for arrest and pre-trial detention. However, the five projects also have some problems in common.

In view of the previous isolation of Georgia, and its general lack of experience of international human rights work, we find that not enough time was allowed for a sufficiently thorough preparation of the support to these five projects, especially as Georgia was a new recipient country of Swedish aid. The projects are of such a nature as to require good knowledge about problems common to countries in transition, about Georgia's economic and political situation and about its domestic politics in general. Also during implementation the Swedish partners should have had more time to keep themselves informed about local developments, for contacts with other donors etc.

Three of the five projects under evaluation are being implemented through so-called Contract-Financed Technical Cooperation. This implies that Sida funds a project implemented by the Swedish consultant and a local counterpart (client) under a contract approved by Sida. In addition, Sida writes a letter of confirmation to the two parties regarding the Swedish support. The documents contain a series of guiding principles and rules. These have not always been adhered to. In this model of aid cooperation Sida applies a principle of cost-sharing, expecting a client to meet the local costs of the project implementation. However, there is scant mention of the sustainability of the projects in Sida's project assessments and decisions. Moreover, as the local financial support is very low, it is difficult to

see how the project impact can endure after the Swedish support has been terminated without a sustained Georgian involvement.

Some of the projects have had a much prolonged implementation period. To some extent this could probably have been avoided, if the preconditions had been more carefully examined. As it was, some of the projects lost momentum. A series of extensions (some delayed) of agreement, contracts and exchange of letters caused unnecessary administrative complications. In some of the projects the important co-ordination between donors was neglected, causing duplications and also missed opportunities of synergy effects. As to the quality of the seminars and workshops, many of them suffered from poor preparations at the local level. The recipient institutions in Georgia were not accustomed to international cooperation, and some tended not to share information about cooperation with other donors – sometimes not even with their own colleagues. Already at the planning stage, participants in some of the seminars and workshops and their superiors were not sufficiently involved. The poor logistic preparations, unqualified interpreters and sporadic attendance were a recurrent problem.

These perceptions and conclusions motivate the following recommendations, listed by project, and the observations under “Lessons learned”.

1. Management and Administration in the Parliament of Georgia

(Öst 143/96, 39/98, 410/98) Implementing agency: SIPU International; Local counterpart: Parliament of Georgia

Total amount: SEK 3.795.000

- *The much delayed IT component should be completed soonest.*
- *Local professional IT consultants should be contracted to provide complementary expertise in the development of IT services in Parliament.*
- *Training in the procurement of goods and services should be included in future cooperation.*
- *In proposals made by the Parliament regarding continued support, first priority is given to the Development of IT Strategies, Information System Development and Use of Databases including training, and also practice in Sweden. In addition, there is a wish for continued training in Management Development, coordinated with the IT component, including Members of Parliament, to start with the Heads of the Standing Committees. These proposals should serve as a basis for a continued cooperation with the Parliament.*

2. Mainstreaming Gender Equality into the Government Institutions in Georgia

(Öst 399/99, 539/99); Implementing agency: SIPU International; Local counterpart: The State Chancellery.

Total amount: SEK 860.000

- *The work plan of any future project should include an element of cooperation with the State Department of Statistics to encourage the production of Gender Statistics, developed together with Statistics Sweden.*
- *The Georgian counterpart advocates an emphasis on gender work in the various regions as an objective for a continued cooperation. With limited resources, such a shift of focus cannot be recommended until the central administration has achieved a more determined stance on the issue of mainstreaming. A more viable alternative would be to focus on women parliamentarians and NGOs, in order to contribute to increased public pressure on the central establishment.*

3. Support to the Development of Local Self-Government in Georgia

(Öst 69/99, 579/99); Implementing agency: Swedish Association of Local Authorities (SALA/IDA); Local counterparts: The State Chancellery, Local Authorities in the District of Kaspi, Shida Kartli Region

Total amount: SEK 6.100.000

- *The handbook on local self-government should at last be published.*
- *Local IT consultants should be contracted for the information planning and communication component.*
- *Several parts of a continued cooperation should await the outcome of the local elections in November 2001.*
- *SALA/IDA should consider changing its local counterpart in any continued cooperation from the State Chancellery to the Communities Association of Georgia (CAG) in order to have a head counterpart on its own level and field of competence.*
- *Any extension of the project to cover a larger geographical area should be analysed carefully, as this might entail involvement in ethnically disputed territory.*

4. Capacity Building at the Public Defender's Office in Georgia

(Öst 20/98, 393/98); Implementing agency: The Raoul Wallenberg Institute; Local counterpart: The Public Defender's Office, UNDP/Georgia

Total amount: SEK 3.220.000

- *It is important to continue the support of translations of legal documents into Georgian for the Human Rights library*
- *A wide support to the PDO – such as inclusion of regional offices – should demand a substantial co-financing by the Georgian government to assure sustainability*
- *In any future cooperation, the complex arrangement around the UNDP should be avoided. Continued support can be provided directly through the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, or possibly in cooperation with e.g. the local office of the Council of Europe.*

5. Human Rights Training

(Öst 374/98); Implementing agency: The Raoul Wallenberg Institute; Local counterpart: The Public Defender's Office

Total amount: SEK 1.040.000

- *Continued human rights training for the police, the military, prosecutors and other special categories of professionals should focus on the training of trainers in cooperation with the academic institutions concerned.*

6 Lessons learned

- *With a view to the sustainability of the projects, Sida should make sure that local financial contributions to the projects, even if small, are provided on an increasing scale.*
- *In the future, Sida should ensure that the Swedish implementing agency is allowed enough time to prepare the project thoroughly with the Georgian counterpart. The consultants should set aside time when visiting Georgia during the implementation phase for discussions with all parties concerned, including other donors.*
- *The gender aspect plays too subordinate a role in the planning of the projects. It should either be a more distinct component, or else be left out.*
- *With respect to the procurement of equipment there is a Georgian law which exempts goods financed through external aid grants from taxes and custom duties.*
- *As to the projects implemented under Contract-Financed Technical Cooperation Sida should ensure that*
 - *the contract with the implementing agency contains a clear division of responsibilities in relation to Sida, including a policy of delegation regarding minor reallocation of funds within the budget to allow for a more flexible project administration*
 - *major reallocations within a project budget be given a formal approval in writing by Sida*
 - *project reports are more elaborate and contain information on the number of participants, general comments on the implementation and deviations from the project plan*
 - *if a project implementation is unduly slow, an interim report should inform all parties about the reasons for the delay, as a basis for a possible decision on an extension or closure*
 - *the implementing agency should co-ordinate the project with other donors engaged in the same field, in order to avoid duplication and make use of common experience and knowledge.*

Appendix 1

Terms of reference for the evaluation of Sida support within the field of democracy and human rights in Georgia

1 Background

Sida has been supporting projects in the field of democracy and human rights in Georgia since 1996. As per Government guidelines this sector should be given priority in the Swedish development co-operation with Georgia. Most of the projects are to be completed during the spring 2001.

Sida has decided to undertake an evaluation of the achievements to date. To carry out this evaluation, Sida will recruit a team of two consultants. These terms of reference will guide the work to be performed by the team.

The projects subject to evaluation are:

Management and Administration in the Parliament of Georgia, phase I & II (Öst 143/96, 410/98). Implementing agency: Sipu International. Local counterpart: Parliament of Georgia

Mainstreaming Gender Equality into the Government Institutions in Georgia (Öst 539/99). Implementing agency: Sipu International. Local counterpart: State Chancellery

Support to the Development of Local Self-Government in Georgia (Öst 69/99, 579/99). Implementing agency: Swedish Association of Local Authorities. Local counterparts: State Chancellery, Local Authorities in Kaspi

Capacity Building of the Public Defender's Office in Georgia (Öst 393/98). Implementing agency: Raoul Wallenberg Institute. Local counterparts: Public Defender's Office, UNDP

Human Rights Training (Öst 374/98). Implementing agency: Raoul Wallenberg Institute. Local counterpart: Public Defender's Office.

The total cost of the projects is SEK 14,630,000.

2 Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The purpose is to evaluate the relevance, results, sustainability and effects of the support so far provided within the field of democracy and human rights in Georgia.

The evaluation should give recommendations for future co-operation in the sector.

3 The Assignment (issues to be covered in the evaluation)

The evaluation should review past and on-going co-operation and discuss the opportunities of continued co-operation. The issues to be covered and discussed in the evaluation are the following:

Evaluation of past and on-going co-operation

- Achievement of objectives. Achievement of the project objectives as defined in the contract, taking into account possible changes in circumstances. Reasons for high/low achievements of goals.
- Relevance. The relevance of the project approach, objectives and services provided in relation to the needs they intended to serve.
- Efficiency in the project implementation

- Conditions for sustainable effects of the projects
- Gender aspects. Have gender aspects been an integrated part of the projects? If not, what are the reasons?

Opportunities for continued co-operation

- Organisational strengths and weaknesses of the concerned Georgian authorities/organisations
- Tangible results and long term development effects
- Need for co-ordination with other institutions and other donors

The consultants should, based on the findings of the evaluation, give recommendations on how the Swedish support to projects in the democracy/human rights' sector ought to be continued.

4 Methodology, Evaluation Team and Time Schedule

The evaluation should be based on interviews with key persons and participants engaged in project implementation and activities, and on the study of relevant materials, i.e. Sida decisions, project documents, contract, reports and materials produced in the course of the execution of the projects. The assignment will include a field mission to Georgia.

The evaluation is expected to start in April and be completed in June 2001. It is estimated that the assignment will require a total of 28 working days. A team of two consultants will carry out the assignment.

The consultants will be responsible for practical arrangements in conjunction with the mission to Georgia. Sida will make available or cause to make available all written material (reports, project preparation documents, project completion reports etc.) deemed to be of relevance to the evaluation exercise by the consultants and Sida.

5 Reporting

The evaluation report shall be written in English and should not exceed 25 pages, excluding annexes. Format and outline of the report shall follow the guidelines in *Sida Evaluation Report – a Standardised Format* (see Annex 1). Two copies of the draft report shall be submitted to Sida no later than June 8, 2001. Within four weeks after receiving Sida's comments on the draft report, a final version in two copies and on diskette shall be submitted to Sida. Subject to decision by Sida, the report will be published and distributed as a publication within the Sida Evaluations series. The evaluation report shall be written in Word 6.0 for Windows (or in a compatible format) and should be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing.

The evaluation assignment includes the production of a Newsletter summary following the guidelines in *Sida Evaluations Newsletter – Guidelines for Evaluation Managers and Consultants* (Annex 2) and also the completion of *Sida Evaluations Data Work Sheet* (Annex 3). The separate summary and a completed Data Work Sheet shall be submitted to Sida along with the (final) draft report.

Appendix 2

Persons interviewed

Sida East

Anders Hedlund, Head of Division for Russia / CIS

Christina Danielsson, Area manager

Parliament of Georgia

Khatuna Gogorishvili, Secretary General

Nana Japaridze-Chkoidze, Head, Department of International Relations

Merab Gotsiridze, Head, Informatics Department

Marina (Diana) Asatiani, Head, Department of Personnel

Roman Kusiani, Chairman, Standing Committee for Local and Regional Self-Governance

Bo Synnerholm, Director, Swedish Institute for Public Administration (SIPU)

Pontus Förberg, Coordinator, Eastern and Central Europe, SIPU

Tove Strömberg, Consultant, SIPU

Karl Skybrant, SIPU

Gender

Rusudan Beridze, Chairman, Commission on Elaboration of State Policy for the Development of Women, National Security Council, State Chancellery

Nani Chanishvili, President, Gender in Development Association

Charita Jashi, Vice President, Gender in Development Association

Leila Kiknadze, Coordinator, Women's Forum, Governor's Office, Shida Kartli Region

Nino Kobakhidze, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Culture

Marie Planhem, Consultant, SIPU

Public Defender's Office (PDO)

Nana Devdariani, Public Defender

Bill Chapman, Chief Technical Adviser, UNDP Project Support Team (PST)

Taras Akhalaia, Project Coordinator, UNDP PST

Tamar Rukhadze, Information Management Specialist, UNDP PST

Givi Mikanadze, Finance Administrator, UNDP PST

Gudmundur Alfredsson, Director, Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI)

Mikael Johansson, RWI

Rolf Ring, RWI

Ingela Ståhl, RWI

Charlotta Larsson, RWI

Birgitta Jonsson, RWI

Human Rights Training

Lieutenant-Colonel Zaqaria Nozadze, Investigation Isolator No 1, deputy head of No 5 prison

Giorgi Berulava, Assistant to the minister, Ministry of Security of Abkhazia

Murman Chkhotu, Public Defender of Abkhazia

Local Self-Government

Alexandre Svanishvili, State Chancellery
Rati Ratiani, State Chancellery
Irakli Brachuli, State Chancellery
Mindia Kashibadze, State Chancellery
David Chanturia, State Chancellery
Irakli Botchoridze, Governor of Shida Kartli Region
Ushangi Mosiashvili, Chairman of Kaspi sakrebulo
Dali Korkomashvili, Head of Information, Kaspi gamgeoba
Avtandil Jalali, Head of Kaspi Gamgeoba machinery
Marina Metreveli, Head of Organisation Department of Kaspi Gamgeoba
Tinatin Gejadze, Chairman of the village 'Metekhi' sakrebulo
Zakaria Noniashvili, Chief Secretary of Kaspi Sakrebulo
Daniel Cederberg, SALA-IDA
Sten-Åke Jonsson, Konsument Göteborg
Karl Knutsson, SALA-IDA
Jonas Reinholdsson, SALA-IDA

Media

Tea Skhiereli, Journalist, State TV 1

NGOs

Nino Saakashvili, Director, Horizonti (the Foundation for the Third Sector)
Nikolos Oakley, Deputy Director, Horizonti
Tinatin Khidasheli, Chairperson, Georgian Young Lawyers' Association

Aid Coordination

Paata Charakashvili, Head of Secretariat, President's Administration, Foreign Investment Advisory Council (FIAC)

Other Donors

Kaarina Immonen, Dep. Resident Representative, UNDP
Emma Melander Borg, Programme Analyst, UNDP
Elene Imnadze, Project Officer, World Bank Office
Michael Keshishian, Local Government/Urban Dev. Officer, USAid/Washington
Lado Gorgadze, Local Governance Project Management Specialist, USAid
Kate Whyte, British Know How Foundation/DFID
Anna Westerholm, Project Officer, OSCE
Ulla Backlund, Resident Representative, Norwegian Refugee Council

Others

Eric Johnson, Consul, Swedish Consulate
Vakhtang Maisaia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Appendix 3

Documentation

Parliament of Georgia

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About the Measures on Strengthening the Protection of Human Rights of Women of Georgia – Decree of the President of Georgia (Nr. 511), 1999-08-28

On Approval of the Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women - Order of the President of Georgia (Nr. 64), 2000-02-25

National Plan of Action for Improving Women's Conditions in Georgia 1998-2000

The Plan of Action for Improving Women's Conditions in Georgia for 2001-2004 – Order of the President of Georgia (Nr. 1406), 2000-12-29

The Gender Perspective in Sweden's Cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ds 1996:72

Strategi och handlingsplan för stöd till ökad jämställdhet i Central- och Östeuropa, februari 1997, Avdelningen för Central- och Östeuropa

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Stöd till ökad jämställdhet i Central- och Östeuropa – en resultatinventering, november 2000, Maria Lagus, Sida-Öst/EVA

Improving Gender Statistics in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia 1998–2000, Final Project Report, Birgitta Hedman – GENDERSTAT 2000:5, June 19, 2000 / Statistics Sweden

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A number of progress reports from SALA-IDA.

Reports from the study tours to Sweden and Poland from the Kaspi and the State Chancellery participants.

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Local Self-Government in Georgia: Its Past, Its Present and Tendency, Vakhtang Khmaladze, UNDP, Discussion Paper Series, Tbilisi 1997.

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Georgia Public Defender's Office – Studieresa och projektförberedelser, beslut om insatsstöd nr 20/98, Sida Öst.

Georgien - stöd till stärkande av Public Defender's Office, beslut om insatsstöd nr 393/98, Sida Öst.

Trip report on Georgian Delegation Mission to Sweden and Latvia 24–31 January, 1998.

Strengthening of the Public Defender's Office in Georgia, UNDP Project Proposal to Sida, 23 June 1998.

Agreement between the Government of Sweden (Sida) and UNDP on support to Public Defender's Office in Georgia, 26 October 1998.

Administration Agreement – extension of the agreement between UNDP and the Government of Sweden on support to the Public Defender's Office in Georgia, 18 October 2000.

Extension of Agreement (UNDP - Sida), 16 February 2001.

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A number of progress reports from RWI, UNDP, UNDP/PST, and Tripartite Review Reports.

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Department for Eastern and Central Europe
- 01/01 Rural Development and Democratisation in Russia and Estonia. An Evaluation of Sida's Support to the Three Projects in Russia and Estonia.** Paul Dixelius, Camilla Gramner, Dan Hjalmarsson.
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