

IN BRIEF...

Support to Democracy and Human Rights

Giving more people the opportunity to enjoy a life in dignity is one of the most important goals in the development cooperation between Sweden and Kenya. The support is therefore directed towards greater respect for human rights and democratisation. The programme is long-term and focuses in particular on the poor, women and children.

Swedish support for the development of democracy and human rights started on a small scale at the beginning of the 1990s and has been expanded since to the first general multi-party elections that were held in 1992. The point of departure of cooperation with Kenya, as formulated in the country strategy for 1999-2003, is that Kenya should make progress towards greater democracy. But the problems are considerable and there are many obstacles on the way towards greater respect for human rights and giving the citizens more influence. The widespread poverty in the country is an obstacle in itself since it makes people marginalised and vulnerable. Most people are not aware of their rights and cannot afford to seek legal assistance. Violence and discrimination against women is an everyday occurrence in Kenya. HIV/AIDS has made orphans of many children and created a group that is even more vulnerable.

So far, the hope has lied in Kenya's very strong civil society. This sector consists of numerous non-governmental organisations that are struggling to improve various parts of Kenyan society, for example to improve laws and

policies, to improve the access to justice for the poor, to decrease police brutality, to strengthen women and give them tools to improve their lives, and to help children to become aware of their rights.

Sida's strategy has been to find independent partners in civil society for programmes of long-term cooperation. At present Sida is supporting five programmes in the field of human rights and democracy.

- National Civic Education Programme
- Human Rights and Access to Justice Programme
- Women's Rights Programme
- Rights of the Child Programme
- Financial Management Programme*

National Civic Education Programme

Sida's contribution to the National Civic Education Programme amounts to SEK 17 million (approximately 121,1 million Kenyan shillings).

This comprehensive, nation-wide programme was developed and implemented by four large groups of civil society organisations that fully reflect

the pluralism and broad range of various interests and social groups in Kenyan society.

More than 70 organisations conducted participatory face-to-face civic education programmes through workshops, church meetings, theatre, woman's groups meetings, traditional structures etc all over the country.

The long-term objective of the programme was to deepen the understanding of Kenyans of their rights and duties as citizens and the role and workings of democratic institutions, in order to strengthen their ability to participate effectively in the political process and in the broadening of democracy in Kenya.

Ten donors are supporting the programme, including the Nordic countries. Disbursements are channelled through a joint financing account. Although the programme came to an end in October 2002, it is foreseen that there will be second phase, incorporating the lessons learned.

The implementing partners are:

- Gender Consortium, which is a network of organisations and gender activists working for the promotion of women's rights
- Constitutional Reform Education Consortium (CRE-CO), a network of human rights advocacy and pressure groups and urban squatter movements
- Ecumenical Constitutional Education Programme (ECEP), a joint programme of the Catholic Church

and the National Council of Churches of Kenya

- Constitutional Education for Marginalised Categories (EDMAC), a network representing Muslims, pastoralists and indigenous peoples, mostly from the coastal and northern regions of the country.

Human Rights and Access to Justice Programme

Civil servants, ministry officials, policemen and officials in strategic positions are given training in justice and human rights through a cooperation between the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute and the Department for Personnel Management (DPM) in the Office of the President of Kenya.

This education and training is part of the Human Rights and Access to Justice Programme, which has the objective of reducing the distance between the poor and the law and to strengthen their access to justice, as well as to monitor the human rights situation and advocate for reforms.

The programme is being implemented largely through co-operation between the Embassy, other donors and a selected number of organisations with documented capacity to deliver educational programmes in this field, including:

- The Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRIC)
- People Against Torture (PAT)
- Release Political Prisoners (RPP)
- Legal Resources Foundation (LRF)
- International Commission of Jurists (Kenya Section)

Women's Rights Programme

The situation of women in Kenya is in many ways of great concern. Poverty has a female face in the country and women are more vulnerable.

Violence, abuse and rape is a problem of endemic proportions. Often they are not aware of their rights and cannot afford legal advice. Most women in Kenya are also excluded from the political decision-making processes at all levels of government.

The low levels of participation by women in leadership, in public life and decision-making processes constitutes a fundamental constraint to national development and poverty eradication. Sida is supporting the work being done to increase the participation of women in Kenyan politics, and the Swedish Embassy has identified a number of organisations and pressure groups with well documented capacity in this field:

- Federation of Female Lawyers (Fida)
- Kenya League of Women Voters
- The Education Centre for Women in Democracy (ECWD)
- Kenya Women Political Caucus (Caucus).

Together these organisations are also conducting various activities to achieve the goals in the "Engendering the Political Processes Programme"—EPPP, which promotes female political participation. EPPP is also being supported by Denmark, Holland, DFID, CIDA and UNIFEM.

Another important component in the Swedish support is legal aid and education to women. Fida, for example, has two legal aid offices and a large number of women are given free legal assistance and also trains lawyers and judges. ECWD and League have trained networks of paralegals in the rural areas which offer assistance and education on legal matters to women in the communities, and have proved to be efficient in promoting the legal and human rights of women, change negative attitudes towards women, as well as to curb domestic violence and FGM.

Rights of the Child Programme

There are many children in Kenya who is vulnerable and exposed to threats, children living on the streets as one example. The numbers are increasing, mainly due to poverty, HIV/AIDS and the break down of the extended family. Several organisations are working to improve the living conditions of these children and to look after their rights. The Embassy has identified three co-operation partners, all engaged in changing of behaviour and attitudes, reforming the law and the constitutional framework surrounding children and making politicians and policy makers aware of the views of the children.

- Child Legal Action Network, CLAN, which represents children in court and gives them legal aid.
- Child Rights Advisory and Legal Centre, CRADLE, with the mission of promoting, protecting and enhancing the rights of children, with a special emphasis on girls. The CRADLE also trains lawyers in different parts of the country.
- Alliance for the Advancement of Children, KAACR, which works with almost all aspects of development from a child's perspective, for example reducing violence in schools and police brutality, which is a very serious problem in Kenya. Sida also intends to support the Juvenile Justice Programme, which is being established for joint donor funding. The Programme will aim at strengthening the situation of children in the Kenyan judicial system.

* Financial Management Programme – see separate fact sheet

Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.

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