

MENA

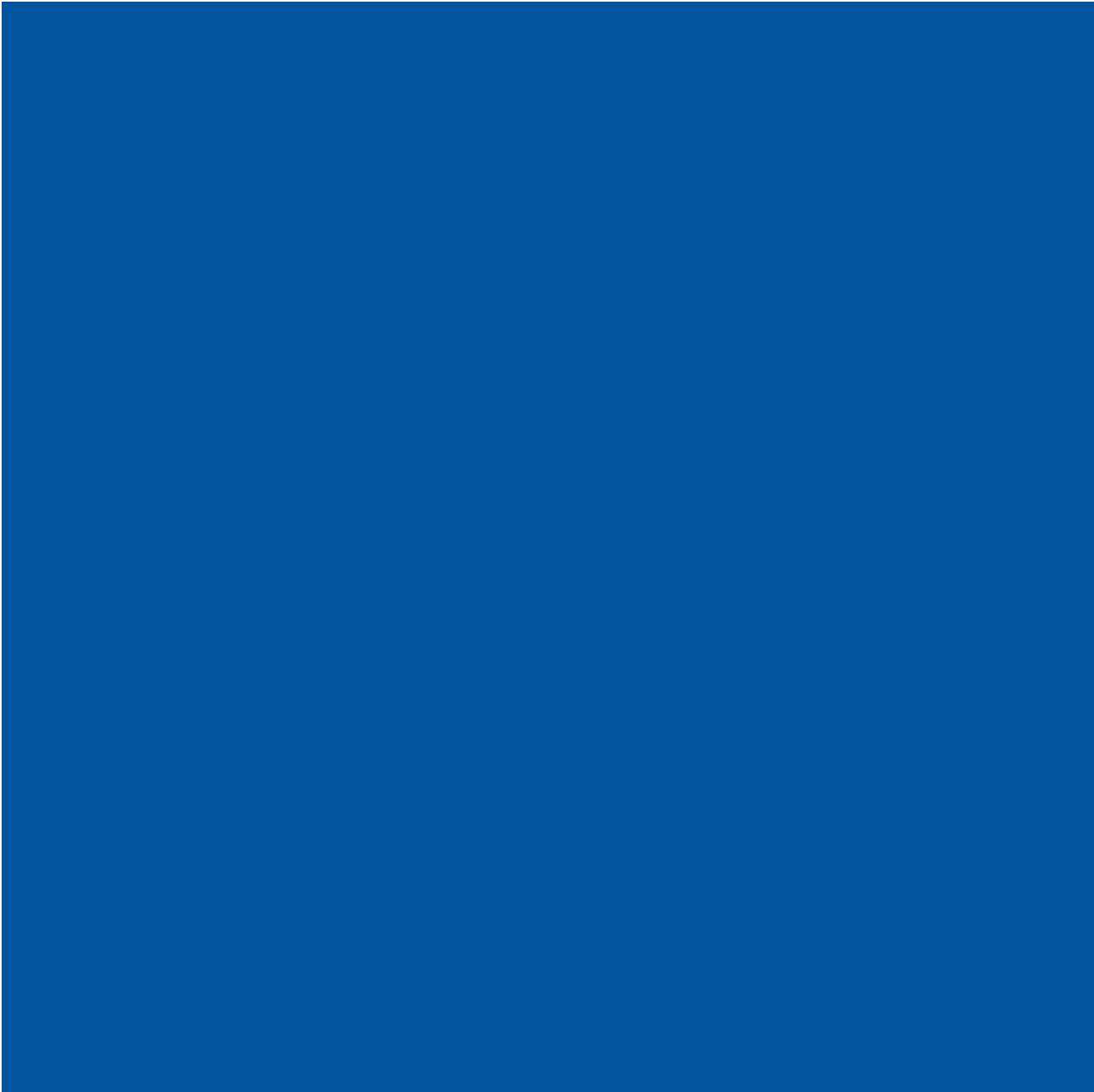


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Published by Sida 2008

Department xxxx

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Printed by Edita Communication, 2008

Art. no.: Sida46001en

This publication can be downloaded/ordered from www.Sida.se/publications

1. Introduction

This is the third annual report on regional development cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The previous annual report for MENA was published in 2006 and covered development and activities in 2005. This report highlights selected key developments in the region in 2007. It also describes the implementation of Sida-supported projects and programmes during 2007.

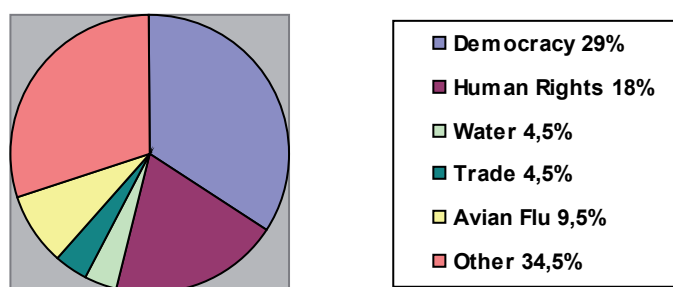
Sida has had a regional programme focused on the promotion of democratic governance and respect for Human Rights in MENA since 2004. In April 2006, the Swedish Government adopted a development cooperation strategy for the MENA region in 2006–2008, which identifies four areas and objectives for cooperation:

- To promote democracy and good governance;
- To promote respect for Human Rights, including equal rights for women and girls;
- To promote the sustainable use of transboundary water resources, from both a poverty reduction and a conflict prevention perspective;
- To promote regional economic development and growth.

In December 2007, the MENA strategy was prolonged by Government decision until December 2010.

During 2007, 40 projects and programmes were supported by Sida, reflecting the priorities in the MENA strategy. In total, 95 million SEK was disbursed. This included a special 9 million SEK contribution to the FAO Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) for combating the Avian Flu.

An overview of the different cooperation areas is presented in the following chart.



In addition, Sida funding to projects in the region was channelled through Sida's global programmes, through the SEKA programme for strengthening civil society through Swedish NGOs, and through the MENA Links research cooperation programme funded via the SAREC allocation for research.

Sida also has bilateral development cooperation with Iraq and the occupied Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza), guided by separate cooperation strategies.

This report has been compiled by the ASIA-MENA department in cooperation with the concerned sector departments and the Sida office at the Swedish Embassy in Cairo.

2. Regional Overview

2.1 Introduction

The countries in MENA¹ are characterized by certain similarities; such as common language, religion and history; and such as the fact that all states without exception are ruled by non-elected authoritarian regimes. That said, there are also great diversities between the countries; socially, politically and economically.

One common characteristic and concern of the region is the seemingly permanent prevalence of violent conflicts which spill over to or influence all countries, albeit to various degree. The deteriorating security situation in Iraq; the summer 2006 war in Lebanon and its aftermath; the escalating conflict between Israel and the Palestinians (and between different Palestinian factions) and the Iranian nuclear issue have created a violence-driven and highly polarized regional dynamic.

This situation constitutes a serious impediment to development, not the least as it is frequently used by regimes as an excuse for any lack of serious reform. Security and stability is presently too often given precedence over democratisation, development and the real needs of poor people.

2.2 Political Development

The lack of democracy in MENA and the region's poor Human Rights records came increasingly in international focus during the first half of the 2000s. As a result of growing internal and external pressure, many regimes in the region conceded to the idea that reforms were needed and announced different reform initiatives. At the Arab League foreign ministers' summit in Tunis in March 2004, a committee was formed to finalize a blueprint for wide-ranging reforms in MENA. Expectations for democratic change were thus raised, both within and outside the region.

Now, the picture looks quite different. The democratic trend is currently changing, and after a few years of at least some progress in a number of countries, the situation in general is now stagnating, if not moving backwards. Whatever reforms were implemented, they have not in any country added up to any substantial democratic change so far. And in some cases they have even been reversed by new and more restrictive policies. The main characteristic of reforms so far thus seems to be their reversibility. And nowhere in the region, so far, have political reforms led to any degree of transfer or rotation of power.

¹ Israel not included in this overview.

Civil society remains weak and restrained, although the situation differs from country to country. Some countries, such as Morocco and Lebanon, are relatively liberal and allow some operating space for non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In other countries, the possibilities for civil society organisations to work are very limited. In countries like Syria, Saudi Arabia and Libya, civil society is more or less non-existent.

In Egypt and Jordan, which have been known to have a more liberal approach and thus – for this region – have had a rather vibrant civil society, various measures were taken in 2007 that restrict the possibilities for NGOs to be established and work independently.

In general there is an urgent need to open opportunities for participation and influence for citizens in all spheres of society, in the family, in schools and universities, in the workplace and in professional associations as well as in communities and politics at all levels. Critical factors in this respect is the improved access to accurate and unbiased information on public policy and affairs, freedom of expression, assembly and association. Also, proper mechanisms of scrutiny and accountability of those appointed or elected to public office are still weak.

2.3 Human Rights

The protection of and respect for Human Rights is inadequate in most countries in MENA. However, while some regimes actively work to improve their records and have shown significant progress over the past few years, others continue to violate the rights of their citizens. In a few cases, there are even reports of a deteriorating Human Rights situation. It appears that the signing of international Human Rights conventions is a lot about improving a country's international image, and not always followed by concrete steps for their implementation on the ground.

Death penalty is applied in many countries, but death sentences are not always executed. Reports of torture and inhuman treatment in police stations, detention centres and prisons abound, and this seems to be particularly common when it comes to suspected Islamists or terrorists. This said, torture is prohibited by law in many countries, but still occurs, probably due to shortcomings in the judicial systems and lack of observance of the laws. In several countries, the pressure on and restrictions for opposition groups and Human Rights activists increased in 2007.

Women continue to face systematic discrimination in most countries in the region, and to large extent lack access to parts of society and to political power. The situation in general, however, has improved. In many countries, opportunities for women to participate socially, economically and politically have in fact increased. In addition, the issue of women's rights has become an issue which is publicly debated in many countries. This said, it is important to note that there are exceptions. In Iraq, for example, the situation of women has seriously deteriorated. Iraqi women are not only victims to the prevalent violence, their legal status and political rights have also been severely limited in the past few years.

Children and youth remain vulnerable groups and even if several bodies and mechanisms for the protection and promotion of children rights have been set up in recent years both at government and civil society level, these bodies are still developing and the values of the CRC need to be anchored within the broader population.

2.4 Economic Growth, Social Challenges

All MENA countries (except Yemen) are classified as medium or high income economies according to the 2007 World Bank Development Indicators. The differences are however profound, both between and within the countries.

The MENA countries have the highest unemployment rate in the world (12.2 percent in 2006) as well as the lowest employment-to-population ratio (47 percent in 2006). In some countries, the youth account for more than 80 percent of the unemployed, and although gender differences when it comes to education and employment have declined, the region still has the lowest levels of female participation in the labor market in the world.

High oil prices and various degrees of economic reforms have created high economic growth in the region for several years in a row. This increasing wealth is however not evenly distributed, and in many countries income inequality is reportedly growing faster than the economic growth. In fact, some of the poorest segments of society saw a drop in purchase power in 2007.

The MENA countries have continued to deepening the trade policy co-operation between themselves and with other countries and regions as India, China, the US and EU. Regional integration is ongoing between several partners. The Agadir FTA agreement between Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, and Egypt entered into force in 2007 and remains open to other countries in the region.

2.5 Media: A Changing Landscape for Public Debate

According to a 2007 Freedom House report, MENA has the lowest press freedom ratings of all regions in the world, and the situation is presently not improving. Journalists and publishers in MENA face surveillance, intimidation, arrest, torture and even imprisonment.

That said, it remains a fact that the development and spread of new communication technologies impacts the MENA region just as the rest of the world. A multitude of sources for information and communication are now available to large parts of the MENA population, and especially the young generation, and these sources are to at least some degree beyond the reach of the ruling establishments. Through Satellite TV, Internet and mobile telephones, a new regional dynamic has been established in the form of an unprecedented public space for debate, which in fact is largely beyond government control.

Although Internet availability and usage in MENA presently is among the lowest in the world, it is steadily growing. Blogging has become a widespread phenomenon in all countries in the region, and it is quite clear that whatever restrictions regimes apply to print media and national television in their respective countries, these restrictions cannot easily be applied to the internet users and bloggers.

Various attempts have been made in several countries to take control of this new media arena; through intimidation and harassment of editors, journalists and – increasingly – bloggers; by blocking access to certain websites, such as Hotmail, Facebook or YouTube; by monopolizing Internet supply and demanding user registration; and occasionally by aiming to adopt new restrictive legislation.

3. Swedish Development Cooperation

– Overall Assessment of the Regional Programme

The overall goal of Swedish development cooperation is to help create conditions that enable poor people to improve their own lives. Development cooperation is to be guided both by a rights perspective and the perspective of the poor, and in the MENA region it is to focus on the kind of generalised poverty that rights abuses and the absence of peace and security represent.

As laid down in the MENA strategy, Swedish development cooperation is to be designed in such a way that it promotes exchange and communication both within the region and between the region and Sweden. This specific regional approach aims to meet the current lack of interaction, exchange and cooperation between the MENA countries. In many countries in the region, different reform and development initiatives are in fact under way at various levels, but information and dissemination of knowledge about what is going on in the various countries tend to be very limited.

In addition, existing formal and informal structures in the region are weak. One of the strategy's prime aims, therefore, is to encourage the development of regional networks and structures in the cooperation areas in question, both at governmental level and within the civil society.

Opportunities for meeting across national boundaries for the purpose of exchanging ideas and experience are also limited, especially among young people and women. It is assessed in the MENA strategy that greater regional transparency and cooperation would add value to ongoing reform processes, as initiatives and ideas that have emerged within the region itself are regarded as particularly attractive and useful.

Sida's cooperation projects have in many cases grown out of a specific interest, expressed by actors in the region, in Swedish experiences. Examples include the Arab Ombudsman Network, the support to Arab Women Parliamentarians, and the project on children's literature and reading. The seminars on water in the Middle East organised over a number of years at the annual Stockholm Water Week has helped create an informal network of decision-makers and public opinion-makers in the MENA region. The ITP Programme "World Trade Conformity Assessment", which has been given specifically for the MENA region during some years, has made participants and the institutions which they represent in their respective countries aware of the importance of the accreditation scheme and have therefore actively started to look at the possibility to create a regional platform for accreditation.

However, the lack of effective regional intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations means that a natural cooperation partner is not always easily available at the regional level. Sida therefore works actively to encourage the development and strengthening of existing regional networks and structures.

This evident lack of effective potential regional partners has had two concrete, somewhat restraining effects on the regional MENA programme. Firstly, as it has been difficult to find partners with the capacity to carry out larger-scale projects or programmes on the regional level, the MENA portfolio presently consists of a large number of small or medium scale projects, many times with limited potential to grow substantially in the short term perspective. Secondly, the regional programme has needed, and will continue to need, considerable time to develop. Sida is continuously exploring new potential partnerships in the region within all four cooperation areas, and the programme is steadily developing and growing, but it should be pointed out that this work is resource demanding and difficult to speed up.

Whenever possible in the development of the regional programme, Sida considers and coordinates with the EU Neighbourhood Policy and the Euro-Med cooperation. There is also close coordination between the regional programme and the bilateral programmes for Iraq and the West Bank and Gaza.

4. Regional Programme Overview 2007

4.1 Democratic Governance

In this sector Sida works to strengthening participation based on civil and political rights as well as to providing support to better governance. The overall objective in MENA is to develop opportunities for participation, especially for women and youth in all spheres and on all levels of society, and to increase possibilities for women and youth to have influence on decisions regarding their situation, at home, in school, in the workplace and in the broader community. The objective is also to promote a public sector built on the principles of transparency, accountability, non-discrimination and participation.

According to Sida policy, strengthening civil society is part of promoting democratic governance so that people have opportunities to act together in order to influence the development of society and/or improve their living conditions. When cooperating with civil society organisations in the MENA region, Sida aims at strengthening the individual organisations supported as well as the arena of civil society as a whole towards increased respect for democratic values.

Arab Women Parliamentarians

- *Cooperation partner:* UNIFEM
- *Agreement:* 2004–2008
- *Sida Contribution:* 13 000 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 1 100 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Syria

The overarching aim of this programme is to facilitate the empowerment of Arab women parliamentarians to act as agents of change through their participation in political processes, and to foster a political climate needed to achieve gender equality in all aspects of national development.

A number of workshops and roundtables have been held targeting mainly women parliamentarians or politically active women at local or national level. Topics included electoral quotas, gender budgeting and Human Rights based approaches. UNIFEM works primarily with official or well established women institutions such as in Syria, the Women's Union, in Jordan the Jordan National Council for Women and in Morocco the Association Democratique des Femmes du Maroc.

An annual Arab Women Parliamentarian Forum has been established, but the planned 2007 meeting to be held in Abu Dhabi in December 2007 was postponed until 2008.

Kvinna till Kvinna, regional MENA program

- *Cooperation partner:* The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
- *Agreement:* 2004–2007
- *Sida Contribution:* 15 500 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 7 200 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria

The objectives of this program is to empower women in the region to take part in the development of the society in their own countries, to strengthen the regional cooperation between women's organizations, and to facilitate the development of a sustainable women's movement in the whole region. Kvinna till Kvinna (KTK) is using a bottom-up approach, promoting local ownership, as well as facilitating networking, bringing a variety of grassroot and well established organisations together, for improved capacity-building and broader coalitions.

In 2007, the support resulted in training for social workers in Palestinian camps in Lebanon and for women working with refugees with war traumas in Egypt. Support was given to the CEDAW shadow report in Lebanon and an exchange between women's organisations regarding the CEDAW and shadow reporting between Egypt and Syria took place. Women candidates in local elections in Jordan were trained through KTK support and several organisations developed their work on personal status issues, such as advocacy for the right for women to pass on citizenship to their children in cross-national marriages and the right to hold identity cards necessary to access for example health and education services.

Adolescents: Agents of Positive Change

- *Cooperation partner:* UNICEF
- *Agreement:* 2005–2008
- *Sida Contribution:* 15 100 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 4 560 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Syria and Tunisia

The overall objective of this programme is to create an enabling policy environment allowing adolescents – boys and girls – to grow to their full potential as citizens and participate in national development. Sub-goals are to establish a consistent knowledge base across the eight countries on young people, to strengthen the capacity of national governments, partners, service providers and young people themselves on youth issues, to promote opportunities for adolescent participation in friendly spaces through home, school and community and to build partnerships for advocacy to promote the rights of adolescents to participation.

Within the programme young people have received training to take part in so-called action research on their own situation. Such a study on adolescent participation was undertaken in Morocco in 2007. The study led to the establishment of a UN working group, which has now identified the education sector as a key entry point to enhance a practice of ad

olescent participation, and it is now developing an action plan under the leadership of the Moroccan Ministry of Education.

In Lebanon, a framework for developing a comprehensive youth policy was established, and the experience was shared with all country offices.

Media is an important tool for changing the public perception of youth, away from concepts of youth as troublemakers to youth as positive agents of change. At a regional media forum in Dubai, UNICEF activities led to the adoption of a declaration on media and youth, and in Lebanon the programme finances a TV-programme (SAWTOUNA) by and for youth dealing with a broad range of societal issues which has become influential at national level. The programme also contributed to the UNICEF website "Voices of the Youth".

An evaluation for the programme is planned for 2008.

MENA Initiative on Governance for Development

- *Cooperation partner:* OECD
- *Agreement:* 2005–2007
- *Sida Contribution:* 9 000 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 3 000 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Open to all MENA countries

The OECD MENA Initiative on Governance for Development (GfD) is directed towards modernizing governance structures and policies.

The programme is structured around six thematic working groups:

- Civil service and integrity;
- E-government, administrative simplification and regulatory reform;
- Governance of public resources;
- Public service delivery;
- Role of the judiciary and enforcement; and
- Civil society and media.

The OECD supports the first four groups and the UNDP the last two. The working groups meet regularly and in some few cases have led to bilateral MoUs for sharing experiences between two countries on a particular issue.

In 2007, two high-level meetings were held to take stock of the first 3-year phase and plan for the next. The issue of corruption has come out as a major focus, whereas civil society and media has not been further developed so far. Sida will continue to advocate for the importance of engaging with civil society for governance reforms as well as for the need to better communicate around such reforms.

Within the GfD programme, OECD has supported the implementation of Country Action Plans by seven Arab countries, as well as the work of ten national co-ordination teams, covering the thematic areas of the different working groups. The support has among other things led to enhanced institutional capacity to prevent corruption in the public procurement process, the creation of a network of policy makers in administrative simplification among Arab and OECD countries, and improvement of performance budgeting capabilities in several Arab countries.

Culture and Media

The overall objective of the culture programme is to enhance freedom of expression and participation, in particular through creative processes.

Culture is supported as an empowering tool for youth and children, especially girls, to express themselves, to get access to wider horizons, to increase their understanding of their own reality and to make their situation known to others. The programme is set to work against lack of rights and security, and against self-censorship and repression. Ultimately, conflict prevention and social integration and change is promoted by offering opportunities for alternative means of expression for young people in the MENA region, by supporting participation and positive interaction.

Cultural cooperation in the area of performing arts

- *Cooperation partner:* Dramatiska Intitutet (University College of Performing Arts)
- *Agreement:* 2004–2007
- *Sida Contribution:* 25 400 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 5 400 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria

This program aims at strengthening individual independent (not state controlled) theatre groups in MENA. Groups are supported in their commitment to good quality performances and audience building, including outreach activities to children, youth and marginalized groups in society.

In 2007, Dramatiska Instutet (DI) partners participated in workshops, invited guest speakers from the Arab region and Sweden/Europe and exchanged experiences which contributed to strengthened capacities and raised professional standards. Several performances and concerts were held with large audiences. According to DI reports, interest in children and youth theatre increased and cooperation with public schools developed, which led to better outreach to new audiences. Independent theatre spaces have been supported, for example in Cairo and in Amman, which enabled young artists to work freely together and develop as artists through for example training programs and exchanges.

The Creative Forum in Alexandria in February 2007, supported within the program, is established as a yearly meeting point for independent theatre practitioners in the MENA region. It also attracts Swedish and European participants. In Amman, the Al Balad Theatre has become a cultural centre for non-commercial quality performances within theatre, dance, poetry and other cultural activities, including specific events for children. In Damascus, a series of theatre workshops have begun, and in Beirut the Shams theatre group continued performances dealing with various themes relevant to current Lebanese society such as violence against women or conflict.

During 2007, DI partners strengthened their cooperation and formed a common platform for the continuation of the network which now includes also Palestinian groups and which will seek to invite groups from Morocco and Syria. An LFA work shop was held in June 2007, providing the base for a program proposal for the period 2008–2010, presented to Sida in December.

Regional program for children's literature and reading promotion

- *Cooperation partner:* The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures
- *Agreement:* 2005–2008

- *Sida Contribution*: 15 500 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007*: 5 000 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus*: Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Territories, Lebanon and Syria

The overall aim of the program is to visualize children development and children rights through children literature. It is built on fruitful experiences from a programme in the Palestinian Territories working with children's literature in schools, libraries etc. with an objective of promoting children's reading and quality children literature in the Arab region.

During 2007, national core groups for the promotion of children's reading have been established, bringing together specialized NGOs, libraries and other stakeholders. Relevant ministries are informed and their support has been sought. The groups have developed criteria for quality children literature and have selected 100 Arabic titles now touring the region as an example of literature available but not always known or utilised.

Animation with children

- *Cooperation partner*: Save the Children Sweden
- *Agreement*: 2007
- *Sida Contribution*: 1 200 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007*: 1 200 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus*: Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Territories, Tunisia and Yemen

A project on children's animation in film making has been a part of the above-mentioned project on performing arts with the Swedish University College for Performing Arts. In 2007, the animation project was separated from the performing arts project, and formed a project of its own implemented by the Swedish Save the Children (SCS).

According to SCS reports, 59 children organisations participated in the project and 110 persons from these were trained in the animation methodology. Some 1000 children have benefited from animation workshops and 50 good quality films have been produced. The films have been used in various awareness and advocacy activities and have been shown on national TV in Yemen, at public cinema halls in Lebanon and some reached an international animation festival in Portugal in November 2007.

The method of animation has now become an integrated part of the SCS work to strengthen children's participation in the region in the context of promoting the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and has proved to be an effective tool in the hands of their partner organisations when reaching out to marginalised children and attempting to give them a voice of their own.

4.2 Human Rights

The overall objective for the support to this sector is to contribute to an increased understanding, knowledge of and respect for Human Rights including equal rights, conditions and opportunities for women and girls as well as the respect for the principles of the Rule of Law. These objectives are achieved through support to organisations and institutions that are safeguarding the Human Rights values, in particular through encouraging the development of regional networks and structures at government and civil society levels. Training and capacity building of key institutions as well as sharing of experience and practices between organisations and countries

are key components of most programmes in this sector. In the long term Human Rights can only be safeguarded if their inherent values are firmly anchored in all public bodies as well as in the broader population.

Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)
Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Foundation (EMHRF)

- *Cooperation partner:* EMHRN, EMHRF
- *Agreement:* 2005–2007
- *Sida Contribution:* 6 500 000 + 1 350 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 300 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* All MENA

This contribution aims at institutional support to the EMHRN and the recently established EMHRF. The overall aim of the EMHRN is to promote and strengthen Human Rights and democratic reform in the framework of the EU Barcelona process and the EU Neighbourhood policy in its southern dimension. It specifically aims at strengthening partnerships between NGOs in the Euro-Mediterranean region and generating capacity at the regional level.

The focus of Sida's support has been to promote the independence and impartiality of the judiciary in MENA with a focus on Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. The overarching aim of the project is to contribute to the development of spaces for free debate between key actors on the independence and impartiality of the judiciary in order to facilitate process towards reform, and to sustain and widen the free spaces for debate by developing regional exchange and synergies between civil society actors to advocate for and monitor regional reform/modernisation initiatives.

Building on a report entitled "Justice in the South and East of the Mediterranean Region" from 2006, the EMHRN working group on Justice developed a regional project to follow-up on the recommendations of the report focusing on the issues of independence and impartiality of the judiciary, first looking at Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. Seminars bringing together stakeholders in each of the countries were held and specific country reports have been produced.

The purpose of the EMHRF is to give rapid, flexible and small-scale support to Human Rights defenders and their organisations in the MENA region. The secretariat is hosted by EMHRN. In 2007 the foundation provided a number of small scale grants and was able to keep its deadline of 10 days to answer urgent requests.

Sida planned to evaluate EMHRN and EMHRF in cooperation with the other donors during 2007. However, after consultation with the other donors, it was decided to postpone these evaluations until 2008.

Human Rights training in the MENA region

- *Cooperation partner:* The Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI)
- *Agreement:* 2007–2008
- *Sida Contribution:* 11 800 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 000 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* All MENA countries with focus on Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria and Tunisia

RWI undertook extensive training in Human Rights in the region during 2004–2006 in cooperation with a Lebanese organization. The RWI

MENA program was evaluated in 2006 and the main conclusions were: The overall content of the training programme is *relevant* and it has been implemented in an *efficient* way. In regard to more long-term or broader local and institutional capacity development there is limited *impact*. The results obtained from the programme will not be *sustainable* in its current form beyond the benefits to the individual participants. Based on the recommendations from the evaluation team, RWI started in 2007 to develop a programme for strengthening institutional capacity in the field of human rights in the MENA region 2007–2008.

During 2007 two main sets of activities have been carried out: 1) preparation and planning for an academic cooperation between Swedish academic institutions and Arabic academic institutions 2) needs assessment missions to six countries in the MENA region in order to -among other issues – provide essential information for the design of pilot activities to be implemented at regional level. The results and activities are presented in an *Inception Report for 2007 and Strategy for 2008* to Sida.

A final programme document will be presented to Sida in October 2008 and will be based on the activities presented in the inception report and on the pilot regional training programme for 2008.

Among identified needs and priorities among academic institutions in MENA are: development of curricula, material and books on HR in Arabic, training of teachers, development of networks, etc. From the needs assessment missions the following conclusions were drawn: combine regional and bilateral capacity development activities, strengthen the resource base in the region, integrate HR in the judiciary, provide support to NGOs.

Juvenile Justice in the MENA region

- *Cooperation partner:* Penal Reform International (PRI)
- *Agreement:* 2004–2007
- *Sida Contribution:* 7 700 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 400 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Yemen

The overarching aim of the juvenile justice program, which was extended from 2006 to 2007, is to bring the justice systems in the targeted countries up to standards that correspond to international conventions in terms of prevention and protection of the child. PRI aims at promoting and mainstreaming concepts of rehabilitation and reintegration into the national systems and cooperates with relevant ministries and specialised NGOs in the countries as well as with Unicef and the UNODC.

In 2007, PRI expertise has been in demand from national governments and specialised NGOs when reviewing legislation regulating for example age of criminal responsibility or prescribing corrective measures for juvenile delinquents. In Jordan, this led to the establishment of pilot specific juvenile police centres, and in Egypt a new draft child law included proposed raising of the age of criminal responsibility from 7 to 13 years. A PRI training manual on juvenile justice for the Arab region was published and used in a series of training workshops for officials in the judiciary dealing with juvenile delinquents held in the targeted countries. The training included aspects of international and national law, as well as rehabilitation and reintegration models and practices.

Two regional conferences brought together stakeholders at government and civil society levels, where problems and challenges as well as strengths and weaknesses in each country were discussed openly and a

regional dynamic of competing towards international standards could be observed. An evaluation is planned for in 2008.

Arab Ombudsman Network

- *Cooperation partner:* National Council for Human Rights, Egypt
- *Agreement:* 2005–2008
- *Sida Contribution:* 7 300 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 300 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* MENA region

The long-term aim of the Arab Ombudsman Network is to prepare the way for the establishment of an Arab Ombudsman institution by enabling the existing and developing ombudsman institutions of the region to exchange experiences and develop joint workshops and training. The project came about as a concrete result of a seminar on Ombudsman institutions held at the Swedish Institute in Alexandria in 2004.

In 2007, regional meetings of ombudsman and complaints offices were held in Morocco and Bahrain. Two studies were completed, one overview of Ombudsman and Ombudsman-like institutions in the Arab world, and one on the role of an Ombudsman institution in the oversight of prison conditions.

Difficulties identified by the project includes confusion about the various names and status of ombudsman and ombudsman-like institutions such as the common “complaints offices” existing in Arab countries. The very concept of an institution scrutinising government records on Human Rights is far from accepted in the region and legislation regarding for example discrimination is not developed in a way that an Ombudsman institution mandate and procedures can be easily defined and implemented.

The ambition to establish a regional Ombudsman institution may have been premature. It has proven difficult to build ownership of a regional process, and for the national institutions to develop regional activities of mutual benefit. At the national level, however, there are encouraging developments with capacity development projects being implemented in several countries such as Egypt, Morocco and Jordan.

Human Rights Capacity Building (KTS)

- *Cooperation partner:* Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP
- *Agreement:* 2006–2010
- *Sida Contribution:* 6 200 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 600 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Egypt

Development Objective: To familiarize Egyptians, primarily government officials associated with the legislative system, with international Human Rights standards as well as with Egypt’s treaty commitments.

Project objective: To create a critical mass that can support a change of behaviour and attitude re. international Human Rights standards.

Results: Not yet reported.

Evaluation plans 2008: First (out of two) external project evaluation to be conducted, according to the UNDP.

Regional Training programme on the Human Rights of Women (ITP)

- *Cooperation partner:* Raoul Wallenberg Institute
- *Agreement:* 2004–2008
- *Sida Contribution:* 16 000 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 900 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Participants in 2007 came from Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, West Bank/Gaza, Syria and Yemen.

Objectives: In short-term; to give participants an overview of international Human Rights law as it relates to women. In long-term; to implement international Human Rights standards in their home countries.

Results: Training of 25 participants in international Human Rights law and given assistance to formulate individual projects focusing on areas relevant for their respective institution/organisation.

Regional Training Programme on Human Rights and Disability

- *Cooperation partner:* Shia, the Swedish Organisations' of Disabled Persons International Aid Association
- *Agreement:* 2006–2009
- *Sida Contribution:* 7 965 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 415 096 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* MENA region

Objectives: The programme aims at enhancing knowledge, develop methods and tools, and to provide a foundation for future networking and co-operation.

Results: The contribution consists of 3 capacity development programmes, held annually 2006–2008. During 2007 the programme was modified somewhat, in order to create a joint action plan between participants, that strive for the ratification and implementation of the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the participants' home countries.

4.3 Transboundary Water Resources

The overall objective with the water resources component in the MENA strategy is to prevent future conflicts by promoting regional cooperation on transboundary water resources wherever possible, i.e. by promoting trust between countries, strengthening their negotiation capacity and their willingness to harmonise water regulations and make necessary investments. Ultimately shared water implies an opportunity of influencing regional politics to lay a foundation for social and political stability, economic prosperity and poverty alleviation.

Sida has decided to initially concentrate the involvement in the water sector to three tasks, namely to 1) elevate transboundary water understanding; 2) support existing transboundary water programmes and 3) promote Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) mechanisms at national and basin levels.

In order to reinforce programme management capacity at Sida, an external institution was contracted by Sida to undertake various assignments with regard to the implementation of the strategy (see below for further details).

A survey of existing undertakings in the water sector in the region was carried out during 2006. The report and its recommendations served as the basis for decisions during 2007 on how Sida could engage in the water sector. One conclusion was the decision in November 2007 to begin

the recruitment of a Sida regional programme officer/advisor to be placed at the embassy in Amman and to be operational from August 2008. With an increased Sida presence in the region there will be improved opportunities for Sida to build relationships and work more closely with partners and beneficiaries.

Initiatives that were subject for initial preparations by Sida during 2007 came from the following potential partners; 1) a consortium of the Governments of Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian Authority (PA), and the World Bank; 2) Israel Jordan, PA and donor partners through the Executive Action Team (EXACT), 3) the Israel based NGO EcoPeace/Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME), 4) Iran, Iraq and Syria through the Euphrates-Tigris Initiative for Cooperation (ETIC), and 5) preparation of an ITP-course for the Euphrates and Tigris basins through the Swedish consultants Ramböll Natura/SIWI.

Sida's assessment is that there is a need to further identify partners and support them in formulating proposals.

Support to Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) for consultancy support

- *Cooperation partner:* Stockholm International Water Institute, SIWI.
- *Agreement:* 2006–2008
- *Sida Contribution:* 4 500 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 1 500 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* MENA region

SIWI has been tasked to provide advisory services, backstopping, evaluations and analysis to Sida.

Fact finding: During 2007, strategic analysis and four missions to the region or to meetings with regional partners outside the MENA region were undertaken. SIWI has established strategic connections with important institutions that can be potential partners with Sida.

SIWI received a formal request to facilitate the Euphrates and Tigris Initiative for Cooperation (ETIC) process of establishing itself as a legal entity and to assist in developing its vision and mission more clearly. Potential support to ETIC can be envisaged for 2008.

The Executive Action Team (EXACT) is an initiative that came out of the Middle East Multilateral Working Group on Water Resources (MWGWR). Jordanian, Palestinian, and Israeli water officials and experts have worked together, with support from donor partners since 1995. Possible support needs to be explored through a dialogue with the core parties and with other donor partners such as Norway, and will be further developed during 2008.

The Red Sea – Dead Sea Water Conveyance Feasibility Study: The Dead Sea water level has been dropping at an alarming rate and the environment is deteriorating. Israel, Jordan and the PA are jointly undertaking a feasibility study to explore options for a multipurpose project addressing the environment, energy provision, water supply and peace & stability. SIWI initiated in 2007 a dialogue with the World Bank that could potentially lead to a redesign of the study and support by Sida in 2008. Such support could strengthen cooperation between the basin partners and unlock opportunities to further cooperation in the Jordan basin as a whole.

Capacity Building: SIWI organised the annual Middle East (ME) Seminar and process for the World Water Week in Stockholm 2007. The ME Seminar was titled “Transboundary Groundwater Resources in the Mid-

dle East Region” and was highly appreciated by the participants. The design of the 2008 seminar is based on a stock taking exercise (evaluation) undertaken in 2007 of the previous five MENA seminars.

Assessment of projects: A desk assessment of a project proposal called “Good Water Neighbours” proposed by FoEME was conducted. It concluded that the project fits the strategy but recommended further development and discussion to clarify the overall outcome of the project. This project could be supported in 2008.

Evaluation plans during 2008: Yes.

Transboundary Water Management MENA (ITP programme)

- Cooperation partners: Ramböll Natura AB, SIWI, University of Jordan
- *Agreement:* 2006–2009
- *Sida Contribution:* 11 700 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 800 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, West Bank and Gaza

Objectives: Support participants in undertaking concrete activities and projects that; 1) contribute to the establishment and strengthening of institutions for TWM; and 2) contribute to the development of mechanisms for dialogue, networking and conflict resolution in areas with shared water resources

Results: Output: 25 participants (out of which nine women) completed the 2006/2007 program that ended in February 2007. Seminars were held in Jordan and Stockholm. Evaluation showed 60% considered objectives reached to a “large extent”, 20% to a “very large extent” and 20% to a “sufficient extent” following the seminars in Jordan, slightly lower after the Stockholm phase. 21 participants took part in the 2007/2008 program that completed in February 2008. More reporting on this will be presented late April 2008.

4.4 Regional Economic Growth and Trade Capacity

The objectives of Sida’s work with trade issues in MENA are to promote regional economic development and growth, through the strengthening of trade policy skills and supply capacity in a regional perspective.

Sweden has as an EU member entered into the European-Mediterranean Partnership (the Barcelona process). EU entered into a number of bilateral trade and cooperation agreements under the Barcelona Declaration. Cooperation with these countries is broad-based and encompasses such areas as political matters, democracy and Human Rights, economic affairs and trade, and social and cultural issues. On the economic front, one of the principal aims is to create a free trade area around the Mediterranean by the end of 2010.

A mapping was carried out in 2006 to explore the potential for Sida to support regional efforts aimed at strengthening the capacity building of institutions related to economic development. Different organisations, programmes and initiatives on national and regional level, which are handling issues concerning the development of the competence on trade policy and the increase of supply capacity have been examined. The result of the mapping has shown a positive feed-back in the MENA region for Sida’s International Training Programmes in the area of trade issues. World Trade Conformity Assessment and Negotiating Principles and Practises have both been highly appreciated training programmes within the MENA region.

As a result of the World Trade Conformity Assessment training pro-

gramme, the Arab countries initiated a dialogue on accreditation processes and on the possibilities for further Swedish assistance in this particular area. The mapping also resulted in suggestions on support for implementation of the Agadir agreement and support to the Arab initiative GAFTA in different trade issues. An initiative has been taken within the Global program for establishment of an International standard on Social Responsibility. Linked to this, a regional workshop has been held in Morocco for the MENA region.

Negotiating Trade Agreements, Principles and Practices (ITP)

- *Cooperation partner:* The Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment (SWEDAC)
- *Agreement:* 2005–2008
- *Sida Contribution:* 3 846 703 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 3 462 038 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, W/G, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia

Objectives: To provide information and training to relevant government officials and other stakeholders regarding the principles and requirements of the WTO agreements and trends and core issues of bilateral and regional trade agreements in the new international multilateral trading systems.

Results: Annual report pending.

World Trade and Conformity Assessment, Quality Infrastructure Development (ITP)

- *Cooperation partner:* The Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment (SWEDAC)
- *Agreement:* 2005–2007
- *Sida Contribution:* 4 240 507 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 334 425 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, West Bank/Gaza, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen

Objectives: To provide information and training to relevant government officials and representatives of organisations involved in international trade in issues related to conformity assessment. In addition, the participants will be assisted in adapting their national and regional quality infrastructure environment. The emphasis will be on the new international principles of international trade with a focus on accreditation.

Results: Progress report 2007, Final Report pending (Programme was procured during 2007 and resulted in a new, global, programme under the new name: “Quality Infrastructure Development in Support of World Trade” with SWEDAC as organiser).

4.5 Other Projects/Programmes

Presented below are projects and programmes that are not sector bound, that falls outside of the MENA strategy or that are financed outside of the regional MENA allocation.

Contract-financed Technical Cooperation (KTS) is a development cooperation instrument normally used in low and middle income countries that are not included in Sida’s other programmes. A number of MENA countries were eligible for bilateral KTS contributions before the adoption of the MENA strategy in 2006. With the implementation of the re-

gional programme, the KTS projects that fall outside of the objectives of the strategy have gradually been phased out in MENA. Most of the projects listed below will therefore be finished during 2008.

Cooperation with the Swedish Institute in Alexandria

- *Cooperating partners:* Swedish Institute in Alexandria (SwedAlex)
- *Agreement period:* 2007
- *Total agreed amount:* 750 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 713 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* MENA regional

Sida has had a close cooperation with the Swedish Institute in Alexandria (SwedAlex) since its establishment in 2000. In 2007, this cooperation was formalised through an agreement regarding Sida support for a number of activities carried out during 2007 by SwedAlex within the framework of the regional MENA programme.

In May, SwedAlex hosted a regional child literature seminar in cooperation with the Anna Lindh Foundation, titled “How to support and develop publishing and distributing children’s books”, and with participants from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinian Territories and Syria. The Swedish Arts Council (Kulturrådet) also participated, as did one Swedish publisher of children’s books.

In cooperation with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Beirut-based Centre for Arab Unity Studies (CAUS), SwedAlex published an Arabic translation of the SIPRI Year Book 2006. In 2007, this work was co-funded by Sida. In April, a regional seminar on the subject “Tools for Peace Studies in the Middle East” was arranged at SwedAlex.

In December, SwedAlex arranged the seminar “Empowering Women in the Political Process” in cooperation with International IDEA. Activists and politicians from, among others, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Yemen and Qatar were invited, and Sweden was represented by Maria Leissner, Ambassador for Democracy at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and one Member of Parliament.

Establishment of forum for Swedish NGOs active in the MENA region in cooperation with SwedAlex

A horizontal objective of the MENA strategy is to promote cooperation between the region and Sweden. Swedish development-oriented organisations active in the region are therefore a key partner to Sida for the implementation of the strategy. A large concentration of Swedish NGOs can be observed in the Palestinian Territories, but for the regional programme those that work at regional level are of course of particular importance.

In order to facilitate networking between these organisations, and to encourage the development of new regional initiatives, a meeting was convened jointly by Sida and the Swedish Institute in Alexandria in September 2007. At the meeting the MENA strategy was presented as well as a specific call for proposals open only to Swedish organisations for regional projects with a deadline of 2 Jan 2008. A training session on the Sida policy for peace and security was also held with particular focus on understanding how projects potentially impact on and are influenced by a conflict setting.

Palestinian International Business Forum (PIBF)

- *Cooperating partner:* International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR)
- *Agreement period:* 2005–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 12 500 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 500 000 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* The occupied Palestinian territories (and Israel)

The Palestinian International Business Forum (PIBF) was established by NIR in 2001, after an initiative from Yassir Arafat and Shimon Peres. The project aims at enabling local and international private sector efforts towards achieving sustainable economic growth in Palestine as a basis for political and societal long term stability in the Middle East region. The project is based on an agreement between private sector representatives from Palestine, Israel and Sweden. PIBF is registered as a Swedish non-profit organisation, with the secretariat placed at the NIR office in Stockholm.

The overall objective of PIBF is to nurture, promote and advocate for developing business and trade environment in Palestine and the region, and to promote the establishment of an independent and sustainable Palestinian economy. PIBF is functioning as a platform for dialogue and trust building between economic actors, with Swedish private sector actors as a third party. PIBF also aims to confront policy makers in the region with clear and well founded economic arguments in favor of peace and stability.

The PIBF programme was evaluated in 2007, with positive results. As a consequence, Sida signed a new agreement with NIR regarding continued support of the PIBF platform. From 2008 and onward, however, this is funded through the West Bank/Gaza allocation.

Support in Planning and Geographic Information Systems (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities/ General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP) – SIPU International AB
- *Agreement period:* 2004–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 10 500 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 3 841 952 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Egypt

Objective: To bring the Egyptian planning processes closer to the people that are directly affected by it in terms of improving the opportunities for full participation.

Project objectives: To (i) improve the training capacity of GOPP on modern planning methods, (ii) prepare a policy on information management and implement an information management system to meet the mandate of GOPP and its regional centres, (iii) enhance the capacity of local planning authorities to prepare and implement plans, (iv) develop an integrated and comprehensive human resources and institutional development policy and programme, (v) strengthen the monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms of GOPP, (vi) strengthen the operational links between GOPP HQ and local authority offices.

Results: Urban planning pilot exercises were completed, lessons learned compiled, and used in the design of new strategic planning assignments; guidelines for Strategic Urban Planning produced in both English and Arabic, using new methodologies for participation, implementation orientation, and capacity building; training sessions held in this new methodology reaching both GOPP staff and local authorities' personnel; in-

formation management policy put into effect, with additional amendments as appropriate; draft human resources development policy submitted; draft institutional development proposals, including new organisational chart, submitted; middle management training executed; design for a monitoring system submitted, testing of 3 components designed and started; GOPP staff trained in the method and evaluation of consultant work; basic data structure for data warehouse created, and demonstrated.

Defining Means and Criteria for Improving Thermal Performance and Minimising Energy Consumption in Buildings (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Royal Scientific Society/Building Research Centre – Lund University/Housing Development and Management
- *Agreement period:* 2004–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 6 095 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 274 776 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Jordan

Objective: To adopt relevant ideas and methods in the construction of new buildings in an environmentally sustainable and energy efficient way.

Project objective(s): Introduce new climatic considerations and concepts to the Jordanian construction industry to enable the development of local methods and techniques for the design and construction of buildings in an environmentally sustainable way.

Results: The RSS staff are now able of handling educational activities on climatic design of buildings nationally and the newly achieved knowledge can be used in the construction industry.

Institutional Capacity Building in the Road Sector (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Ministry of Transport. Public Establishment of Road Communications (PERC) – Vägverket/SweRoad
- *Agreement period:* 2005–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 8 600 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 4 311 762 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Syria

Objective: To enhance the competence of PERC in key road sector areas by developing adequate methods and enhancing sector specific skills and knowledge.

Project objectives: To disseminate outputs from previous project phases, e.g. making road inventories and road quality assessments, planning and programming using HDM-4 and further training of their use, collecting bridge data, executing bridge inspections, to develop management and road contractors' awareness and skills of using efficient road and bridge maintenance and repair methods as well as quality assurance, and to prepare a tentative plan of action for PERC in its role regarding traffic safety.

Results: Current policies of transport and road sectors reviewed, validation of all data in the Road and Inspection (RIS) Database and output application completed, design of the database for RIS completed, PERC staff have enhanced their competence re. survey techniques, a road accident data base has been designed and constructed, a manual on traffic devices has been delivered.

Public Service Management Training Programme (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Syrian Planning Commission – ÅF Process AB
Communications (PERC) – Vägverket/SweRoad
- *Agreement period:* 2005–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 2 900 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 1 212 436 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Syria

Objective: To help create conditions and provide experience to enhance the public service reform process in Syria.

Project objectives: To strengthen and develop the participating organisations knowledge and possibilities to carry through their modernisations projects with regards to the public service concept.

Results: Improvements made on the participating organisations formulation of definitions, context and problem analyses and implementation plans, a higher comprehension on the need for introduction of organisational transparency and change for development made, a considerable change in leadership styles and personal behaviour achieved, projects being implemented were transferred to higher instances thus approved, a considerable improvement in the preparation and implementation of reform projects achieved, participating organisations analytical and learning capacity improved.

Feasibility Study on the Organisation and Development of Land Administration (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Ministry of Communications - Lantmäteriet
- *Agreement period:* 2007–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 2 700 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 1 004 477 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Syria

Development Objective: To identify measures to improve the quality, security and efficiency of land administration, thus ultimately contributing to economic growth, poverty reduction and a more even distribution of wealth.

Project objectives: To clarify stakeholders' responsibilities and visions for land administration, delineate technical and managerial problems and restraints affecting the present situation, evaluate alternative solutions for future land administration, prepare an assessment of land as an economic resource, and prepare and present a comprehensive vision, strategy and road plan with recommendations for future sustainable solutions for land administration.

Results: The direct effects of the interventions are still to be described. However, the study, due to be completed in May 2008, will result in report covering recommendations for future land administration system in Syria. During 2008 the project has continuously presented tentative recommendations.

Solid Waste Project in Oujda (KTS)

- *Cooperating partner:* Communauté Urbaine d'Oujda
- *Agreement period:* 2005–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 5 700 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 2 546 978 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Morocco

Development Objective: To improve the environment by introducing a solid waste management scheme adapted to local conditions.

Project objectives: To assist the technical department of the Communauté Urbaine d'Oujda in design, planning and monitoring of the construction and operations of modern solid waste management facilities

Results: The Swedish consultant SWECO AB has assisted the city of Oujda in design and planning of the project. They have jointly developed a pilot project with design well adapted to the semi-arid conditions in Morocco. The project has drawn great attention in Morocco as a model for similar facilities. SWECO has strengthened the city of Oujda in the whole process from design to initial operations, thus securing the quality of the project.

Industrial Maintenance (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Ministère de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de la Mise à Niveau de l'Economie and Idhammar i Sverige AB
- *Agreement period:* 2005–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 4 000 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 1 744 126 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Morocco

Development Objective: The overall objective is to promote the industrial maintenance for small and medium enterprises in Morocco by showing good examples.

Project objectives: On the basis of audits of four selected companies support the capacity development of the responsible Ministry.

Results: The project has successfully carried out three of the four planned audits. The best company showed an increase by 65% in efficiency thus contributing to the overall profitability improvement. Due to the project, the Ministry established an Industrial Maintenance Group of the Ministry. This group was responsible for the audits and has developed tools, procedures and guidelines for the future work.

Gender Statistics, Tunisia (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Ministère des Affaires de la Femme, de la Famille et de l'Enfance, MAFFE and Sweden Statistics
- *Agreement period:* 2003–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 2 150 354 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 350 105 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Tunisia

Development Objective: To contribute to increased equality between men and women in Tunisia.

Project objectives: To develop and strengthen the competence and capacity in collecting, analysing and dissemination of gender segregated statistical data.

Results: The project has been heavily delayed due to language confusions and organisational problems. Sweden Statistics should have worked directly with relevant authorities instead of through the intermediary of the Ministry. The final results were in accordance with expectations and the Tunisian professionals carried through necessary analyses

Maritime safety and institutional capacity building (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* La office de la Marine Marchande et des Ports, OMMP and the Swedish Maritime Authority
- *Agreement period:* 2006–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 3 500 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 1 486 984 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Tunisia

Development Objective: Increased maritime safety and environmental protection in Tunisian territorial waters and in the Mediterranean area.

Project objectives: OMMP has increased its capacity and competence to strengthen the quality of monitoring maritime safety and marine environment protection and to address international legislation and conventions and to support the institutional reform process.

Results: The cooperation between OMMP and Sjöfartsverket is running smoothly and implemented through a series of workshops. OMMP staff is responsible for the implementation. Types of workshop activities are Flag ship control, Inspections and Port state control, Port state control routines, Work health promotion, Managerial workshop.

Employment office (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Agence Nationale de la Promotion de l'Emploi, ANAPEC and the National Labour Market Board of Sweden (AMS)
- *Agreement period:* 2002–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 4 100 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 449 390 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Morocco

Development Objective: To contribute to a better employment market and increased employment.

Project objectives: To contribute to the capacity development of ANAPEC to better collect, analyse and disseminate information about the labour market and to improve the organisation of the employment services to reach out into the whole country .

Traffic safety (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* La Direction des Routes et de la Circulation Routière and the Swedish Road Authority.
- *Agreement period:* 2005–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 8 500 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 3 248 483 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Morocco

Development Objective: To implement the national plan to decrease the number of deaths and casualties in the traffic.

Project objectives: To increase the capacity of responsible Moroccan authorities and in particular La Direction des Routes et de la Circulation Routière to implement the national strategy plan

Industrial Maintenance (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Centre Technique des Industries Mécaniques et Electriques, CETIME and SWECO AB
- *Agreement period:* 2005–2008
- *Total agreed amount:* 4 000 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 658 219 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Tunisia

Development Objective: To contribute to economic growth and increased international competitiveness.

Project objectives: To increase the competence and capacity of CETIME in automatic maintenance systems and dissemination to mechanical and electrical companies.

Results: The project has had a slow implementation rate, but has had significant contribution to Tunisia's adaptation to European standards

Modernisation of Employment Services (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* Agence Tunisienne de l'Emploi, and the National Labour Market Board of Sweden
- *Agreement period:* 2003–2007
- *Total agreed amount:* 5 850 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 770 691 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Tunisia

Development Objective: To contribute to the improvement of the employment market.

Project objectives: To increase the capacity of the Tunisian employment office through introduction of new methods for information and communication.

Climatic adaptation – Touzeur daycare centre (KTS)

- *Cooperating partners:* L'Agence de rénovation et de Rehabilitation Urbaine (ARRU)
- *Agreement period:* 2003–2007
- *Total agreed amount:* 1 959 454 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 129 140 SEK
- *Geographical focus:* Tunisia

Development Objective: To develop a concept on how to adapt construction to local climate conditions.

Project objectives: To develop competence and capacity of the ARRU personnel by carrying through a study of the Touzeur daycare centre and disseminate the results.

Results: The results of the project are a number of detailed recommendations worked out by ARRU in cooperation with Lund University to consider for construction of institutions in arid areas.

4.6 Swedish NGO Support to Framework Organisations 2007 – MENA Region (funded by the SEKA allocation)

Cooperation partners: Diakonia, Olof Palme Centre, Save the Children Sweden, PMU Interlife, Swedish Mission Council member organisations and Church of Sweden.

- *Agreement period:* Fiscal Year 2007
- *Sida Contribution:* 13 MSEK (34 regional projects)
- *Geographical focus:* MENA region

14 Swedish organisations have Sida frame-agreements. Through them and their networks, Sida can provide support for a dynamic and democratic civil society in partner countries while also strengthening local partner organisations.

The majority of projects supported through the NGO channel focus on the themes Human Rights/democracy, gender equality, conflict management and peace building. The regional support is geographically targeting primarily the Middle East, and to a minor extent North Africa. Among activities conducted were education/training, organisational and capacity building efforts as well as network building between local groups in different countries.

Diakonia support networking amongst their local partners which includes Egypt, Israel/Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan. Strategic work is done in collaboration with a number of Palestinian groups. Another effort aims to train Imams in the region on democracy/Human Rights aspects.

The Palme Centre support focuses on conflict resolution, in crisis, and is geographically placed in Palestine/Israel. In doing so a Peace Forum and network, consisting of 120 organisations, has been established which take active part in the peace process. The aim is to further the cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian groups/organisations, who jointly want to promote peace. The Palmecentre has also activities in West Sahara and are there conducting gender equality work/initiatives, in order to give local women more influence of decision making at local levels.

The Young Eagles (Unga Örnar) work regionally at grassroots levels, with youth, this is done through the use of cultural expressions and events. Finally, the Palmecentre are extending support and working in refugee camps in West Sahara, and where they work in close collaboration with Polisario's Youth organisation Ujsaario.

Save the Children Sweden conduct their work based on the UN Study "Violence against children", and where they through their support provide children with tools against different forms of abuse, including sexual exploitation. Important aspects are training/education of marginalised children.

Swedish Mission Council (SMR) member organisations are active in supporting of gender equality projects, with a number of Human Rights interventions i.e. in Egypt, Lebanon and in Morocco. Furthermore SMR is also supporting project in Western Sahara together with Kristna Freds and their work related to conflict management and to try and find methods for preventive peace initiatives.

The Church of Sweden work in part with conflict management/democracy support focussing on economic and social justice together with Palestinian refugees.

4.7 Research Cooperation (funded by the SAREC allocation)

Swedish Research Links Programme (MENA Links)

- *Cooperating partner:* The Swedish Research Council
- *Agreement period:* 2006–2010
- *Total agreed amount:* 16 000 000 SEK
- *Disbursement 2007:* 3 500 000 SEK
- *Cooperating partner:* The Swedish Research Council
- *Geographical focus:* The whole MENA region

Swedish Research Links (Links) has as its main aim to promote collaboration between researchers in Sweden and in developing countries. The program has covered MENA since 2002. The contribution in 2007 to researchers in the MENA region and their Swedish research partners was approximately 3 MSEK.

In 2007, 21 of the 64 applications submitted from the MENA region were approved for funding. Out of the 64 applications, 16 were submitted by female researchers. Since 2005 there has been an increase of over 20 percent in the number of applications from the MENA region.

The majority of applications are in the area of Natural Sciences and Engineering. The number of applications in the social science and humanities sectors is few. In 2007, a workshop took place at the Swedish Institute in Istanbul on the theme “Societies in transition – Identity and Modernization/ Modernity”. The aim was to increase awareness of the Links program and to assist in establishing the initial contact between Swedish researchers and researchers from the region working in the Social Science and Humanities sectors.

5. Studies and Evaluations

As part of the effort to develop a regional programme in the fields of culture and media, democratic governance and Human Rights, Sida has set out to analyse existing donor strategies and programmes in the region. In 2007, two studies financed wholly or in part by Sida, were delivered, one on cultural donors in the region and one on democracy and Human Rights programmes by other donors. No project or program evaluations were commissioned in 2007 as priority had to be given to the renewal of a large number of agreements.

Mapping of Democracy and Human Rights programmes of other donors in the MENA region 2007 disbursed 2007: 0,3 MSEK

In line with provisions in the regional cooperation strategy, Sida commissioned a mapping and analysis of regional Human Rights and democracy programmes in the MENA region in order to situate the developing Sida programme in the context of other regional donors. The study was delivered in June 2007 and the study identified that Sida is one of few donors with a clear regional cooperation framework and that this remains a relevant way of operating. The study emphasised that much effort needs to be invested in strengthening regional structures both at state and civil society level and in supporting long-term efforts to build ownership and well founded strategies relevant at national and regional levels. Organisations emanating from the region should be invited to submit proposals and support be provided for activities such as LFA-workshops to better identify problems and potential solutions with clear targets and indicators. One result of the study was the call for proposal that Sida launched in October 2007 inviting Swedish non-governmental organisations to develop regional programs in the field of democracy and Human Rights.

Mapping of cultural donors in the MENA region through the European Cultural Foundation 2005–2007 – 0,08 MSEK, disbursed 2007:0 MSEK

In order to better situate the support through the Swedish University College for Performing Arts and Media - DI (see above under culture and media) - in its regional MENA context of other cultural donor policies and strategies, including those of governments, a mapping study was commissioned together with the Cairo office of the Ford Foundation and the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) to be executed by ECF. The study was much delayed and a final text, not very satisfactory, was delivered only in late 2007. This study was part of the basis for the decision to continue and further develop the support to the new phase of the DI programme. DI, as an institution, is by now a very well established actor in the MENA cultural donors scene and its knowledge and experience is often sought by others.

6. Office and Administrative Issues, Major Events

There was a change in programme officer for the regional cooperation programme at the Embassy in Cairo in 2007. The previous programme officer left in early February and the new programme officer started in Cairo in June. During the gap left in between, staff from Sida HQ worked shorter periods at the Cairo office. The job description for the post has been revised insofar that it now only covers the sectors of culture and media, democratic governance and Human Rights.

The temporary reinforcement of the Sida regional office in Cairo from mid 2005 by a post of a young expert (biträdande bilateral expert, BBE) assisting in programme officer tasks ended in august 2007. Since then, the office is again a single-person office. Development cooperation remains a relatively separate activity within the Embassy in Cairo, and there is no local project committee. In order to balance this reality, the Sida staff person at the Embassy is in regular contact with Sida HQ, frequent field missions from HQ are undertaken and the sharing of responsibilities between HQ and the field office have been reviewed in some cases.

Out of 12 agreements in the sectors of culture and media, democratic governance and Human Rights ongoing in 2007, 8 ended in December and significant time and effort was dedicated to the preparing for the renewal or closure of these agreements. Follow-up of ongoing activities as well as networking and information sharing with other donors and actors in the MENA region are major priorities of the Cairo office, with frequent travelling in the region, mainly to the five focus countries mentioned in the strategy.

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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