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Sida Review

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MID-TERM REVIEWS OF SIDA'S SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY IN CAMBODIA THROUGH FORUM SYD AND DIAKONIA 2007–2009

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1. Introduction

The Assignment

The assignment should in accordance with the ToR focus on undertaking a review of Sida's current support to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia, with emphasis on Sida/ DESAs support to Forum Syd and Diakonia, and, based on findings from the review, outline potential options for a Swedish future support strategy to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia.¹

2. Method and Approach

Framework of Analysis

For the purpose of answering the questions to be addressed according to the ToR and to provide a reporting format which focus on Forum Syd and Diakonia capacity to deliver in accordance with the Programme for Human Rights and Democracy 2007–2009, three areas of achievement are used as point of departure; namely

- *Area I* concerns the capacity to deliver of the individual organisation, in this review Forum Syd and Diakonia respectively.²
- *Area II* deals with the outcomes of (activities of) the individual organisations, i.e. of Forum Syd and Diakonia activities vis-à-vis their partners.
- *Area III* encompasses impact of Forum Syd and Diakonia programmes in civil society and in society as a whole.

Obviously, a number of methodological problems arise in the tracking of results along the causal chain, of which the dominating problem is that of attribution when different actors are present, influencing results. Outcomes can seldom be explained as the logical result of a single causal chain, and impact even less so. A more fruitful discussion would deal with the possible probability of a certain outcome related to a specific programme, and the possible contribution of a programme to an impact in civil society.

A distinction should be maintained between the programme outcomes of the organisations in focus – Forum Syd and Diakonia – and the outcomes of the partner programmes. Basically the activities of the former concern a) the implementation of programmes driven by the partners, b) capacity building of the partner organization and c) mainstreaming. The partners have their own result criteria and indicators, which may or may not coincide with those of the “donor” partners.

Activities and achievements in the three areas are “governed” by visions, strategies and objectives of the dominating actors, as outlined in the left part of the diagram. Dominating actors are Sida, other

¹ Terms of Reference are enclosed in Appendix 1.

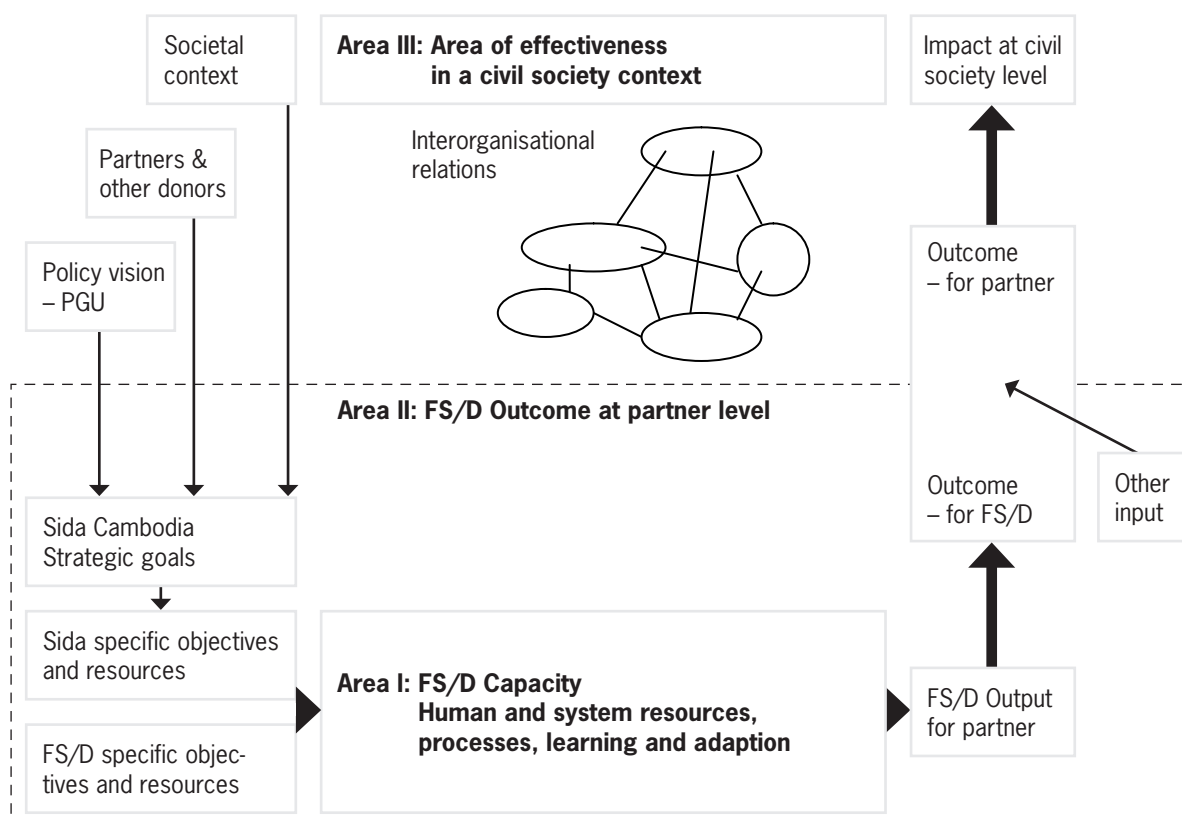
² The capacity to deliver is based on the adequacy of resources in terms of staff and systems and the effectiveness of processes, corresponding to basic dimensions of the Octagon.

donors, Forum Syd and Diakonia, other international NGOs, national NGOs etc.³ These issues cover *the second part of this review*, namely to outline potential options for a Swedish future support strategy to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia.

The “strategic input” to the programmes of Forum Syd and Diakonia – design, implementation and review – will be Sida strategies as well as strategies formulated by the head offices of the two organisations.

At the centre of the figure, the multi-organisational context is indicated. An important part of this context is constituted by the local NGOs, which also are related to other organisations and actors in different networks.

Figure 1. Three areas of achievement



Approach

When initiating the study, the ToR issues were discussed by e-mail and telephone in order to specify the questions prioritised by Sida, in relation to the two main parts of the assignment, namely:

- Review Sida’s current support to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia, with emphasis on Sida’s (DESA’s) support to Forum Syd and Diakonia, and
- Outline potential options for a Swedish future support strategy to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia.

The focus of the assignment was further discussed and agreed upon with SDC on the first day of the field work. It was then again emphasised that Forum Syd and Diakonia was at the centre of the study,

³ To make the diagramme readable, only the most important actors.

and not their partners per se. Furthermore, it was discussed how Part a) review of the Programme 2007–2009 should be reported. It was confirmed that a detailed result analysis was not required. An overall presentation of achievements and results and a perusal of the roles of Forum Syd and Diakonia would be carried out.

The study has been carried out through review of written reports and other relevant documentation. A starting point for the study was the external mid-term evaluation commissioned by Diakonia and Forum Syd of their programmes. Annual reports and agreed minutes from annual review meetings between Sida, Forum Syd and Diakonia, have been studied as well as policy and method documentation from the two organisations. The study of civil society made by the SAT, reported in 2003 and 2006 has been an important input, and also other reports and programme documents from other donors. The Country Cooperation Strategy has served as a main guiding document. Interviews have been undertaken with representatives of Forum Syd and Diakonia in Cambodia and Sweden and with selected partner organisations⁴ of Forum Syd and Diakonia. The review team has also interviewed Sida/ SDC Phnom Penh, donor representatives, the OHCHR-Cambodia and representatives of consultancy and training institutions in Cambodia. A workshop with Forum Syd, Diakonia and Sida was held at the end of the study, in which important feedback to tentative findings was acquired.

The review has been carried out by Ms Pia Sarsarsson Cameron and Dr Peter Winai, Stockholm International Consulting Group, supported by a quality assurance team consisting of Dr Anders Mellbourn, also a member of the Stockholm Group and Professor Örjan Sjöberg, Stockholm School of Economics. In all, the study encompassed six weeks, of which two weeks were assigned to field work in Cambodia.

3. Three Areas of Achievement

Area I: Capacity to Deliver

The first area of achievement encompasses the internal enabling factors, the skills, resources and processes that are in place for the organisation.⁵

It can be stated that both Forum Syd and Diakonia now are established locally. A difficult working environment has been and is a challenge, including factors as a not too friendly attitude amongst governmental authorities. There have also been internal disturbances and difficulties regarding the continuity in management and a high staff turnover.

Both Forum Syd and Diakonia now have local offices in Phnom Penh. Both organisations have gradually built core capacity to deliver. Forum Syd has developed an office locally since some time, while Diakonia only recently has started to increase its capacity locally.

Both organisations have implemented LFA as a planning device, whilst monitoring and evaluation instruments are only partly applied. Baselines and indicators are not fully applied in the monitoring of partner programmes. Differences in staff capacity between Forum Syd and Diakonia are reflected in the extent to which systems and procedures are implemented; Forum Syd is ahead of Diakonia in this

⁴ A sample of partner organisations, representing different approaches and areas of support was selected for more detailed study, see further Appendix 2.

⁵ Internal capacity primarily refers to the area in the Octagon, dealing with all the internal resources that an organisation needs in order to do its work and to develop the organisation: Input of relevant skills, financial resources and systems to provide efficiency and predictability in core activities.

respect. Both organisations are aware of the need to strengthen monitoring and are referring to work in progress.

At their respective head offices, both Forum Syd and Diakonia have developed PME systems and procedures, based on RBM and LFA, documented in manuals. Locally, PME procedures are being adapted. The local PME process in Diakonia Country Office is currently undergoing a major oversight and adjustments. Forum Syd has locally during 2008 produced a Program handbook, guidelines for donor cooperation, worked on the PME system and improved monthly results report format.

Sida demands the two programmes to be better integrated, preferably merged into one programme. In response to this demand, work on harmonisation of results between Forum Syd and Diakonia has been initiated. Presently the organisations apply different result areas, which cause some difficulties for joint evaluation efforts and to follow the reporting of results. However, it must be taken into account that the result areas have been processed together with the partners and thus reflect a consensus regarding objectives, which has to be respected and managed with caution.

Forum Syd and Diakonia have both expressed in their programme proposal that mainstreaming is an approach to be applied.

Forum Syd result area number 5 is “Improved mainstreaming within partner organization & their projects”. Forum Syd sets out to mainstream three areas: Gender, youth and HIV/AIDS. The three mainstreaming areas follow the same strategies. “Internal mainstreaming” focuses on support to staff and modifying the organisations internal procedures, “external mainstreaming” focuses on training and capacity building, research/analysis of target group /designing mainstreaming programmes and adapting the new systems. Gender mainstreaming is not new in the Forum Syd collaboration in Cambodia; some partners are in the process of gender mainstreaming. The Gender Advisor (jointly employed by Forum Syd and Diakonia) has since beginning 2007 assisted partners in creating and applying gender policies in place. All partners have drafted a gender policy, and they also have focal points for the gender mainstreaming work in place.

The partners also point at more active participation by women in the organisations.

Generally, it is stated that there are improvements in society in this area, which not easily can be attributed to Forum Syd efforts, e.g. increased awareness of women’s rights in society, and the need to report domestic violence.

The weakest area of the three appears to be the involvement of youth in the programmes. According to figures provided by UNICEF, nearly 70% of the countries population are younger than 30 years. Even though youth represents the majority of the population, there is a lack of a defined and coherent youth policy and lack of a youth focal point within in the state administration in Cambodia. For example there is no defined national programme regarding generation of employment opportunities targeting specifically youth. According to Forum Syd many existing youth organisations demonstrate lack in leadership and are lacking defined direction of the organisation. During discussions with Forum Syd it was stated that efforts are being stepped up, specially regarding youth. It is probable that these efforts will be reflected in the application regarding the next phase of the programme starting 2010, as well as in the coming reporting to Sida. In general, the Resource Advisors may facilitate the wider acceptance and application of mainstreaming as an approach.

Diakonia has a result area number 3, the “Gender equity improved” (i.e. no result area related to mainstreaming specifically). Diakonia result area number 4 “Programme management” further entails the issue of gender and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming. In the Diakonia programme proposal 2007–2009

gender mainstreaming and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming are addressed. The work of the joint (FS/DK) Gender Advisor is referred to as well as the gender assessments that were undertaken in 2005–2006. The approach is to address mainstreaming both at institutional level and at project level. Diakonia has undertaken assessments of their partner organisations regarding gender mainstreaming at institutional level and at project level (see DK Annual Report 2007, Annex III). The Annual Report 2007 refers to the Gender Assessment carried out March 2007 and states that all partners have adopted gender policies, connected policy to a systematic action plan and ongoing implementation. However, the sample of actual partner reporting assessed in respect leaves room for improvement. This picture is further confirmed by Diakonia in their Annual Report 2007⁶, by stating in the Annual Report that in relation to gender mainstreaming; “Some partners are able to report on gender results as well, however the picture is mixed in this regard.”

The OD Advisor is further referred to as being instrumental in Diakonia’s work with mainstreaming HIV/AIDS (see Annual Report 2007), but the OD Advisor left her position in July 2007. The assessment is that Diakonia has to a greater extent than Forum Syd been stretched capacity wise locally in Phnom Penh, since the local office of Diakonia has possessed less human resources, and to some extent been managed from the Thailand office. The gap that the empty positions of the Advisors created appears to have hampered progress regarding Diakonia’s mainstreaming efforts.

Resource advisors (gender, advocacy, OD and legal) working for both Forum Syd and Diakonia have been recruited during the present program period, three of four during the end of 2008. As part of a new policy all Swedish advisors are being phased out and replaced with locally recruited staff. As touched upon above, the high turnover of key staff has negatively affected some aspects of the program, especially the capacity building and coaching of partners.

To conclude, both Forum Syd and Diakonia offices have gradually been consolidated – Diakonia still weaker as a logical consequence of weaker presence locally, but with good prospects provided the plans for reinforcement are realised.

Area II: Forum Syd and Diakonia Outcome at Partner Level

General

Forum Syd and Diakonia both work towards achieving outcome of their programmes through cooperation with their partners in three ways:

- a) Implementation of their programmes in and through partner organisations
- b) Capacity building of partner organisations – introduction of tools/methods and development

Mainstreaming in certain areas, specifically gender, youth and HIV/AIDS.

A distinction should be made (see also Method) between two types of outcome:

1. Outcome of Forum Syd and Diakonia programmes in the partner systems, (corresponding to the bullets above). These are outcomes related to the objectives and result areas of Forum Syd and Diakonia.
2. Outcome of the programmes carried out by the partner organisations, related to their objectives.

The focus here is on the achievements of Forum Syd and Diakonia.

Substantial outcomes have been achieved during the present programme period. This is the general picture given by partner reports and interviews with the partners. It does appear likely that both

⁶ Diakonia Annual Report 2007 (page 10).

organisations have achieved essential outcomes at partner level, related to their programmes. Significant contributions have been made in terms of capacity building, and also in strengthening of specific areas as advocacy, network building and judicial assistance.

Mainstreaming activities have started but with some difficulties to find its forms⁷.

In the Forum Syd and Diakonia Human Rights and Democracy Programme, several rights are included. Examples of specific rights, which are addressed through the Cambodian partner organisations projects/programmes are:

Fisheries Action Coalition Team – FACT works with the access to justice/rights of local fishermen, environmental rights and sustainable livelihood;

Cambodian Defenders Project – CDP works with access to justice/ providing legal representation to the poor and vulnerable, civil and criminal cases;

Khmer Kampuchea Krom Human Rights Organisation – KKKHRO – works with Minority Rights, human right training, monitoring investigation and advocacy;

Legal Support for Children and Women – LSCW, work with women and children's rights, abuse and violence against children and women, trafficking;

Cambodian League for the promotion and defence of human rights – LICADHO – works with civil, political, economic and social rights. E.g. freedom of expression, prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment.

Forum Syd outcome at partner level

It is likely that Forum Syd has achieved essential outcomes at partner level, related to its programme during the programme period. Interviews carried out with partners and documents analysed support that picture. However, the statement has to be accompanied by a number of reservations.

Forum Syd has stated *six result areas* in its programme proposal for 2007–2009:

1. Strengthened participation of marginalized youth, women, men and minorities in decision-making processes in communities.
2. Free and secured advocacy for human rights and rights to access natural resources.
3. Effective, professional and ethical functioning of law enforcement and judiciary.
4. Strong and effective cooperation and networking among communities, CBOs, NGOs at local and national levels.
5. Strong, democratic, participatory partners capable to effectively and ethically manage their organization and projects.
6. Improved mainstreaming within partner organization & their projects.

The first four areas correspond to the three ways in which Forum Syd and Diakonia act, i.e. A (supporting the implementation of partners programmes) the fifth area to B (capacity building) and the sixth area to C (mainstreaming).

For all result areas, strategies, activities, indicators and means of verification are defined. However, as demonstrated below the actual reporting is in some respect lacking as regards the use/application of indicators.

⁷ See further under Result Area 6 and 3 respectively below.

Mapping of baselines of partners were done in 2006. The Forum Syd Annual Report 2007, page 36, states further that “Several of Forum Syd partners have further developed baseline studies as starting points for activities in their target areas and sectors and as comparative basis for impact. Among those that have existing baselines are CEPA, FACT, Star Kampuchea and ICSO.” Forum Syd have been working, and intends to continue to work with its partner organisations as a capacity building activity so that all partners have baselines in place. Part of this work is said to be undertaken within the further development and implementation of PME system during 2008. The fairly recent procedure of Quarterly Review Meetings regarding the whole Programme, and the plan to recruit a Program Officer specialized in PME and RMB may reinforce assessment and follow-up in this respect.

As regards baseline information in relation to capacity building of the Cambodian partner organisations, the Octagon process is said to provide significant baseline information on strengths and weaknesses of partners management systems, service delivery systems, capacity and relationships.

However, in the assessed sample of partner reporting a general feature is that indicators have not been applied in the reporting from the partners to Forum Syd. A challenge appears to be to continue to convey a full understanding and application of PME systems so that measurements of results are possible. Sufficient level of information retrieval and integration of such an approach and method into the partner processes is necessary to feed into Forum Syd’s reporting.

Result Areas 1–4

To communicate main characteristics in the reporting of achieved results, the following picture protrudes:

The interviews with and reports of the partner organisations give records of achievements in all of the four areas, where it is highly probable that Forum Syd support has contributed. Accounts are given in the categories applied by Forum Syd, but distinctions between the categories are often not easily made – in practice achievements in terms of e.g. strengthened participation and free advocacy may overlap. Concrete measures to achieve both objectives are similar, i.e. the building and maintenance of networks etc.

STAR Kampuchea works with building and carrying out advocacy. Concretely technical support is given for advocacy networks at province level, encompassing issues of forestry, agriculture and fishery. Networks are built with communities, not with individuals.⁸ Among activities are radio talk shows on labour issues, organisation of Labour Forum in cooperation with trade unions and federations, and Public Dialogue Forums in order to lobby the rights to natural resources for poor communities. Forum Syd has given support to the organisation since long and is one of the bigger donors.

FACT works with the access to human rights, with emphasis on the capacity of fishermen and NGOs/CBOs promoting the rights of local fishermen. The organisation concentrates on engaging the local community. Achievements are made in advocacy training, network building, organisation of communal meetings and provincial NGO networks.⁹ The situation regarding rights has according to FACT been somewhat improved in fishery, due to its activities, but the conflict with strong interests of hydropower and fishery industry remain.

COMFREL concentrates on monitoring elections, but also on follow up between elections. According to the organisation, the support from Forum Syd has been instrumental in promoting democracy.

Generally, result reporting comes close to outcomes, but reported results are expressed in terms of meetings arranged, advocacy training carried out etc. Crucial of course is whether networks are actually maintained and advocacy is actually contributing to improvements in human rights.

⁸ STAR Kampuchea Annual Programme Report 2007

⁹ FACT Annual Report to Forum Syd 2007

Examples of registered outcomes and possible impact with reinforcing and counteracting factors are

- Result Area 1 Outcomes: More people have become aware of their rights; awareness-raising activities are facilitated. Possible impact: Rights violations are brought to the attention of government authorities and addressed. Government authorities may take their responsibility as duty bearers, or possibly actively delay improvements if the authority is threatened.
- Result Area 2 Outcomes: Community dialogues attended by local authorities countervail through attention to adverse effects of development projects. Possible impact is adjustment of project design to encompass rights; obstructing factors are interests in natural resources by corrupt actors.
- Result Area 3 Outcomes: Information on laws and legal support provided by volunteers. Possible impact: Policy reform, improved legal support for right holders; adverse factors may be shifting over of responsibilities from governmental actors to NGOs.
- Result Area 4 Outcomes: Formation of coalitions, networks and case referral system as basis for cooperation between communities and CBOs. Possible impact is more effective cooperation and networking, boosting reform work both at local and national level. Possible counteracting forces are stakeholders acting on openly available information to hamper reforms.

Result Area 5

All of the selected/sample organisations emphasise the role of Forum Syd in capacity building and strengthening.

Examples of registered outcomes and possible impact with reinforcing and counteracting factors are

- Outcome in terms of strengthened capacity of partner organisations will increase effectiveness to fulfil mission and objectives, most likely contributing to impact in terms of democratisation and human rights. A disturbing factor is the lack of attention to internal democracy.

Result Area 6

Reports by the partner organisations indicate that Forum Syd has played and plays an important role in increasing awareness of HIV/AIDS issues and adoption of policies. The Gender Advisor (jointly employed by Forum Syd and Diakonia) has since beginning 2007 assisted partners in creating and applying gender policies in place. All partners have drafted a gender policy, and they also have focal points for the gender mainstreaming work in place.

The partners also point at more active participation by women in the organisations.

Generally, it is stated that there are improvements in society in this area, which not easily can be attributed to Forum Syd efforts, e.g. increased awareness of women's rights in society, and the need to report domestic violence.

The weakest area of the three appears to be the involvement of youth in the programmes.

Examples of registered outcomes and possible impact with reinforcing and counteracting factors:

- It can be noted that no indicators or means of verification are defined for this result area. Thus there are no means of measuring results in this area in more than a very subjective way. There also appears to be some ambiguity as to the meaning of mainstreaming in practice, and confusion between mainstreaming in the organisation, amongst target groups and society as a whole.

Diakonia outcome at partner level

Diakonia has chosen a cooperation strategy different from Forum Syd, due to its until presently more limited representation locally. Some of the organisations are described as well established and consolidated, with administrative resources of their own, thus needing less backstopping from Diakonia. One important function for Diakonia could be to work more concretely and focused with improvements regarding the democratic structure and functions of their partner organisations. It appears obvious that influence coming from outside the Cambodian organisations is needed as a catalyst (see further discussion in section “Difficulties in implementation of the Programme” page 19 below).

Generally interviews and reports indicate that Diakonia has achieved results at partner level and contributed to partner outcomes. As in the case of Forum Syd, that statement has to be qualified.

The *four result areas* that Diakonia applies in its programme proposal of 2007–2009 are the following:

1. Awareness and respect for human rights increased.
2. Actors working for democracy, including civil society strengthened.
3. Gender equity improved.
4. Programme management improved.

The fourth area refers to capacity building, corresponding to Forum Syd’ area 5. Area 3 corresponds to Forum Syd’s area 6, Mainstreaming.

The fact that the partner reports to Diakonia are not structured along the Diakonia result areas makes the assessment of Diakonia’s contribution more difficult.

Result Areas 1 and 2

When it comes to human rights cases both LICADHO and ADHOC report an increased number of cases handled. Specifically, ADHOC can show that records of complaints regarding HR violations forwarded to courts have been increased in target areas. Also ADHOC advocacy activities on national level, related to HR appear to have resulted in adoption of criminal and civil procedures codes.¹⁰ ADHOC representatives claim that Diakonia input has been important for its results; however direct relationships are not easily traceable.

As ADHOC, LICADHO is a consolidated since more than a decade. Apart from reported results in terms of advocacy on key issues and support in cases of domestic violence, achievements are reported in the development of methods for human rights data collection, management and analysis.¹¹ LICADHO attributes these achievements partly to Diakonia, but finds it difficult to determine to which degree.¹²

Khmer Ahimsa reports its greatest achievements to have occurred within target communities, in which community members have acquired a strong awareness for maintaining their natural resources and livelihoods and traditions through non-violent communication. The Salabons (local meeting venues for religious and other activities) are claimed to have become a sustainable structure for community change, advocacy, civil society self-organization and development. Indicators supporting these statements are largely activity and output based, however.¹³

¹⁰ ADHOC Annual Narrative Report 2007 and Diakonia Annual report 2007

¹¹ 2007 LICADHO Annual Activity Report for funding partners.

¹² Interview with the Director of LICADHO

¹³ Khmer Ahimsa’s annual report 2007.

NGO Forum reports that stakeholders show high satisfaction when it comes to influencing government and donor policy and practices, as well as influencing the National Budget so that it benefits poor and vulnerable groups. NGO Forum has for instance had a key role as organizer of stakeholder meetings to bring together authorities from Cambodia and Vietnam, in which grassroots people could speak directly to key officials on a high level, foreign hydropower consultants and NGO representatives.¹⁴

Examples of registered outcomes and possible impact with reinforcing and counteracting factors are

- Result Area 1 Outcomes: Instruments for monitoring right concerns improved and advocacy networks reinforced. Possible impact on respect for HR and Government reform work. General counteracting factors are bureaucratic inertia and dynamic conservatism.
- Result Area 2 Outcomes: Networks established for actors working for democracy strengthened. Possible impact, as Result Area 1, on respect for HR and Government reform work. General counteracting factors are bureaucratic inertia and dynamic conservatism.

Result Area 3

ADHOC observes that local authorities have more respect for women and children rights and has a less hostile attitude to Human Rights organisations. Key achievements reported are better knowledge of women's rights through training, but also an increase in support to and intervention regarding reported cases of violence against women and children.

LICADHO works specifically for women's rights through monitoring and investigating cases of violation against women, education, advocating, training sessions etc. Specifically it represents victims of gender-based violence through its HR legal project.¹⁵

NGO Forum reports progress in its Gender project, pointing at numerous meeting and study tour activities, but also at achievements in terms of comments from the project incorporated into the final version of the National Strategic Development Plan.¹⁶

Examples of registered outcomes and possible impact with reinforcing and counteracting factors

- Result Area 3 Outcomes: Better knowledge of women's rights, better support in violence reporting. Possible impacts are improvements in report routines of local authorities and police, and follow up in terms of monitoring of women's rights and abuses. Possible contra effective factors are "free-riding" behaviour of local authorities, shoving responsibility over to CBOs and NGOs.

Result area 4

Octagon workshops have been carried out with most of the partners, with some of them twice. The results of the workshops indicate interesting perceptions on internal democracy in the partner organizations. For those partners who had the Octagon a second time, the picture is mixed with some partners reports on improvements in regard to the action plan developed while others have stagnated or have even experienced a negative trend. In earlier partner capacity measurements, ADHOC, LICADHO and NGO Forum all score low results on some of the Internal democracy indicators, e.g. independency of board from operative staff. Also, they are rated to be weak in terms of influence from target groups over the projects.

Examples of registered outcomes and possible impact with reinforcing and counteracting factors are

- Result Area 4 Outcomes: As with FS, registered outcome in terms of strengthened capacity of partner organisations will increase effectiveness to fulfil mission and objectives, most likely contribut-

¹⁴ NGO Forum Annual Progress Report Jan–Dec 2007 and Diakonia Annual report 2007.

¹⁵ LICADHO Annual Report.

¹⁶ NGO Forum Annual Report.

ing to impact in terms of democratisation and human rights. A disturbing factor is the lack of attention to internal democracy.

Problems/difficulties in evaluating outcome

Organisational culture and nature – what type of entity is the national Cambodian NGO and what constraints might that bring?

Several factors are important when attempting to evaluate outcome. Some factors are highlighted below. An overall factor deemed to influence implementation and result of the programme is the actual nature of the national Cambodian NGO¹⁷.

When assessing outcome of the Forum Syd and Diakonia program “Democracy and Human Rights in Cambodia”, efforts have been made to assess in particular Forum Syd’s and Diakonia’s ability to work towards the result areas regarding management/support to partners and partner capacity to work among communities, CBOs and NGOs at local and national levels. The level of participatory approaches applied and the general level of democratic culture and systems in selected partner cooperation have been assessed. An overall conclusion is that the deficiencies in democratic structures and functions within the Cambodian NGOs working with human rights and democracy are considered to contribute to non-desired consequences in respect of the supported programmes/projects. In fact, these deficiencies are assessed to constitute a genuine and serious development obstacle.

Outcome of Forum Syd and Diakonia efforts in partner system vs. outcome of partner organisation activities

Even though achievements are interrelated, in accordance with the requirements of this assignment, the focus here is on the former, i.e. achievements of Forum Syd and Diakonia. Thus, achievements in the partner organisations and their work are related to the objectives (and result areas) of the two organisations.

It should further be noted that FS/D programme objectives and result areas do not correspond to formulations in the FS/D partner programmes. Although the Forum Syd (but not Diakonia) partners report results corresponding to Forum Syd’s result areas, not coherently linked objectives of FS/D on one hand and partners on the other complicates follow-up and assessment of contribution to objectives.

Attribution of results to Forum Syd and Diakonia outcome

Even though attribution in terms of an evaluation exercise seldom may be proved per se, the overall environment in which the programme is implemented is of interest. When assessing the *probability of contribution* to outcome/impact – possible contributing or distracting factors – should be taken into consideration.

In order to assess whether support channelled through Forum Syd and Diakonia to their Cambodian partner organisation may be contributing to the overall objectives, the broader picture in which the local partner operates – including means of finance through various donors – is of relevance. The influence of other donor requirements could *contribute to or distract*, from the focus and priorities connected to the Swedish funding. Generally speaking, the Cambodian NGOs working with human rights and democracy have a relatively high number of donors, compared to similar NGOs in other countries who receive Sida funding. Although both Forum Syd and Diakonia are grand contributors to many of the partners, these receive support also from other donors (on average 5–9 international financiers). Most of the donors are international NGOs and international organisations (for example Oxfam, IOGT, McKnight Foundation, ILO, and UNFPA). More donors with different modes and conditions of operation will presumably cause difficulties in both steering and follow-up. Generally, that implies difficulties of attributing results to the two organisations where other organisations are contributing.

¹⁷ See further developed below, page 12 “Difficulties, challenges in implementing the programme”.

Availability of relevant indicators – and application of indicators

Result indicators are listed by both Forum Syd and Diakonia in their respective programmes, but are applied only partly in the partner reports (by partners to Diakonia not at all).

Although the partners (FS/DK – Cambodian NGO) have formulated their programme objectives together in dialogue, and expressed them in measurable terms, i.e. with indicators, it is the partners that now implement the programmes. The partners normally implement *their own programmes*, as defined by their own organisation. In the best of cases they may report back to the “donor” partner according to that organisation’s result framework. This principle is adhered to in the case of Forum Syd, less so in the case of Diakonia¹⁸. Typically, the indicators defined by the donor organisation will not be applied, due to confusion regarding application and reporting. This has been observed by Forum Syd and Diakonia, who intend to work through the issue of common, harmonised objectives and indicators.

The effect of this “mismatch” in reporting will typically be greater difficulties in reporting outcome. To a large extent this is a general and even “eternal” problem, which cannot be solved fully. In other words, it may be necessary to accept that results in the donor partner’s terms have to be reported “by proxy”. The reporting of the Forum Syd partners is made along these lines.

Scope of time

The programmes as they are now designed, have been working during a limited scope of time – since start of 2007 – causing difficulties to assess outcome in relation to objectives set in the programmes. However, most if not all of the partners report high activity levels and outputs in terms of attendance in meetings, training activities, reporting and policy documents etc. Although these are measures at output level they still give some indication as to the probability of forthcoming results.

Gap between Forum Syd/Diakonia objectives and partner implementation

When evaluating outcome and impact an assessment of Forum Syd/Diakonia objectives has been made. These objectives (FS/DK) have been assessed in relation to the Cambodian partner organisations objectives as expressed in their projects. The link between the levels of objectives has been analysed and an assessment of whether they are inclusive or not has been made. The conclusion is that the objectives of Forum Syd and Diakonia are not always fully corresponding, which may not necessarily be a problem but could contribute to complications regarding follow-up, which, according to statements in interviews with FS and DK will be attended to. This “gap” in the formulation of objectives and results between Forum Syd/Diakonia and their partner projects, was a concern expressed by Sida. In response to this concern, the following should be stated;

Forum Syd and Diakonia are working with and through local partner organisations. None of the two organisations work directly towards civil society or society as a whole; in other words they do not implement their own programmes parallel to their partners. Neither of the two organisations has expressed any will or ambition to work in that way. This fact can be elaborated on further:

Firstly, both organizations clearly have the policy to work with and through partners. The idea of local ownership is central; furthermore it is clearly supported by central statements of the Paris Agenda.

Secondly, the strategy of working through others is based on the idea that this is more effective and efficient: The local partners understand the working environment, can move quicker in the local context and can approach grassroots more easily etc.

Thirdly, this strategy implies that capacity will be built locally, in the partner organisation.

¹⁸ Based on sample study of Forum Syd and Diakonia partners.

Fourthly, the very meaning of “implementing agency” may be elaborated on. Actual projects and programmes may be carried out by the local NGO’s, but with the assistance of Forum Syd or Diakonia in the operations, to a greater or lesser degree. Thus the Swedish partners may be involved in the implementation of programmes, but the partners are responsible “in-principle”. However, the greater extent to which the “donor” is involved in implementation, the greater the will be the difficulties of distinctions between responsibilities of the two partners respectively. Also, capacity building will not be taking place where the “donor” contributes on the side.

Finally, and not least important, the necessary consequences in terms of difficulties in deducing causal relationships have to be accepted, with two or more partners involved.

Probing the idea of working directly, obvious advantages would be opportunity of more direct action, monitoring and control. There would be no transaction costs in terms of negotiations and agreements with partners. Flexibility would be higher, allowing for quicker adaption and action in response to new circumstances. Furthermore, it would not be necessary to build capacity in partner organisations (provided that the partner did not have adequate capacity). On the other hand, it would be necessary to compensate for lack of local context knowledge and networks, i.e. build up own competence in this respect.

Summary of outcomes

With a number of reservations as given above, the most protruding outcome so far is that Forum Syd and – with reservations regarding presence – Diakonia have succeeded well in achieving a strengthened local ownership. The partners have been strengthened, mainly in terms of capacity. These results, however, have been achieved during a number of years and cannot be attributed to the last two-year period only. Notwithstanding, the partners claim the support from Forum Syd and Diakonia to have been instrumental in respect of capacity building.

Difficulties and challenges in implementing the programme(s)

NGO context – professional NGOs without genuine constituency? Implications regarding effectiveness, sustainability

In the assessment of outcome and impact, the following challenges during the implementation phase have been noted by the evaluators. Further, it should be stressed that these challenges are considered to constitute development constraints, decreasing possibilities of contribution to outcome and impact.

At programme implementation level, there are uncertainties as to changes in attitude towards the NGO community, and specifically a new NGO law and its implications.

The background and history of the NGOs sector in Cambodia, particularly the human rights and democracy NGOs deserves to be highlighted. After the Peace Agreement 1991 in the beginning many of the NGOs established could generally be described as Donor Organised NGOs (“DONGOs”). Over time, NGOs in Cambodia working with democracy and human rights are sometimes referred to as Business Organised NGOs (“BONGOs”). NGOs supported by Forum Syd and Diakonia, which are active today in Cambodia within the area of democracy and human right, are typically Phnom Penh based, and not (individual) membership based organisations. Overall it may be stated that a large number of these NGOs are generally lacking as regards internal democracy¹⁹. This fact still represents a serious obstacle to progress of democracy and human rights.

¹⁹ The incumbent study undertaken during this Sida Midterm Review of the selected Cambodian organisations, available material and interviews with partner organisations, and interviews with actors/donors within civil society, as well as other publications supports this assessment. See further for example Diakonias assessment of their co-operating partner organisations as regards level of internal democracy (Cambodian partners capacity and definitions).

Certain components are widely accepted as essential for the health and effectiveness of organisations working with human rights and democracy²⁰. Three components are as follows;

1. Internal democracy

There are various types of organisational styles of governance ranging from “autocratic” to “democratic”. Internal rules and procedures, decentralized functions, participation in policy and decision making are aspects of interest when assessing an organisation. Cambodian NGOs are often characterised as closer to autocratic than democratic (see further below).

2. Accountability

A human rights organisation should further be viewed accountable when it is answerable for its actions to the communities that it is serving, the national and international communities that they may receive information from, and to its funders. Due to a combination of internal and external conditions, many of the organisations have difficulties in reaching these requirements.

3. Effective leadership

In a Cambodian NGO, leadership is often exercised solely by the Executive Director. Not all organisations have a Board of Directors. Delegated structures with delegated authority and delegated responsibility should be strived towards – not relying on talents and skills of one person alone.

4. Teamwork

If internal democracy, accountability and effective leadership are in place, an enabling environment of collaboration and teamwork is present.

Steps towards development of internal democratic structures and functions have been taken, but progress is assessed to be on the slow side. The Sida SAT team recommended for example in 2003 that Sida, Forum Syd and Diakonia should pay more attention to partners internal democratic structures. It is understood that this has been a complicated task and different approaches have been used by Forum Syd and Diakonia. However, when assessing the sample partner organisations of Forum Syd and Diakonia, and the work so far of Forum Syd and Diakonia, a need to step-up efforts and room for improvements is called for. The lacking democratic structures and functions within the Cambodian NGOs working with human rights and democracy, is considered to contribute to non-desired consequences in respect of the supported programmes/projects. It is assessed to constitute a genuine development obstacle, creating barriers regarding effectiveness, learning and sustainability. Hence, there are concerns not only in relation to the organisation’s legitimacy or how representative an NGOs is in relation to beneficiaries/target groups, but also in relation to *how effectively* such an organisation can contribute to the democratisation of society and to change for the individual citizen. Often when vague definitions of beneficiaries are present, the objectives and the linking of activities to achieve results, contain uncertainties/unclearities, making the follow-up of results difficult. Other, own interests of the NGOs, e.g. more short-term considerations, will determine content and direction of operations.

A common trait is that the organisations are hierarchical in structure, often with one strong leader where concentration of decision-making powers etc, are vested. In some cases high capacity and competence is present at the top echelons, and capacity lacking at lower levels. In the area of capacity

²⁰ From a functional perspective, organisational effectiveness coincides with free information flow and shared responsibility. This is common knowledge in organisation theory, built on numerous studies, and articulated e.g. in 1956 by Burns & Stalker in the concepts of “organic and mechanistic structures”. From a normative perspective, the Octagon expresses requirements of a good NGO in eight dimensions. Several of these dimensions touch on the components above, in particular “Structure”: a) Application of a clear division of duties and responsibilities and b) Application of democratic rules; The dimension “Relations” deals with legitimacy.

building, tools introduced by Forum Syd and Diakonia, e.g. the Octagon, provide approaches for organisational diagnosis, but there are difficulties to apply findings, follow-up and developments in the organisations, possibly due to lack of capacity, and perhaps lack of attention and priority by management of the organisation.

Forum Syd and Diakonia have chosen to cooperate with organisations of different sizes and background. Some of the organisations are bigger, some are coalitions and networks. Some organisations state that they seek opportunities for dialogue with government, others are more inclined towards a more confrontational approach and method in their activities. Why exactly Forum Syd and Diakonia, have their respective partner organisations in their portfolio, is not completely logical or easily explained with reference to Forum Syd and Diakonia policies and strategies etc. More practical reasons appear to have directed the choice of cooperating partners (such as for example Diakonia's so far, not so strong local representation Phnom Penh).

In relation to NGOs working with human rights and democracy in Cambodia and how their activities are generally viewed by the Cambodian government, it is further of importance to note if the NGOs themselves are adhering to principles of good governance, specifically of accountability and transparency. Democratic governance supports consultation and broad participation in policy and decision-making. These principles should not be viewed as contradicting or hindering some of the functions that a human rights NGO is fulfilling, for example being a watchdog and monitoring the state as a duty bearer in relation to rights. Credibility will further determine the effectiveness of a human rights organisation. For example, if those outside the organisation do not perceive it as credible, the organisation's ability to obtain information, mobilise support etc will be weakened.

The pace of development towards more democratic, accountable – and more effective – organisations must hence be deemed as slow. Various factors, some touched upon above, contribute to the lack of development in this respect, and donors may consider providing external incentives to stimulate progress. Demands on Cambodian NGOs in regards to democratic structures and functions could for example be phrased as pre-requisites for funding by donors. To present requirements regarding a certain level of good governance in an organisation requesting financial support, should not be viewed to be more controversial than demanding certain legal status to be eligible for funding. A minimum level of requirements (and demands on development over a time period) could be agreed between international donors and integrated in the prerequisites for all types of finance regarding development cooperation (project/programme support, core support etc).

A donor has in most cases defined actual entry points and possibilities of influence, both regarding the stage when assessing an application of finance, before embarking on a project/programme, and during the programme period through the project design (Steering Committees etc), formulation of reporting requirements, level of details required etc, in project or programme support. Hence the opportunities for influence and control are in general higher in project/programme support, than in not earmarked core support to organisations. In other words, project support generally implies opportunities to higher degree of specification as to targets set, monitored and met, as opposed to non-earmarked core support.

Reflecting on the above, in relation to considerations of various forms of core support to Cambodian NGOs, the actual organisation's level of democratic governance structure and functions, should determine the level of how "hands-off" partnerships/cooperation and financing forms can be. This is a consideration for Sida, as well as for Forum Syd and Diakonia.

The general notion that core support is conducive towards ownership should only be supported if the necessary preconditions/requirement enabling democratic organisations and participation is present.

Networking – on the level and nature of cooperation between actors.

The terms “network” and “coalition” are often used interchangeably, but can have different meanings. A network could be used emphasising the exchange of information and/or services, and a coalition is more often an actual alliance of organisations for joint action.

Several of the NGOs that receive support channelled through Forum Syd and Diakonia have similarities in their mandate. In some of the Cambodian partner organisations networking is taking place on the projects/programme level of the Cambodian NGO (see above in section Area 2 Outcome at Partner Level).

Below some comments are made concerning another level of networking, namely regarding networking between the Phnom Penh based Cambodian NGOs supported through Forum Syd and Diakonia.

Overall it may be concluded that networking appears to be a method and approach, which is less developed. Regarding advocacy, the FS/DK partners have fairly recently formed a network where all FS/DK partners are welcome to join; the Community Advocacy Network-CAN. The network has developed through the joint FS/DK partner training series regarding advocacy. The objectives of the CAN network is;

- To strengthen the advocacy capacity of CAN’s members
- To exchange knowledge and experience between network members
- To raise awareness of advocacy among stakeholders and communities

The network meets once every month and has three working groups, namely a group for compiling advocacy documents, a group for training workshops, and finally a group for information issues.

Apart from this network, no other formal network between the Cambodian NGOs that receive support through Forum Syd and Diakonia regarding human rights and democracy has been able to confirm. However, it must be noted that some of the NGOs supported through FS/DK are actual coalitions (i.e. alliance of organisation for joint action) For example, the NGO Forum is a membership organisation, which consists of 83 local organisation and 25 international organisations.

Further, the Advocacy Resource Advisor is working on and is aiming to develop tools for participatory approaches for developing community advocacy.

The growth and development of network and coalitions should preferably be organic and based on interest from the parties involved. However, in some contexts it can be motivated to inform of the advantages and values of networking, and even to provide incentives coming from outside of the organisations.

The reasons to build coalitions/network that are commonly referred to in literature and not considered controversial are;

- 1) Speaking with a stronger voice/increasing pressure; United groups that agree on problem formulation and needed solutions, increases visibility and credibility (vis-à-vis government, public or other) of the issue.
- 2) Enabling smaller groups (capacity, reach etc).
- 3) Increasing pools of information and contacts.
- 4) Avoiding duplication of efforts.
- 5) Coordinating quick response to crisis. A network of likeminded is already in place and provides mechanisms for response.

- 6) Geographic spread. A network composed of groups from different parts of the country, province, etc will cover more territory and involve a larger constituency
- 7) Creating collective security; for example when launching a campaign.
- 8) If coalition, funding through a central channel is made possible.

International donors like Sida could, separately, but preferably in a coordinated effort with other likeminded donors, decide to stimulate the development of coalitions through constructing financing mechanisms eligible only for joint efforts from coalitions of NGOs. Since in the Cambodian context there already are a number of NGOs of coalition nature, closer assessment of these NGOs and following discussion with likeminded donors, could be pursued. The concern from the donor side would be to enhance impact and effectiveness.

Modalities and channels for Swedish support

From a Sida perspective, the rationale for utilising intermediary parties (one or several) in the support to NGOs in Cambodia, is built on a number of values:

- Knowledge of political and societal context in general,
- Knowledge of practical context,
- Access to government –channels to important persons and institutions in Government,
- Access to civil society; knowledge of the NGOs and their multi-organisational networks,
- Already built trust in NGO community and with cooperating NGOs/partners
- Capacity to work with the NGO community and multi-organisational context, to build or facilitate networks, combine resources, channel initiatives etc.
- Capacity to run NGO support: to plan, monitor, give continuous support; e.g. technical support, through resource advisors,
- Capacity to assess outcome and impact of support in civil society,
- Capacity to work as mediator and facilitator in partner organisation.

Forum Syd has built a functioning office and administration in Cambodia, during a span of years. It is a name in the NGO community – and is even well known by a number of NGOs. It has working knowledge with several organisations and it must be assumed that there is good knowledge amongst the staff of the political and practical working context. Access to civil society is generally good, but access to government at central level is all but non-existent. Forum Syd has suffered from some staff turnover recently. Diakonia is now building capacity of its own.

The basic capacity to monitor and evaluate is there, still with some shortcomings, (See Achievement area I) but improvements are being made.

The advantages of having established and functioning intermediaries with existing plans for improvement have to be put in relation to the costs. In other words, the costs for running the intermediaries must be worth the benefits. Apparently this has been found to be the case up till present. However, a decision ahead cannot be based on sunk costs. Notwithstanding, the investments in establishment, function and planning capacity represent a value that has to be appreciated as against what has been achieved. Resources for listening close to grass-root level, for close follow-up, to join the partners at work and invested pre-understanding are not resources that are usually available at the embassies, or will be in the near future. By working through intermediaries, Sida will by consequence distance itself

from the actual implementation and they have less of a relationship with the Cambodian Partners. However, there are various levels of engagement that one might take on even if one has the role of financier, both in relation to the intermediary and in relation to the local partner organisation.

Alternative channels

As of today, all Swedish support to democracy and human rights is channelled through other intermediaries. The Swedish Embassy does not give any support directly (from the Swedish Embassy/Sida or from Sida/HQ).

The alternative to give support directly to a Cambodian NGO has to be considered very carefully. Direct support requires that the monitoring which is now carried out by the intermediaries be substituted by matching mechanisms at Sida which are currently not assessed to be in place. Direct support to most of the assessed NGOs is therefore not considered an option by the consultants, due to several risk factors, whereof risk for corruption and the lack of any possible risk management given the context, is one. Further, the actual set up and functioning of the local NGOs as described above (i.e. deficits in democratic structures and functions) is further considered to be of concern. Careful assessment of the NGO before contemplating discussions with the NGOs on direct support, close and regular monitoring by the Embassy and strict terms and conditions regarding the finance conditions should be in place. Local presence and capacity to follow up is still considered a pre-requisite of finance.

Alternatives to the present construction of channelling the funds to human rights and democracy through Swedish NGOs could be:

- After due, careful assessment and selection of one or two local organisations, a test model of direct support from the Embassy may be contemplated considering above. Possibly a genuine NGO coalition and one of the bigger, less confrontational NGOs could be examined and assessed regarding suitability for direct support from the Embassy.
- A professional management institute which in turn would administer financial support to Cambodian NGOs, which would require an open competitive international tendering procedure. Such an alternative puts great demands on the procuring entity. The procurement process, the drafting of the precise relevant ToR, the contracts terms and conditions, evaluation criteria, knowledge of market of potential suppliers of the services to facilitate evaluation of tenders for example, is not a choice that one embarks upon lightly. The question monitoring and follow-up results, the level of involvement from the financier side (requirements of no-objection during implementation for example) may further be complicated. In addition, the question is what values and competences compared with the present set-up will be lost in the selected management institute, and what role it would demand of Sida during implementation will have to be analysed.
- Channelling support *via other donors*, which would require agreements as to M/E procedures, finance modalities. A variation of models exist from other development co-operations (Dfid channels money for example to Cambodia Development Resource Institute through Sida, and also in other countries as in the Water Sector in Kenya) Likeminded other donors, preferably who would take the lead initially could be identified. Common overall interest's needs to be established and mechanisms developed. A broader Sida approach regarding finance should then be considered i.e. not only thinking support to civil society through civil society NGOs in Cambodia, but support to human rights and democracy through other sectors, for example through a broader environmental /natural resources sector or culture/media sector. Cooperation with other donors could further be a step for Sweden in developing cooperation's with the Cambodian government.
- Channelling support together *with other donors* with the intent to *pool funds and budget* through a Joint Financing Agreement. An interest for harmonisation and alignment must be present for what Sida deems to be a sufficient number of donors. Before entering into the elaboration of joint donor

models of financing agreements, it is important to assess/estimate the added value of joint financing over bilateral financing by individual donors. The goal should be to achieve reduced transaction costs for management and monitoring, enhanced possibilities of effectiveness and less risk for duplication of donor efforts for example. A step-by-step approach, developing extent of cooperation and volume in undertakings, is recommended. Such an approach could start by setting up a donor co-operation (declaration on joint financing requirements) which agrees on requirement associated with the financing; general principles, level of auditing, streamlines reporting, contacts with organisations with particular Cambodian partner organisations that the donors channels money through. Possible partners to discuss such a first step could be Danida, Ausaid. Please note that such a first step (donor cooperation light) does not require actual pooling of funds or budgets.

Variations of a joint financing mechanism (JFA, pooling of funds and budgets) could be used: Either for support to government in the co-operating country (support directly to government and parts of the government administration), or for direct support to a particular sector (not necessarily directly to/through government, but targeting a particular sector for example rule of law or environment, where several actors i.e. non governmental, may be recipients) by setting up a funding pool. This would be more of a long-term ambition, since the preparation of such a funding modality is a time consuming process. Such a process should contain three main phases of preparation;

1. *Information sharing.* All parties (donor + recipient) involved must communicate positions and programmes, reach an understanding regarding each other's positions and programmes, agree on institutions and forums to exchange information on a regular basis,
 2. *Strategic co-operation.* All parties must build consensus on policies and key interventions, using the established forums mentioned above to be established, agree on policies and interventions to be entered, agree on divisions of tasks,
 3. *Operational harmonisation.* Agreement on financial modalities, common intervention procedures and application of such procedures. Negotiation of a Joint Financing Agreement, entering into a Joint Financing Agreement (and the bilateral agreements). Joint implementation of the financing agreement.
- Considering the use of *other* Swedish NGOs than Forum Syd and Diakonia as channel for support to civil society. The question has been raised by Sida, if another Swedish NGO could be contemplated. There is no information available at this time that would support the notion that another Swedish NGO being a Sida Framework organisation would be more effective than the present ones. In response to Sida requests, Forum Syd and Diakonia have made and are making investments in monitoring and evaluation procedures, working relationships etc, which should be taken into careful consideration. In principle, an option could be to go through another INGO established in Cambodia such as Action Aid, PACT or similar. Pros and cons of utilizing a new organisation must be carefully assessed in each case, diagnosing capacity e.g. in terms of the Octagon.

Potential for harmonisation

Harmonisation of the support to the NGO partners could take place:

A. At Forum Syd/Diakonia level

- By choosing one of the organisations as “executing intermediary”
- By full co-ordination to a joint programme for the two organisations
- By securing that there are no overlaps in programmes and partner cooperation
- By choosing a common programme format

- By harmonising the result areas of the two organisations, i.e. applying the same result areas
- By applying a common format for monitoring and result reporting
- By sharing and offering joint resources, as is done now, with resource advisors

B. At donor (international)

- By channelling support/cooperation through a lead agency and taking the position as (more or less) sleeping partner
- By co-ordination of programme with likeminded donors
- By avoiding overlaps between donors in programmes and partner cooperation
- By applying a common format for monitoring and result reporting
- By sharing and offering joint resources

Please refer to Table 1.

Table 1: Potential for harmonisation of support to Cambodian NGO partners.

At FS/DK level	Possible pros	Possible cons
One org as “executing intermediary”	Sida has one channel, no coordination work	Possible loss of flexibility towards target groups
Joint programme	Better overview for Sida, decreased coordination work	Still two channels for Sida
No overlaps in programmes and partner cooperation	Increased effectiveness in implementation	No obvious disadvantages
Common programme format	Better overview and basis for monitoring	Possible initial costs for introduction
Applying the same result areas	Better overview and basis for monitoring	Need for FS/DK to agree with partners
Common format for monitoring and result reporting	Better overview and basis for monitoring	Possible initial costs for introduction
Joint resources, with resource advisors	Coordination benefits	Dependence on agreed procedures FS/DK
At donor level	Possible pros	Possible cons
Channelling support through lead agency, taking position as sleeping partner	Increased effectiveness in monitoring	Initial costs (agreement between agencies etc.)
Co-ordination of programme with likeminded donors	Increased effectiveness of programme, possibly better impact	Costs for coordination (Meetings, reviews etc.)
Avoiding overlaps between donors in programmes and partner cooperation	As above, but less restrictive/conditional	Costs for cooperation (meetings etc)
Common format for monitoring and result reporting	Better overview and basis for monitoring	Possible initial costs for introduction
By sharing and offering joint resources	Coordination benefits	Dependence on agreed procedures

Note that the different options are not necessarily exclusive alternatives. Joint resources could for instance be applied in combination with application of the same result areas, or not. Also note that the “pros and cons” above are indicative, there will probably be other advantages/ disadvantages to take into consideration in the actual situation.

Summary of achievements and constraints in programme implementation

Achievements and constraints in programme implementation also assessed from a rights-based approach:

As further developed above, looking at the Forum Syd and Diakonia cooperation with its partners as one programme, it is assessed that the programme is virtually on the right track. The programme has got a rights-based approach expressed in the programme proposal. Forum Syd and Diakonia point of departure and programme design rests on the principle of equal rights and value of all people. The partner organisations and their projects can broadly be described as working with contributions to the respect, protection and promotion of human rights. Several of the partner organisations use the rights bearer (individual level) for example in the cases regarding rights (for example land rights) against the duty bearer (the state) with reference to both national and international law. Forum Syd, through the CBO fund, attempt to empower community-based organisations, improve reach and hence come closer to the target groups. However, a consideration in this respect is still, as elaborated above²¹ the lacking democratic structure and function of the Cambodian NGO working with human rights and democracy.

How are long term sustainability addressed – by Sida and within programmes? Financial situation?

Long-term sustainability issues are not addressed in a systematic way. It is clear that the partner NGOs do not have financial sustainability in a strict sense. They are fully dependent on funds from their donors and will remain so for a long time. However, generally the Cambodian partners try not to be too dependent on one donor; normally they have a number of financing partners.²² As described above (see p15) in relation to difficulties in implementation of the programme, many of Cambodian NGOs working with human rights and democracy have still a lot of work to do to become democratic institutions and to develop their legitimacy through developing the interface and engagement with their constituencies. This shortcoming is deemed to negatively effect effectiveness of the Cambodian organisations. External assistance to the Cambodian organisations to achieve change towards a more democratic structure and function appears to still be needed. Crucial factors for the ability of an organisation to survive are the capacity to handle its financial dependence, and a realistic perception of what it can do within the framework of its resources. Some of the partners show a perhaps not realistic approach to their financial situation. This has been noted when partners express needs for “flexibility” of the donors to refill funds during the year.

Audit firms have not signalled any important concern or remarks.

Organisational sustainability implies that the organisation itself can retain its capacity, be in command and develop on its own. The partner organisations are fragile in this respect, although in varying degree. Some of the bigger, more consolidated organisations claim to have capacity to develop on their own. Although this may true in some cases, they remain vulnerable, due to their hierarchical and top-heavy competence structures, not building capacity at lower levels. The concept of structure of an NGO (as defined in the Octagon) also includes the application of democratic rules and the manifestation of these rules in the organisation’s constitution. This requirement is generally fulfilled in little degree.

The sustainability in terms of building and retaining capacity in a long-term perspective is thus uncertain. This will in turn reflect on the ability to produce results in the long run.

²¹ See section above on “NGO context – professional NGOs without genuine constituency? – implications regarding effectiveness, sustainability”.

²² When assessing their partners, Forum Syd and Diakonia take their financial dependence into consideration. The Octagon, which is applied in the assessment of the partner NGOs, expresses these considerations in the following way: “A highly developed capacity to handle financial dependence is accompanied by a determination to spread risks and to avoid one-sided dependence on one single financier.”

Results based perspective and follow up of partners

Forum Syd and Diakonia have based their cooperation with their Cambodian partners on LFA and defined activities and demand reporting in relation to respective result areas. In the Forum Syd and Diakonia financing agreements with Sida regarding the HRD Programme, there is a stipulation regarding result-based reporting obligations for FS and D. However, this obligation appears not in all cases to have been transferred to the agreements that Forum Syd and Diakonia have entered with their respective co-operating Cambodian NGO. This constitutes a problem, since Forum Syd and Diakonia are dependent on the Cambodian partner reporting to be able to assemble annual reports and reporting to Sida. Forum Syd and Diakonia should address this issue.

Are channels chosen for Swedish support effective?

There is room for improvement in the effectiveness of the presently used channels, mainly through further harmonisation of support, common result areas and similar M/E systems, specifically reporting format concentrating on outcomes. Conditional demands regarding progress on democratisation of the NGOs should be made by FS/D. Closer analysis of how “hands-off” approach Forum Syd and Diakonia can be in relation to the organisation that receives finance. This might lead to a fewer number of NGOs receiving support, which overall might lead to improved cooperation.

Co-ordinating support with other donors?

Forum Syd and Diakonia do not co-ordinate support with other donors systematically, but appear to be aware of the contributions by other donors to their partners.

Area III: Programme Achievements in Civil Society

Civil society

After the Paris agreement of 1991 opposition was virtually non-existent and civil society was only rudimentary. Political powers were in a few hands. The existence of NCOs was virtually the only way to create arenas for free debate.

Since the Paris agreement, the NGO movement has grown exponentially, encouraged and supported by the United Nations and international donors. Around 2000 organisations are now registered with the Ministry of Interior. Most of these are classified as service delivery organisations.

The role of the NGO community and civil society – often defined as equivalent – has been and is considered to be a countervailing power to government, but also largely a resource compensating for lack of capacity in government, specifically at local and provincial level.

It is sometimes claimed that, had it not been for the NGOs, Cambodia had been “another Burma”.

The contributions of Forum Syd and Diakonia to the building of civil society

Both Forum Syd and Diakonia have, through support to a number of organisations working for different aspects of democracy and human rights, contributed to the building of civil society.

Many other donors have engaged in the NGO community, making it difficult to attribute developments to the input from Forum Syd and Diakonia. However, it is plausible that the both organisations have contributed strategically, through the thrust on core support and capacity building. The support is carried out mainly along three lines:

- Through capacity building and strengthening of the partner organisation as such. A visible indicator of the presence of support is the application of the Octagon (although the results of diagnoses remain to be implemented in a number of cases);

- Through support in working with inter alia advocacy, law enforcement, network building, and strengthening of the voice of marginalized persons;
- Improved mainstreaming within partner organisations and their projects (mainly regarding gender, youth, HIV are still under development).

The fact that both Forum Syd and Diakonia are in high esteem by their partners, and known by international donors, further indicates that they are being listened to and that the support from both organisations is taken seriously.

The partners that the two organisations cooperate with constitute a mix of organisations of different sizes and a variety of missions. To some extent the mix reflects deliberate strategies of Forum Syd and Diakonia, respectively. However, due to capacity constraints locally, Diakonia have opted for supporting “bigger” NGOs to which Diakonia apply a “hands-off” approach. Important issues have been and are attended to by the partner organisations and their networks, as domestic violence, land grabbing and violation of rights due to the hunger of private investors for natural resources. Approaches have mainly been to support the handling of individual cases or advocating for rights at central or local level. Involvement with local authorities tends to become more common. Constructive engagement by the partners with central Government ministries or authorities is not evident.

Complicating factors remain

However, structural and functional conditions, hampering the development of a democratic society, remain. Transparency is all but non-existent. Corruption shows no tendency to decrease, rather is the interest for valuable natural resources a driving force to increased corruption. The Indonesian acronym “KKN”, which stands for corruption, collusion and nepotism, is highly relevant also in Cambodia.

Hierarchy is a trait not only in governmental organisations and corporations, but also in NGOs.

There is hope as to the development of a dialogue at local level, between CBOs and community councils. However, it is not often realistic for NGOs to reach Central Government for dialogue, although there are exceptions. The central level remains closed, due to not only lack of interest, but also lack of capacity below the top echelons.

Civil society context changes

As mentioned, the very strong powers – international business in combination with national interests – become stronger and the competition about natural resources is increasing. Land grabbing continues.

The decentralisation has just started, its pace and outcome difficult to assess. NGO networks and work at CBO level appear important in this process.

The founding of an NGO law has appeared again on the Government agenda and it is a general opinion that such a law will become reality soon. In the NGO community there are two or even three stances in relation to engaging in a dialogue about the content of the NGO law.

1. “Not engage”: The position here is that it is useless and even dangerous to take part in a dialogue. It is impossible to influence a Government, which is decided to increase its control of the NGOs. Involvement would imply cooptation.
2. “Engage afterwards”: This position appears common among service delivery NGOs, for which the law may not seem threatening. “Wait and see”, and approach Government if there are needs for adjustment of the law.
3. “Engage”: The NGO community must take the opportunity to any dialogue, considering that so much is at stake. This is a stance held by e.g. CCC – the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia and NGO Forum.

A complicating factor is the fact that there are obscurities around the present status of the law. Different draft versions of the law are in circulation. Worries concern

- a) The phrasing that the law regulates “the registration and functioning of local associations and non-governmental organisations”. It is feared that the CBOs, described as informal structures, making important contributions at community level and being significant in the decentralisation process, would be threatened if the demand for registration of local associations would be applied on them. The CBOs would probably not register, then work outside the law and possibly be wiped out.
- b) The restriction that local associations and NGOs shall not “conduct activities for any political interests”. The phrasing would allow for arbitrary application of the law by the authorities.
- c) The demand that all funds from donors should be channelled through Government, making its financial control over NGOs anything but total. This demand, however, does not appear in the latest available version of the draft law.

Trends, discussions on possible change of future support to civil society

Most international donors working in Cambodia today have been present in Cambodia since the mid 1990's. Assessment and discussion on results and achievement of what the support has contributed to is a natural part in each donor operation. Several policy documents applicable to international development cooperation further contribute to discussion of what has been achieved over the years.

Amongst interviewees representing both partner organisations, other donors and professional consultants in the field, views pointing at the need for new approaches have been expressed in different ways. The thoughts and ideas vary from a need to “re-think” to more active and also concrete new measures.

The need for new approaches is linked to questions relating to how support has so far been channelled and the nature of the average Cambodian NGO (i.e. non-membership based and Phnom Penh based). The fact that NGOs are not based on individual members is pointed at. Implications are that they are distanced from the grassroots, with lower degree of democratic legitimacy. Generally, there is a need for re-thinking about capacity building, what it implies and who is included. The need to increase reach, participation, and involvement of target groups/beneficiaries in order to enhance short-term, medium term effects appears to be the concern. Often when vague definitions of beneficiaries are present in programmes/projects, the objectives, and the linking of activities to achieve results contain uncertainties/unclearities, making the follow-up of results difficult. Simply put: To answer the question what the financing is “contributing to” becomes cumbersome, apart from in more general terms to assess that the financing has contributed to for example “raised awareness regarding human rights”.

A current choice in programme design made by the World Bank is for example to more actively work with support targeted more clearly to CBOs. The cooperation is still designed with components where a Phnom Penh based NGO is involved.

The need for new approaches is further relating to concerns regarding the interface between civil society and government. Especially regarding the sector human rights, democracy and legal reform, the relationship must be described as tense and non constructive. The choice by some NGOs to be strongly confrontational is viewed to contribute to the situation. However, it is a stalemate situation, beneficial to no one. Ways forward towards constructive dialogue are sought after. Lessons to be learned from actual dialogue with government regarding other sectors (education, land, health) could be used. DANIDA has for example devoted efforts on this matter (see for example the DANIDA Report, June 2006, regarding drafting a “Code of Conduct Framework for Royal Government of Cambodia- Civil Society cooperation”). USAID has further given the stalemate situation some thought when considering future support.

In the areas of HR and democratisation, several actors express concerns about slow progress. One of the interviewees²³ reminded about the building of civil society and NGOs in a context and situation different from now, where there has been a shift in violence from (the still present) physical violence to economic violence. Corruption should be acknowledged and fought at, not only in Government, but also in other pockets of society. A point risen is that advocacy networks could include other actors than NGOs. Also, more active measures should be taken to more actively include women in civil society work and network building.

Regarding the role of NGOs, some actors think that NGOs should be more active and visible in society. Activities should be stepped up. Typically, this view is connected with the different attitudes towards taking part in a dialogue about the NGO law, where there is a span in opinions ranging from none to active involvement²⁴.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

If the assumption is that Embassy Sweden in the near future intends to take a more active role in Cambodia, the main options are:

- To develop the Swedish representation and actions further on a diplomatic level
- To develop the Swedish support through the international development cooperation, through existing channels and new, through a variety of sectors and types of support.

The more active role should be developed step by step, looking realistically on possible short and longer-term opportunities.

Before considering future actions, the following conclusions must be taken into account:

1. Definitions of beneficiaries are vague and influence from target groups is still weak. This negatively affects both legitimacy and effectiveness. It will make follow-up of results difficult. Short-term considerations will dominate content and direction of operations.
2. progress in the development of internal democratic structures and functions is still slow. This also affects legitimacy and effectiveness negatively.²⁵

4.1 Short Term Perspective

To develop the preconditions for a more active role for the Swedish Embassy in Cambodia, will realistically take some time. The Embassy has to make available capacity and human resources to match the demands on such a role. Activities to be considered are building inventory of the total Embassy project/programme portfolio (not only support to human rights and democracy), an assessment of channels of cooperation with implementing partners (civil society and government or other) and attention to the necessary alignment with applicable Sida policies and systems. Steps are now taken by the Embassy in this direction to prepare decision making of its future role and function.

Gradually building for a more active role could also include more in-depth discussions between the

²³ UN OHCHR Representative.

²⁴ This span in views can be found both among NGOs and donors.

²⁵ Sida SAT team recommended e.g in 2003 that Sida, Forum Syd and Diakonia should pay more attention to partners' internal democratic structures. Please also refer to p.16, Difficulties and challenges in implementing the programme(s).

Embassy and other, international actors present in Cambodia. These discussions could concern the specific possibilities to coordinate and cooperate in joint, co-financed efforts. New entry points into the Government structures may be explored and considered for government dialogue and potential support.

- *Option 1: Continued support to civil society with present basic support construction*, combined with a gradually more proactive role of the Swedish Embassy and more specific requirements regarding conditions for support to Cambodian organisations.

It can be concluded that Forum Syd and Diakonia do play an important capacity building role together with their partners, in fighting for human rights. However, the dialogue capacity with Government on issues related to democracy and human rights appears to be low. The two organisations report that they have virtually no contacts with Government, except when they have to, in practical matters. This lack of communication is of importance for the design of future cooperation.

Considering the above, it is suggested that Sida in the short-term scenario continues its support along present lines, i.e. by channelling support through the intermediaries Forum Syd and Diakonia. As intermediaries the two organisations still have advantages through their experience of Cambodia and established working relationships with partner organisations. They have also established home office structures and functions. Given present developments in the country regarding space and environment for the civil society to work in the area of human rights and democracy, continued support with adjustments, reflecting above considerations appears to be the best short-term solution available at satisfactory level.

Sida may in relation to Forum Syd and Diakonia gradually take a more active role on an overall level, through closely formulated preconditions for funding in order to stimulate development in the direction deemed required. As an example, Sida could formulate requirements regarding the levels of internal democracy in the Cambodian NGOs that receive financial support, demands on inclusiveness-project programmes that also involve CBOs and clear beneficiaries/target groups.

In parallel, Sida can continue scaling up presence and activities in the “donor community”. For example, more in-depth orientation to and discussions with one or two likeminded other donors on possible joint action or co-operation regarding support to civil society, as well as dialogue with Government. Further, support to human rights and democracy can be given through other sectors, for example culture/media, natural resources. When preparing new programmes to be financed by Sida, links can be made to already ongoing efforts and existing partner organisations regarding human rights and democracy. A more holistic approach could be applied in the programme preparation phase, where the totality of Sida commitment in Cambodia – ongoing and planned – is taken into account. In practice such an approach implies that efforts and actors are linked together, which does not necessarily have to be more complicated than other existing program approaches practiced by Sida today.

Likeminded donors for discussions regarding joint actions, joint financing agreements, could be for example, Danida and AusAID to start with.

Another option for Sida already in a short-term perspective could be to further assess possibilities of direct support to a Cambodian NGO. This is not a widely practiced construction in Cambodia in the support to civil society and human rights. Most donors, as far as have been possible to establish during this mission, engage an intermediary of some kind when financing NGOs active within the area of human rights. As in all projects several risk factors, whereof the risk for corruption and the lack of any possible risk management given the context, must be considered. Further, the actual set-up and functioning of the local NGOs as earlier described (i.e. deficits in democratic structures and functions) is a matter of concern. Careful assessment of the NGO before contemplating discussions on direct support, followed by close regular monitoring by the Embassy and strict terms and conditions regarding

the financial conditions are essentials. Notwithstanding, local presence and capacity to follow up are still considered pre-requisites of funding. A test model with one organisation receiving direct support could be contemplated upon. It should be noted that in the choice of partner the kind and characteristics of organisation have to be taken into account. Some Cambodian human rights organisation are more actively confronting than other, in what may be described as an anti-government profile with a clear stand of non-engagement and non-dialogue with government. Other NGOs can cooperate with such a local human rights NGO, but to closely associate and cooperate with a “confronting NGO” is for a foreign financier associated with certain risks in the ambitions to intensify dialogue with government.

- *Option 2: Continued support to one only of the existing intermediaries*, for example Forum Syd – combined with more specific Sida requirements regarding terms and condition regarding the support that may be granted to the Cambodian organisations. Parallel increased activity and visibility of Sida through various actions.

This option entails ending and phasing out of either Forum Syd or Diakonia in Cambodia as intermediaries, but generally the Sida approach is similar to Option 1. In a short-term perspective this is not an option that we can recommend since both channels function and recent improvements have been made. Investments made so far should be allowed to prove themselves further before a choice is made. Further, alternatives should be more thoroughly investigated and tested step-by step before any decision of this nature. This option may be come more viable on a medium or long-term perspective.

4.2 Medium to Longer Term Perspective

Based on a development along the lines described above, the basic approach in a medium to long-term perspective would be concentration in respect of channels and programmes, combined with broader cooperation with other actors, and co-ordination and possible integration with support in other sectors, for instance the environmental and media sectors –from a human rights and democracy perspective.

The more concentrated and coordinated approach would imply the use of one or two more streamlined intermediaries, with fewer partners based on clear preferences regarding profiles. It would also imply more core and less project support, combined with sharp conditions regarding good governance etc as described earlier and developed below.

In the medium term perspective, Sida should develop the bridging initiatives already embarked on (as described under 4.1 above), with ongoing Swedish support in other areas and with other partners. In practice this could entail supporting human rights and democracy through other sectors, for example through environment and media, as mentioned above.

Further, Sida should seek cooperation and build coalitions with likeminded actors. Based on the main approach of concentration, co-ordination and cooperation, Sida should more closely investigate which other donors that would match its strategic approach best. For instance, if support in the area of land rights were given priority, it would be of interest to coordinate support – by different donors and through different channels – to CBOs to protect individual rights, with improvements in land administration and reinforcement of rule-of-law.

Assuming that future Sida support to the civil society sector will put more emphasis on CBO level, a method could be to more systematically than presently reinforce initiatives taken at local level and communicate lessons learned from NGO projects to the national level, creating mutual confidence between local and national levels.

A reinforced approach along these lines presupposes better and more direct contacts with the Cambodia Government and relevant ministries²⁶ than the Swedish Embassy/SDC at present has reported to have, according to the consultants' findings. The method would entail what has been referred to as "policy up-streaming" encompassing 1) identifying the problems, 2) implement projects at local level ("solving problems"), 3) parcel the lessons learned from the problem solving and draw clear and open conclusions from the cases and 4) provide a ground for change strategies towards better governance at local and national levels. A strategic move by Sida, together with likeminded donors, would then be to make attractive offers to Government, e.g. concerning building of government institutions and decentralised functions. The right holder position would hence be reinforced.

Summary of Recommendations

Immediate issues to discuss between Sida and FS/DK

- Reporting on results and reporting on impact
- Level of detail, extent, frequency of such reporting. What is expected by Sida from FS/DK? How can FS/DK ensure that such information can be provided by the Cambodian partners? Clarification of status today and way forward with time plan and actions to be taken and responsible partners.
- The Resource Advisors": The strategic best use of the advisors. FS/DK to further develop objectives, plans etc for best possible use of the resource as such.
- The Cambodian partners of FS/DK "Urgent issues to discuss improvements, way forward regarding:
- The lacking democratic structures and functions of Cambodian counter parts. An assessment and follow-up on what has been achieved since the FS/DK rating of their partner's organisational status. Assessment of consequences of Cambodian partners status in relation to effectiveness, especially regarding reach and target groups.
- Mainstreaming. Way forward.
- The FS/ DK portfolio of Cambodian Partners. Type of, number of, FS/DK co-operation ;who is best suited to co-operate with a particular Cambodian Partner; re-assessment of respective portfolios. Respective FS/DK strengths and weaknesses taken into consideration.

Short term issues

- Prepare for a more proactive role of SDC. Preparations could entail a more holistic approach regarding the totality of Sida commitments in Cambodia, ongoing and planned.
- Link efforts and actors in the project portfolio HR and Democracy together; also cross-sector links should be considered.
- Review necessary adaptations in cooperation to Sida policies and systems.
- Examine strategies of other actors/donors as against SDC's own strategy.
- Continue and deepen cooperation discussions and initiate joint action with one or more donors.
- Build shared cooperation programmes.
- Assess possibility to support one NGO directly, without intermediaries;
- Option 1: Utilize present support structure and channels, i.e. FS/DK, in combination with stronger presence and clarified demands specifically regarding internal democracy.
- Option 2: Choose one of FS or DK, in combination with stronger presence and clarified demands specifically regarding internal democracy.

Longer term issues

- Strive towards concentration: Fewer channels, fewer programmes.
- Integrate and coordinate Democracy and HR programme with other sectors, foremost environmental and media.
- Offer core support conditioned with good governance and internal democracy of NGOs.
- Deepen initiated cooperation with likeminded actors.
- Together with likeminded donors, strive towards a two-pronged strategy supporting both right holders and duty bearers.

²⁶ For instance the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fishery, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Health.

Annex 1 Terms of Reference

for mid-term review of Sida's support to civil society through Forum Syd and Diakonia

1. Evaluation Purpose

Sida intends to continue its support to the promotion of human rights and democracy through civil society in Cambodia. As a new country co-operation strategy was agreed upon in May 2008 and the programme period for Diakonia and Forum Syd ends by the end of 2009, Sida considers it pertinent and important to review Sida's current support to the strengthening of civil society as well as to assess and analyse strategic options for future support to human rights and democracy through civil society.

The purpose of this evaluation is twofold; to do a mid-term review of Sida's support to Forum Syd and Diakonia to see what lessons can be learned as well as to provide ideas for Sida's future support to civil society organisations in Cambodia.

2. Background

Since 1997 Sida's support for the promotion of democracy and respect for human rights through civil society in Cambodia has been channelled through Forum Syd and Diakonia under the so called "Democracy and Human Rights Programme" (a total of 17 NGOs in 2008 – 24 including support through SEKA).

In September 2006 Forum Syd and Diakonia submitted programme proposals and applications for Sida grants for the period 1 January 2007–31 December 2009 for continued support to and cooperation with Cambodian HR-organisations. The proposals build further on experiences and lessons learned and meet Sida's criteria for relevance effectiveness and efficiency.

Civil society in Cambodia is dominated by NGOs, of which most were created in the beginning of the 90s, after the signing of the peace agreement and the arrival of the UN mission in Cambodia. Today, more than 15 years later, parts of civil society are facing challenges, including internal organisational, management and financial problems. Long-term sustainability is a great challenge for most NGOs as well as visions of how to strengthen civil society in the future. It has been one of the priorities of Sweden to strengthen the independence and sustainability of NGOs to among others decrease the dependence on project based support. Sida's support to human rights and democracy, through civil society, has apart from the support to DC-CAM and CDRI mainly been channelled through Forum Syd and Diakonia. Sweden is one of the biggest donors in Cambodia within the EU group on human rights and civil society support.

3. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation in 2005²⁷ and the Sida Advisory Team concluded that Forum Syd and Diakonia have indeed contributed to the achievement of the objectives and to the promotion of democracy and human rights in Cambodia.

In advance of a new programme phase, and as a stance to the mid-term period we now want to do a re-assessment of this.

²⁷ Crossroads to Development (2005), Evaluation of the Human Rights and Democracy Programme

The mission shall therefore focus on:

- A. Review Sida's current support to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia, with emphasis on Sida's (DESA's) support to Forum Syd and Diakonia. This task includes, but is not limited to, a mid-term review of Forum Syd's and Diakonia's democracy programmes. What can be concluded on results on the work so far (effectiveness, outcome/impact and sustainability)?

Sida shall be presented with an informed opinion on a) the continued relevance of the current support based on the rights, needs and demands of primary and intermediary target groups and b) the effectiveness in which the programmes are scoped, managed and monitored in relation to stated objectives and c) the feasibility of the current support given the ability of the channelling organisations (Forum Syd and Diakonia) to reach results, manage internal and external risk factors.

- B. Based on the findings mentioned above, the review team shall outline potential options for a Swedish future support strategy to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia. This shall include the opportunities for and possible risks with further harmonisation of donor support.
- C. Furthermore, the review team shall act as facilitator during a Sida workshop to be held in Phnom Penh at the end of the mission. Some preliminary conclusions of the review mission will be presented to, and discussed among, relevant stakeholders, including Sida, Forum Syd and Diakonia.

4. Tasks

The assignment consists of three components:

4.1 Mid-term review of Sida's support to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia

The review should address the issues below from a broader civil society and Sida perspective, and use the findings as inputs in the discussion on the relevance of the Swedish overall support, on future options etc.

Among the issues to be touched upon, the following should be mentioned:

1. *Achievements and constraints in the programme implementation*

- Programme constraints and opportunities, also assessed from a rights-based approach. Are there deviations in programme implementation compared to what is set out in the project document?
- How are long-term sustainability (financial, organisational, results) issues addressed both when it comes to the support to Diakonia and Forum Syd, as well as within their own programmes?
- Financial situation, including assessing audit firms
- How is Forum Syd and Diakonia working on integrating a results based perspective and how are they working with a results-oriented way of following up their partner organisations? Is there a risk management in place for when results are not achieved?
- Are the channels chosen for Swedish support effective?
- Are there areas of duplication in the Swedish support through Diakonia and Forum Syd? What are the challenges and opportunities to increase the harmonisation of future support to Forum Syd and Diakonia under a joint programme framework?
- Are Diakonia and FS co-ordinating support with other donors in order to avoid duplication and strive for complementarity and harmonization?

2. Assessment of programme strategies and results

- What role do Diakonia and Forum Syd, and their partners, play in the strengthening of human rights in Cambodia? How is their dialogue capacity with government and other stakeholders on issues related to democracy and human rights?
- Is the focus of the support consistent with a democracy and human rights perspective? What specific rights have been targeted through the programmes?
- How representative are the partner organisation of the poor and vulnerable groups (children, youth, people living with disabilities etc.) and how are the poor visible in the programmes? How do Forum Syd and Diakonia make strategic choices on selection of partner NGOs?
- What could be said at this stage of the methodology and modalities of support to strengthen the capacity of partner organisations under the programme framework, including the work of the resource advisors? What is partner organisation's assessment of the work of the resource advisors and what have the impact been so far?
- How are thematic areas integrated in the programmes (gender, youth, HIV/AIDS etc)?
- What possibilities do partner organisation have in making an assessment of Forum Syd and Diakonia? What is their view of the comparative advantage of gaining support and technical input from Forum Syd and Diakonia?

4.2 Assess potential future options for Sida's support to democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia

Based on the elaboration of the task above, the review team shall analyse and give recommendations on:

- How Sida could improve and/or change its support to civil society in Cambodia in order to increase its impact on the democratic processes and the respect for human rights in Cambodia. In this assessment the review should include a strategic discussion on options to improve the linkages between Sida's support to civil society and its increased focus on human rights dialogue with the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC).

The carrying out of the task as well as the recommendations need to take the following into consideration:

- The major issues (problems and needs) concerning democracy and human rights, as well as the relationship between civil society and the state in Cambodia.
- That Sida intends to continue its support to human rights and democracy through civil society in Cambodia
- Harmonisation with other donors and potential synergy effects with Sida's and particularly DESA's other supports in Cambodia.
- The realistic level of ambition for Sweden's support, given Sida's, Forum Syd's and Diakonia's limited organisational and financial resources.

4.3 Provide recommendations and lessons learned

The review should provide recommendations on the following issues:

- i) How can support to Forum Syd and Diakonia further contribute to the strengthening of democracy and human rights through civil society in Cambodia?
- ii) How can support to civil society continue strengthening human rights although Forum Syd and Diakonia report on an environment of deteriorating human rights? How can work be successful without endangering human rights activists, and what can Forum Syd and Diakonia's roles be in this?

- iii) Measures, if any, to be taken by Diakonia and Forum Syd to improve their programmes and cooperation between the two organisations.
- iv) Thematic areas, not covered in today's support, that are in need of support, or with a clear gap in support from the donor community.
- v) Alternative channels for Sida of support to the existing ones.
- vi) Outline of a strategy for Sida support to civil society in Cambodia for the strengthening of democracy and human rights.
- vii) The recommendations shall be based both on the support Sida has today, mainly through Diakonia and Forum Syd, as well as on alternative/additional channels and/or support areas. Alternative options of the future should be explored with an open mind.

4.4 Facilitate a Sida workshop

The review team should facilitate a smaller workshop with stakeholders, including representatives from Sida, Diakonia and Forum Syd. The workshop should take place in the beginning of December in Phnom Penh. The role of the the review team is to present the preliminary findings and to facilitate the workshop. A programme will be prepared by Sida in co-operation with the review team at a later stage.

5. Method

The study should be carried out through review of written reports and other relevant documentation. A starting point for the study should be the external mid-term evaluation commissioned by Diakonia and Forum Syd of their programmes (a draft report will be ready 17 October and a final report 25 November). Annual reports and agreed minutes from annual review meetings between Sida Forum Syd and Diakonia, the study of civil society made by the SAT in 2003 and 2006 and other critical reports and programme documents describing interventions from various donors. The Country Cooperation Strategy shall serve as a main guiding document. Additionally to the written documentation, the review team shall interview representatives from Forum Syd, Diakonia, partner organisations of Forum Syd and Diakonia, Sida/DESA, SDC, relevant representatives from the public sector, relevant donor representatives, the OHCHR-Cambodia and other persons that the review team finds important to interview.

6. Work Plan and Schedule

The mission will be carried out during an assignment of 3 weeks, of which approximately 2 weeks are expected to be in Cambodia. The mission in Cambodia should take place between approximately 24 November–5 December. Before the team leaves Cambodia it shall present preliminary findings at a Sida workshop where representatives of Sida, Diakonia, Forum Syd will be present. A few days before the workshop the main findings and recommendations should be presented in a brief written form to facilitate the discussion in the workshop.

A draft report should be presented to SDC and Sida/DESA no later than 8 December 2008. The final report shall be submitted to SDC and Sida/DESA electronically no later than 2 weeks after receiving Sida's comments on the draft report. The final report shall be copied and printed by the review team and provided to SDC in 6 copies and as a soft copy.

The report should be written in English and include an Executive Summary of findings, analysis and recommendations and not exceed 40 pages except the annexes. The descriptive part of the situation in Cambodia shall be kept to a minimum and the focus should be on the tasks described above. In depth descriptions may be attached in annexes.

7. Evaluation Team

The team should consist of at least two people, one senior consultant as team-leader and one junior or senior consultant. Sida will apply the following criteria when selecting the best proposal:

- Good experience of evaluating civil society organisations
- Knowledge of human rights and a human rights based approach
- Experience of development cooperation
- Knowledge of results based management
- Preferably experience of South East Asia and Cambodia
- A very good working command of English (spoken and written)
- Cost of the mission

Annex 2 Persons Met

In Sweden

Diakonia HQ

Margareta Koltai, Head of Asia Department

Tom Abrahamsson, Head of Asia & Middle East Departments

Forum Syd HQ

Monica Billgren

Jan-Erik Wänn, Regional Director

In Cambodia

Embassy of Sweden/ Sida

Ms. Eva Gibson Smedberg, Counsellor

Ms. Miriam Malmqvist, First Secretary, Programme Officer

Ms. Martina Fors, First Secretary, Programme Officer

Diakonia

Mr. Ouch Sarak Cheta, Former Country Representative

Mr. Jens Rosbäck, Country Representative

Mr Mattias Brunander

Forum Syd

Maria Monahov, Programme Coordinator

PO; Yin Dara and Ith POV

Resource Advisors of Forum Syd and Diakonia;

Gender; Chan Sambath

Advocacy, Thy Bunthoeun

ODA, Nhek Sarin

MTR consultant for FS/DK

Jack Cruz

Cambodian organisations

ADHOC

President, Mr. Thun Saray

COMFREL

Executive Director, Koul Panha

Mao Phally, Head of Administration

Sieng Dahlia, Financial Officer

NGO Forum

Mr. Ny San, Deputy of Executive Director

LICADHO

Director, Naly Pilorge

Khmer Ahimsa

Executive Director, Huot Thavory

FACT

Executive Director, Mak Sithirith
Leang Kanha, Finance Officer + Administrative Officer

Community Advocacy Network, CAN
Mr Seng Rithy

Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, CCC
Executive Director, Borithy Lun

Star Kampuchea
Deputy Executive Director, Chet Charaya
Advocacy Action Program Manager, Tieng Sophorn
Administrative Manager, Orla Nay

International organisations / donors

Danida
Mr. Michael Engquist, Senior Programme Officer

DFID

Ms. Cheryl Urashima, Social Development Advisor

European Commission

Mr. Seth Van Doorn, Programme Officer
Mr. Kiet Leng Hour, PO/HR & Democracy

USAID

Mr. Paul Randolph, Senior D&G Officer

UNCOHCHR

Christoph Peschoux, Representative
Henrik Stenman Deputy Representative

World Bank

Ms. Nil Vanna, Social Development Specialist
Mr. Preap Kol, Programme Coordinator

AusAid

Arthi Patel, First Secretary, Development Cooperation

PACT

Mr. Stevens Tucker, Decentralisation advisor
Mr. Chhor Sophal, Deputy Chief of Party/Programme Director

VBK

Director, Graeme Storer

Annex 3 Program for MTR

Draft Program for Civil Society Consultants 2008

Delegation	1. Mr. Peter Winai 2. Ms. Pia Cameron		
Purpose of visit	Main purposes/Objectives of the mission: Mid-term review of Sida support to Civil Society through Forum Syd and Diakonia.		
Arrival date	22 November 2008 by TG 698 at 19:45		
Depart. Date	05 December 2008		
Hotel	Hotel Himawari		
Vehicle			
Date/Time	Activity	Venue & Telephone contact	Status
Saturday 22 November 2008			
Evening	Arrival at airport, hotel pick up Check in hotel		
Sunday 23 November 2008			
Monday 24 November 2008			
08:00–10:00	Briefing at Sida Ms. Eva Gibson Smedberg Ms. Miriam Malmqvist Ms. Martina Fors	At Embassy of Sweden (SDC) #8, Street 352 Tel: 023 212 259	Confirmed
10:30–12:00	Meeting with Diakonia Mr. Ouch Sarak Cheta, Former Country Representative	At Diakonia #37, Street 592 Tel: 023 300 125	Confirmed
12:00	Lunch		
14:00–17:00	Meeting with Forum Syd Maria Monahov, Programme Coordinator PO; Yin Dara and Ith POV Resource Advisors; Gender; Chan Sambath Advocacy, Thy Bunthoeun ODA, Nhek Sarin	At Forum Syd #91, Street 95 Tel: 023 364 727 HP: 012 803 201 (Jan-Erik)	Confirmed
Tuesday 25 November 2008			
08:30–10:00	Meeting with Danida Mr. Michael Engquist, Senior Programme Officer	At Danida #8, Street 352 Tel: 023 987 629	Confirmed
10:00–11:30	Meeting with DFID Ms. Cheryl Urashima, Social Development Advisor	At SDC	Confirmed
12:00	Lunch		
14:00–	Meeting with Community Advocacy Network(CAN) Mr Seng Rithy KYA	#91, Street 95	Confirmed
Wednesday 26 November 2008			

08:30–10:00	Meeting with European Commission Mr. Seth Van Doorn, Programme Officer Mr. Kiet Leng Hour, PO/HR & Democracy	At EC Delegation #1, Street 21 Tel: 220 611/2	Confirmed
10:15–11:45	Meeting with USAID Mr. Paul Randolph, Senior D&G Officer	#1, Street 96 Tel: 023 728 352 HP: 012 222 450	Confirmed
12:00	Lunch		
14:00–15:30	Meeting with UNCOHCHR Christoph Peschoux, Representative Henrik Stenman Deputy Representative	At UNCOHCHR # 10, Street 302 Tel: 023 993 590-1 Mr. Huon Touch HP 012 47 64 93	Confirmed
15.30–17:00	Meeting with PACT Mr. Stevens Tucker, Decentralisation advisor Mr. Chhor Sopha, Deputy Chief of Party/ Programme Director	Phnom Penh Center Building A, 3rd Floor Tel: 023 217 855 Ext 101	Confirmed
Thursday 27 November 2008			
10:30–12:00	Meeting with World Bank Ms. Nil Vanna, Social Development Specialist Mr. Preap Kol, Programme Coordinator	At World Bank #113, Norodom Blvd. Tel: 217 301/304 HP: 012 416 767 (Ms. Lyna Chea, Asst) HP: 012 877 833 (Kol)	Confirmed
12:00	Lunch		
14.00–15:30	Meeting with AusAid Arthi Patel, First Secretary, Development Cooperation	#11, Street 254 Tel: 023 213 470	Confirmed
Friday 28 November 2008			
08:30–10:00	Meeting with ADHOC President, Mr. Thun Saray	#3, Street 158 Tel: 023 218 653	Confirmed
10:15–11:45	Meeting with COMFREL Executive Director, Koul Panha Mao Phally, Head of Administration Sieng Dahlia, Financial Officer	#138, Street 122 Tel: 023 884 150	
12.00	Lunch		
14.00–15:30	Meeting with NGO Forum Mr. Ny San, Deputy of Executive Director	#9–11, Street 476 Tel: 023 214 429	Confirmed
15.30–17:00	Meeting with LICADHO Director, Naly Pilorge	#16, Street 99 Tel: 023 360 969	Confirmed
Saturday 29 November 2008			
Sunday 30 November 2008			
Monday 01 December 2008			
08:30–10.00	Meeting with Khmer Ahimsa Executive Director, Huot Thavory	#59, Street 95 Tel: 012 685 341	Confirmed
10:00–12:00			
12.00	Lunch		
14:00–15:15	VBK Director, Graeme Storer	#28, Street 80 Tel: 023 722 115	Confirmed

15:15–16:15	Meeting with FACT Executive Director, Mak Sithirith Leang Kanha, Finance Officer + Administrative Officer		Confirmed
Tuesday 02 December 2008			
09:00–12:00	Meeting with MTR consultant for FS/DK Jack and the team	HP: 017 717 359	
12.00	Lunch		
14:00–16:00	Meeting with Diakonia Mr. Jens Rosbäck Mr Mattias Brunander	At Diakonia #37, Street 592 Tel: 023 300 125	Confirmed
16:00–	Meeting with Cooperation Committee for Cambodia, CCC Executive Director, Borithy Lun	# 9–11, Street 476 Tel: 023 214 152	Confirmed
Wednesday 03 December 2008			
08:00–10:00	Meeting with Sida to discuss about the workshop	At Embassy of Sweden (SDC) #8, Street 352 Tel: 023 212 259	Confirmed
10:30–11:30	De-briefing with Programme Staff at SDC	At Embassy of Sweden (SDC) #8, Street 352 Tel: 023 212 259	Confirmed
12.00	Lunch		
14:00–16:00	Meeting with Star Kampuchea Deputy Executive Director, Chet Charaya Advocacy Action Program Manager, Tieng Sophorn Administrative Manger, Orla Nay	#55, Street 101 Tel; 23 211 612	Confirmed
Thursday 04 December 2008			
	Discussion and Preparation for Workshop		
Friday 05 December 2008			
09:00–12:00	Workshop		Confirmed
12:00–14:00	Wrap-up meeting Between consultants and Sida		Confirmed

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