



2010:08

Sida Review

Lars Florin  
Robert Gustafson

Viktoria Hildenwall  
Lars Oscár

# The Swedish Strategy for Development Cooperation with Middle East and North Africa, 2006–2010



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**Authors:** Lars Florin, Robert Gustafson, Viktoria Hildenwall, Lars Oscár.

The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

**Sida Review 2010:08**

Commissioned by Sida, Department for Conflict and Post Conflict,  
Team for MENA-IRAQ

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**Date of final report:** March 2010

**Printed by:** Edita 2010

**Art. no.** Sida61251en

**ISBN:** 978-91-586-4119-8

**URN:NBN** se-2010-10

This publication can be downloaded from: <http://www.sida.se/publications>

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

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Address: SE-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden.

Visiting address: Valhallavägen 199.

Phone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Fax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64.

[www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se) [sida@sida.se](mailto:sida@sida.se)

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## Executive Summary

Sipu International – The Swedish Institute for Public Administration has been commissioned by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to evaluate the Swedish *Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa 2006–2010*. The purpose has been to generate knowledge, create discussions and reflect on the need for adjustments of the current strategy as input to the development of a strategy for the period 2011–2014. The main objectives were to assess the regional approach, the outcomes in four areas of cooperation and the choice of cooperation partners, aid instruments and Sida's role.

Due to a number of circumstances, only five calendar weeks could be allocated for preparation of the first draft report. The final report has been further elaborated based on comments from Sida. The team has reviewed 32 interventions covering 89% of the funds allocated 2006–2009. Field visits have been carried out in Egypt, Jordan and Morocco. A total of 68 persons have been interviewed and a number of relevant reports have been reviewed.

### Results of the Evaluation

As a whole, the Strategy points out four broad cooperation areas, focus countries and the use of a regional approach, however without offering any strategic guidance as to how Swedish development cooperation with the MENA region should be implemented. It may have been intentional to provide for flexibility in the implementation. However, as a result, implemented interventions have had the character of stand-alone efforts – with a variation of partners and aid instruments – rather than coordinated initiatives contributing to a common objective. To some extent this is also a consequence of difficulties to identify interventions meeting the regional criteria.

The Evaluation shows that the adoption of the Strategy was not preceded by any strategic dialogue with governments or intergovernmental organisations in the region. The selected cooperation areas seem relevant in relation to the region's needs and Swedish comparative advantages. The concept of focus countries, on the other hand, seems to have been less relevant during the strategy period.

Challenges in implementing the Strategy have come clear through this evaluation. These relates to the facts that:

- There is no strategic approach and that linkages between objectives and other directives are unclear;
- Sida has not developed a strategic approach or elaborated a results framework;
- Sida has mainly relied on a dialogue with implementing organisations, not complemented by a strategic dialogue with governments or regional intergovernmental organisations;
- Weak regional cooperation makes it difficult to apply a regional approach in four broad areas;
- It has been challenging to work with sensitive issues such as democracy and human rights; and
- During the first two years and a half, Sida had only one field officer and almost no staff working on the two new areas Sustainable Use of Water and Regional Economic Development.

At the time of adoption of the Strategy, the expectations to achieve concrete results were rather low. This may partly explain the vaguely formulated Strategy objectives. Summarising the achievements against the Strategy objectives, we conclude that the objectives have been met – the Swedish support has promoted:

- Democracy and Good Governance;
- Respect for Human Rights;
- Sustainable Use of Water Resources; and
- Regional Economic Development.

In our view, however, it remains uncertain whether the Swedish support has been the most appropriate for achieving concrete results in terms of contributing to sustainable improvements. The support has clearly contributed to a higher level of exchanges of experiences within the region and between the region and Sweden. We have, however, only observed two examples where Sida has strengthened regional structures that were developed independently of donor support. The reason for this is probably the limited number of regional cooperation initiatives and organisations.

## Reflections on Needs for Adjustments of the Strategy

We hope that the following reflections will provide input to the discussion and elaboration of a strategy for the MENA region 2011–2014.

Our understanding is that improved democracy and respect for human rights are in the forefront of the Swedish development cooperation ambitions for the region. Democracy and respect for human rights depend on a complex interaction between governments, public sector organisations, business communities, non-governmental organisations and citizens in different capacities. While it is rather obvious that there is a need for a long-term perspective to achieve these values, it remains uncertain what should constitute the most effective approaches for concrete improvements.

Based on our interviews with local and regional actors, there are reasons to question whether the best approach is to separate work specifically focused on democracy and human rights from work on issues directly related to the development of institutions and welfare for citizens. Instead, we would argue for integrating these two perspectives with each other. We believe there are reasons to consider a Swedish support to institutional development and improved welfare for citizens, systematically designed to contribute to a Swedish agenda of a long-term development towards democracy and respect for human rights.

There appears to be a demand – both from civil society and from government entities in the region – for enhanced regional and international exchanges and collaborations. Should Sweden decide to keep a regional approach, it is nevertheless imperative to articulate clear arguments for how such an approach shall contribute to achievement of results in the selected cooperation areas.

We see three applications of the regional approach to be considered for the coming period:

- Support to regional cooperation emerging from local/regional initiatives, even if these are few;
- A strategic role for Sida in complementing other donors' initiatives and strengthening initiatives from multilateral organisations; and
- Provision of opportunities for exchange within the region and between the region and Europe/Sweden, for example through ITPs or regional training programmes.

We also make the following reflections on needs for adjustment of the current Strategy:

- Consider to focus the Swedish support on fewer and more narrowly defined areas and use a more result-oriented approach;



- Consider to enter into a strategic dialogue with governments or regional intergovernmental organisations;
- Consider to align the Swedish development agenda with the agenda defined by the Arab states; and
- Consider to balance interventions with different approaches and partners in coordinated efforts to achieve common strategic objectives.

Experiences from previous regional support show that it takes time to build up regional programmes. While no area should be taken for granted for future support, it is important to consider the investment needed to engage in completely new areas. We believe that one or two of the four areas in the current Strategy would be relevant as main cooperation areas also in the strategy period 2011–2014, however with more narrowly defined focuses:

- *Good Governance* – Focusing on public sector reform and administrative governance;
- *Women and/or Youth* – Narrowing down the area of human rights and elaborating on links to institutional development and good governance of importance for these groups;
- *Sustainable Use of Water* – Developing the current cooperation area further; and
- *Pro-poor Economic Development* – Linking the current area more clearly to poverty reduction and to a long-term development towards democracy and human rights.



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the Evaluation

The Swedish Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has decided to evaluate the implementation of the *Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa 2006–2010*, hereafter “the Strategy”. The Evaluation is supposed to feed into the process of elaborating a new strategy to guide the Swedish development cooperation 2011–2014.

The objectives of the Evaluation are to assess the outcomes achieved from Sida’s support as part of the current Strategy and Sida’s role as development partner. The Evaluation is also expected to assess the regional approach as a model for development cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The Evaluation is required to be formative with a strong learning element by generating knowledge and creating discussions. The intended recipients are Sida and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter the Ministry), Swedish and international NGOs, multilateral organisations, and development partners active in the region. See further the Terms of Reference (ToR) in Annex I.

Sida assigned SIPU International (The Swedish Institute for Public Administration) – a Swedish training and consultancy firm working in international development cooperation – to conduct the Evaluation. Very short time was available for carrying out the assignment, with approximately 5 weeks from award of contract to delivery of a draft report for comments. Another two weeks has been available to finalise the report. Field trips to three countries were requested in the ToR. To meet this challenge SIPU set up an Evaluation Team with four key members assisted by experts in the three countries for field visits and one intern. The following persons have carried out the Evaluation.

<b>Core team:</b>	<b>Assisted by:</b>
Lars Florin	Abdul-Hamid Barghouthi, Jordan
Robert Gustafson	Tarik Ait Benhassi, Morocco
Viktoria Hildenwall	Jakob Lindfors, Egypt
Lars Oscár	Crister Sahlén, intern

SIPU International and the Evaluation Team hope that the Evaluation will contribute constructively to the elaboration of the coming strategy for development cooperation with the MENA region. The Team does not see that the limited time frame has had any major negatively affect on the findings and analysis in the Evaluation.

## 1.2 Methodology

The Evaluation has been carried out according to the ToR interpreted in an evaluation framework submitted to Sida in the inception report, see Annex II. The Team has reviewed 32 interventions covering 89% of the funds allocated in the regional MENA programme during 2006–2009. The criteria for selecting projects were set by the Team. Sida only added one project out of the maximum of three that was agreed. The Team has reviewed assessments memorandums, external evaluations and the latest report of results available from the selected projects. In addition, 15 interviews have been carried out with current and former Sida employees and 53 other interviewees representing different stakeholders – the Ministry, other donors, professional actors in the areas of cooperation, implementing organisations, beneficiaries and other relevant actors. The Evaluation Team selected the interviewees from lists with known possible contacts provided by Sida. A number of other reports have also been reviewed. See Annex III for interviewees and reviewed studies.

Since different Team members carried out interviews and assessment of different cooperation areas in the Strategy, efforts were invested in forming a common framework for how to carry out interviews and assessments. In all the assignment the Team has made an effort to respond in a constructive way to the questions and tasks in the ToR.

### 1.3 Perspectives on the Regional MENA Programme

The Swedish development assistance in the MENA region is in monetary terms marginal compared to the total Official Development Assistance (ODA) in the region. This is true for the regional support as well as the bilateral support.<sup>1</sup> The total *regional* ODA was approximately USD 5.3 billion 2008, while the Swedish contribution was limited to USD 23.3 million corresponding to or less ½ percent. Sweden's share of the *bilateral* ODA in the region was 2008 just above ½ percent (USD 106 million) of the total bilateral ODA of approximately USD 18.3 billion USD. Sweden's bilateral support in the region focuses Iraq and West Bank and Gaza<sup>2</sup>. The Swedish regional programme is also rather small compared to the bilateral support to West Bank and Gaza, and on a similar level as the bilateral support to Iraq (see Table 1).

**Table 1** Disbursement of support in the regional MENA programme (excl humanitarian aid) and in the bilateral support (incl. humanitarian aid) to Iraq and West Bank and Gaza. MSEK.

Area	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total, regional programme	85.6	94.4	130.4	162.6
Health	0.6	0.2	–	–
Dem., HR, Gender Eq.	45.0	47.9	69.9	96.7
Conflict, Peace, Security	0.4	0.3	–	–
Sustainable infrastructure + services	2.1	22.9	32.1	29.2
Market development	15.4	11.3	19.4	29.8
Environment	–	–	–	6,9
Agriculture & forestry	–	9,0	9,0	–
Other	4.1	2.8	–	–
Iraq, bilateral support	80.0	114.9	143.9	169.0
West Bank/Gaza, bilateral support	361.8	350.5	454.6	774.7

Source: Sida

The regional programme has been developed stepwise since 2002, see Table 2. During 2002–2005 the disbursements for support to the region, excluding Iraq, West Bank and Gaza and humanitarian aid, was SEK 240 million. Out of this, SEK 126.3 million was part of the regional programme. During the following four year period 2006–2009 the regional programme increased almost 4 times to SEK 473 million. The annual disbursement has almost doubled during the strategy period to SEK 162.6 million in year 2009. The annual allocation of funds to the programme increased from SEK 120 million per year 2006–2008 to SEK 200 million 2009, but has been reduced to SEK 130 million 2010 due to the financial crisis and reduction of Swedish development assistance.

<sup>1</sup> Statistics from OECD, <http://stats.oecd.org/qwids>.

<sup>2</sup> In the Strategy this areas are referred to as the Occupied Palestinian territories. In this report we have used the label currently used on Sida's website.

**Table 2** Disbursement in the regional pgm, MSEK

Year	Disbursement
2002	3.2
2003	8.4
2004	48.3
2005	66.4
2006	85.6
2007	94.4
2008	130.4
2009	162.6

Source: Sida and Position Paper 2003

## 2 Description of the Swedish Strategy 2006–2010

In 2005, the Swedish Government adopted a “Strategy for development cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa 2006–2008”, elaborated by Sida and the Ministry. The Strategy was later extended to the end of 2010. The Strategy was preceded by a position paper 2003 where Sida outlined the cooperation with the region in the areas of democracy and human rights. Until 2006, the Swedish development cooperation with the MENA region had been focused on these two areas and through interventions of International Training Programmes (ITP) and so-called contract-financed technical cooperation supporting government institutions in the region.

The Strategy does not provide any background information as to how, and on what basis, it was elaborated. Also, arguments for strategic choices are not made explicit and the structure of objectives is somewhat unclear. The Strategy sets out several objectives and instructions at different levels but the relationship between these are not elaborated. It is difficult to get a full overview of the objectives and instructions since they are spread out and sometimes worded differently in the document.

The overall goal is the same as for all Swedish development cooperation – to help create the kinds of conditions that enable poor people to improve their lives. In the MENA region, the focus should be on the kind of poverty represented by rights abuses and the absence of peace and security, while a rights perspective and the perspective of the poor are to guide the cooperation. The Strategy also sets out as a separate objective the intra-regional cooperation and cooperation between the region and Sweden. This regional approach is not only seen as an objective but also as a method for implementation. One reason for this pointed out in the Strategy is to find and support initiatives that are perceived as more acceptable to the region than Western initiatives.

It is stated that support can be channelled through civil society, government administrations, research institutes and regional organisations. Three different “types” of interventions are set out:

- Regional or sub-regional interventions, where the aim is to develop the region or a sub-region as a whole;
- Interventions that are undertaken bilaterally in a number of countries but which include elements of regional exchange and cooperation between these countries; or
- Interventions undertaken bilaterally at country level or with two countries, where these are expected to strengthen regional efforts or have a favourable regional impact, or may develop into a regional intervention.

The Strategy sets out that Sweden should provide development cooperation in four sectors – or “areas of cooperation” in the Strategy – each with their specific objectives, (further described in Section 5):

- Promotion of democracy and good governance;
- Promoting respect for human rights;
- Environmental care and the sustainable development of resources, primarily water, particularly of a regional, transboundary nature; and
- Capacity building in the field of regional economic development.

The Strategy covers 18 countries and two territories,<sup>3</sup> but sets out five focus countries<sup>4</sup>, however, other MENA countries may be supported too as long as they are developing countries<sup>5</sup>. It is encouraged to include the West Bank and Gaza and Iraq in dialogue-related activities, but the relationship between the regional Strategy and these two bilateral strategies is not elaborated. The reason for selecting five focus countries seems to have been mainly practical – the available funds were limited and initiatives with a regional approach had already started in five countries.

The Strategy states that the regional approach and the focus on four cooperation areas will enable the programme to have a greater impact in a wider regional perspective by creating opportunities for interacting with and supplementing the efforts of other bilateral and multilateral actors, particularly the EU, the UN and the multilateral development banks.

Improved dialogue between the region and Sweden/Europe is a core feature in the Strategy, both as an important element in the cooperation expected to lead to results and as a method to enable support to regionally initiated interventions. However, the Strategy recognises that regional structures in the MENA region are few and weak. In this respect, it should be noted that the Strategy itself appears to have been developed without much dialogue with stakeholders in the region. Governments and inter-governmental organisations in the region are not mentioned as cooperation partners in the document.

The Swedish Institute in Alexandria, the Section for Turkish-Swedish Cooperation at the Consulate-General in Istanbul, the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul and the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation have a special standing in the Strategy. Sida is requested to support them since they are perceived to possess valuable expertise.

Other instructions and objectives in the Strategy relates to:

- The prevention of natural disasters;
- The prevention of the development of extremism;
- Swedish organisations and institutions must be given wider mandates than before;
- Efforts to combat corruption are to “inform” all interventions;<sup>6</sup>
- Interventions should as far as possible be designed to facilitate the evaluation of goal fulfilment;
- A detailed survey to be carried out of other development cooperation actors and their activities for coordination reasons; and
- A dialogue with Swedes with roots in the region as they are seen as able to contribute to the cooperation.

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<sup>3</sup> Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and Western Sahara

<sup>4</sup> Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Syria

<sup>5</sup> According to OECD/DAC criteria.

<sup>6</sup> “Inform” is the wording in the Strategy.

Sida is required to report on the progress of the implementation of the Strategy, but it is not stated how often. Consultations are anticipated within the normal framework of consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Sida.

### 3 Regional Development

The Strategy is based on an analysis of the situation of the MENA region made around 2005. For both the Strategy and the subsequent interventions, the focus is more on the Middle East than on North Africa. We will have the same focus in this brief analysis of the regional development. Five years have passed by with events that are relevant for the region as a whole as well as for the four areas in which Sida is funding interventions. This is a summary of key reports<sup>7</sup> and interviews made during the Evaluation Team's field visits to the region.

#### **Democracy, good governance and human rights**

In 2005, the *Jyllands-Posten* Muhammad cartoons resulted in a global controversy that led to the outbreak of violence on the streets of various major cities in the Middle East and Africa. This had immediate effects on Sida's support as the planned media-programme was put to a halt.

The political situation following the Gaza war (December 2008) has been counter-productive for regional cooperation with reduced travel and regional relations, a slowdown in project activities including the freeze of the Union for the Mediterranean affecting mainly the water cooperation.<sup>8</sup>

The global financial crisis has affected the region differently depending on the countries' developmental level, but generally not in terms of collapsing financial institutions but rather decreased levels of economic growth and trade.

The report *Development Challenges for the Arab Region* (DCAR) is a joint initiative by the League of Arab States, UNDP and a group of Arab experts, published in March 2009. The report highlights six key interrelated challenges facing the region:

- Institutional Reform and Governance;
- Generating Employment;
- Sustaining and Financing of Pro-poor Growth;
- Reforming Educational Systems;
- Economic Diversification and Globalisation; and
- Food Security and Agriculture.

The report stresses that dealing with these challenges requires the adoption of a comprehensive development model based on the human development approach which considers freedoms as the basis for development.

The DCAR notes very little progress of the institutional framework in the region since 1996; moreover, the overall average index for each of the six governance dimensions is negative, indicating that Arab countries suffered from below average quality of institutions in each indicator. "As far as government effectiveness is concerned, the Arab countries recorded a fairly large deterioration."

<sup>7</sup> Mainly the *Development Challenges for the Arab Region* and *Arab Human Development Report 2009*.

<sup>8</sup> Sida's Strategy Report 2009 for the Regional MENA strategy

Political analysts interviewed during the Evaluation noted that there is a perception of increasing corruption and that there has been a complex merger between the political elite and the business community. The new generation of rulers in several countries in the region is the result of a fusion between business and politics where these rulers maintain very good relations to the business sector. The focus is not on a welfare state model but on the free market in a neo-liberalist model. This has brought increased polarisation between the rich and the poor.

Regarding Democracy and Human Rights, one indicator of the regional development is The Arab Democracy Index<sup>9</sup>; an annual survey carried out and published in ten countries with 72 indicators for evaluation of democratisation process in the Arab World. The democracy barometer shows only a half-hearted process; scoring a total average 505 out of 1000 points. In our interviews some knowledgeable people have underlined that there is a weak internal drive for democracy in the region due to a weak middle class. Most people have to struggle to satisfy basic needs such as food, water and clothing. According to these opinions, an externally imposed democratisation process is bound to fail since democracy only can be achieved if driven from within.

Activists and observers interviewed also talked about a dead-end for the work on democracy and challenged donors to evaluate their traditional strategies with a direct focus on democracy and human rights. Stronger institutions, better education and higher standards of living are according to these interviews key issues to pave the way for a democratic development.

Governments generally do not trust the populations enough to be willing to share power. Therefore it may be difficult to convince governments to engage in a partnership with those not under their control. Many people in the region feel that the states withdraw from their responsibility for the welfare of their citizens. At the same time governments realise the risk for social instability they are facing, as a large young generation is coming out in a society with poorly functioning education and welfare systems. In contrary, Sweden seems to have a reputation as a state based on a well-functioning welfare model. Swedish experiences can hence be clearly relevant in the region to meet some of the current challenges – how to impose legitimate taxation, social responsibility, good education, maintaining self-employed businesses of good quality, promote access to labour markets, a modern care of the elderly and the promotion of a secular state.

Sweden seems to have a very good reputation in the region in the absence of a colonial past or polarisation during the Cold War. A Swedish progressive position towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is also well known and appreciated. In general, Sweden seems to be perceived as neutral and not suspected for having a hidden agenda.

### **Regional economic development**

Turning to trade and economic development, both the DCAR-report and *Arab Human Development Report 2009* describe a low, volatile, and oil-led growth which has created weak structural foundations in Arab economies. Many Arab countries are turning into increasingly import-oriented and service-based economies. The types of services found in most Arab countries fall at the low end of the value adding chain, contribute little to local knowledge development and lock countries into inferior positions in the global markets. This trend has grown at the expense of Arab agriculture, manufacturing and industrial production. In addition, the MENA region's international trade is hindered by an outdated, centralised approach where government entities organise the trade infrastructure. Arab intra-regional trade remains insignificant (around 10%) and is the least developed of comparable regions in the world. The general optimism about the region's future prevailing in 2005 is no longer there.

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<sup>9</sup> See Arab Reform Initiative <http://ari.see-tek.com/?lang=en>



Somewhat connected to this is the fact that some 60% of the population in the Arab countries are under 25 years old, making it one of the youngest populations in the world. With an average unemployment for young people of around 25%, Arab countries will need to create about 51 million new jobs by 2020 to keep up with demand. Interviewees pointed to the urgent need of vocational training to promote both growth and job opportunities.

### **Sustainable Use of Water**

In the water sector, transboundary conflicts, poor distribution and heavy use, especially of groundwater resources, characterise water use in many Arab countries. Stressed groundwater systems are often the only source of fresh water in the region, yet reserves in renewable aquifers have been withdrawn faster than they can be replenished. In 2004, water demand had exceeded the actual water resources available in the region by about 46%. The stress on available water resources and inefficient irrigation systems reduces the region's ability to use cultivable land to their full potential. Of the many constraints facing Arab food security, none is reportedly comparable to the severe water shortage problem, which has enormous future implications. In our interviews, support to development of welfare – for example access to clean water – has been mentioned as an approach that can be used as an entry point for addressing issues like democracy and good governance, respect for human rights and economic development.

### **Regional cooperation**

Regional cooperation is in the DCAR seen as the only way forward for economic development as well as sustainable development and achievement of UN's Millennium Development Goals – involving knowledge-sharing, production and investments. A focus on regional integration and regional cooperation will require revamping of existing Arab institutions, including the Arab League to be better equipped to face the new situation. Steps are already taken to transform the Arab League from a weak actor without any implementation and historically focusing on political agendas – now moving more clearly towards a development agenda. Every other summit of the Arab League will in the future be focused on development issues, promoting a technical cooperation around issues like poverty reduction, trade, education and health.

## **4 Assessment of the Strategy and Its Implementation**

As of today, the Strategy has been in force for four years. For several reasons, its implementation has proved challenging. First, there has been a shortage of staff in the field during most of the Strategy period. At the start of the period, Sida had only one officer working with the regional programme posted in the region (in Cairo), working with the areas Democracy and Good Governance and Human Rights. A second staff member was posted in Amman during the autumn 2008, to work 50% with Sustainable Use of Water and 50% with Democracy and Good Governance and Human Rights. From the autumn of 2009, these two officers have been supplemented by one National Programme Officers in Cairo and another one in Amman. The rest of the MENA Team is posted in Stockholm. Shortage of staff resources and limited presence in the field seem to be an important reason for a delay in the initiation of new interventions in the areas of Sustainable Use of Water and Regional Economic Development.

### **4.1 Overall Assessment of the Strategy**

It is a challenging task to analyse the objectives and the directions set out in the Strategy. The reason is that these are many and spread out in the document, using different wordings. Also, the linkages between different objectives and between the objectives and other directions are not made explicit. Since the Strategy objectives only require the support should “promote” the development in the four areas, they provide little guidance as to what is to be achieved.

To some extent it may have been intentional to keep the Strategy “open” and allow Sida to choose how to implement it. A reason for this may have been a limited knowledge about development cooperation on a regional level in the MENA region at the time the Strategy was developed. According to the Team’s interviews, the expectations on concrete achievements were rather low and the formulation to “promote” the development intentionally reflected these expectations. The risk is, of course, that this might have limited the Strategy’s capacity to constitute a strategic guidance for the implementation of the development cooperation in the region.

The Strategy states that activities need to be developed in an ongoing dialogue with partner organisations in the region, but recognises that existing formal and informal regional structures in the region are weak. There is, however, no discussion as to how this weakness affects the possibilities to use a regional approach for development cooperation. With the exception of the Water sector, the Strategy does not elaborate on how a regional approach can be an advantage in the different sectors. There are only general statements on the value of exchange between cultures and exchange of experiences within the region and between the region and Sweden/Europe. In the longer run, Sida is supposed to encourage and contribute to regional networks and structures in the cooperation area.

The Strategy does not elaborate on reasons for and advantages of using *one* development strategy for the region as a whole – as compared to bilateral strategies. According to the instructions for the elaboration of regional strategies developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2009 (long after the Strategy was elaborated), regional strategies should be used in connection with regional and transboundary problems. The instructions state that there has been a need to have the regional strategies focusing on adding value to regional issues and that the reason to have regional strategies should be that they provide better results than bilateral strategies. What the views on these issues were at the time of elaboration of the Strategy is not clear.

The structure of objectives in the Strategy is unclear, and has several sub-objectives with no elaboration of how they relate to each other:

- Realisation of Sweden’s policy for global development;
- Contribution towards the attainment of the UN’s Millennium Development Goals and global development;
- Development cooperation (as a goal in itself);
- Regional cooperation (as a goal in itself);
- Prevention of extremism; and
- The objectives for the different cooperation areas.

Furthermore, there is no explicit discussion on how the Strategy objectives are expected to contribute to the overall goal of poverty reduction, nor on how other instructions can lead to the achievement of Strategy objectives. In particular it would have facilitated implementation if the regional approach had been elaborated for each of the selected cooperation areas.

According to our interviews, the interpretation of the regional approach has been particularly challenging when implementing the Strategy. It appears that it has been mainly up to the individual desk officer to make this interpretation. The Strategy legitimised initiatives that were already taken in the sectors of Democracy and Good Governance and Human Rights, and few new initiatives have been taken in these areas.

Our assessment is that the Strategy has been important and guided the implementation of Sweden’s development cooperation to the MENA region in terms of:

- Which areas interventions have focused on;
- The cooperation with Swedish and international organisations;
- Five focus countries, in particular in the areas Democracy and Good Governance and Human Rights; and
- The use of a regional approach.

It is more uncertain whether the Strategy has provided any guidance to Sida when it comes to developing programmes that effectively contribute to concrete results in line with the Strategy objectives. Also, the absence of a strategic focus in the Strategy – where interventions in the same area are expected to contribute to the same objective – may be one reason why many of the initiatives supported by Sida seems to be stand-alone interventions without clear inter-linkages.

## 4.2 Selection of Cooperation Areas

At the time of drafting the Strategy, the ambition was to identify the most important cooperation areas and also provide a clear instruction from the Ministry to work on Human Rights and Democracy. Sustainable Use of Water was also apparently obvious, Governance was important and Regional Economic Development was a forthcoming topic at the time. Thus, the Strategy points to four general and broad cooperation areas. The objectives for all four areas begin with the verb “to promote” – a vague and general expression, more like an activity adding to the elasticity of the Strategy.

The relevance of the four cooperation areas was rather obvious at the time for drafting the Strategy and has also been confirmed by recent reports, such as the *Development Challenges for the Arab Region* and the *Arab Human Development Report 2009*. Also, these reports indicate an increasing approval of the regional approach as a way to solve these types of problems.

The experiences from implementation, interviews with Sida programme officers and managers as well as with the Ministry suggest that the management of these four areas in such a wide and complex region has been quite an overwhelming task. While the support in the areas Democracy and Good Governance and Human Right continued, it took a long time to develop a detailed plan for Sustainable Use of Water and no special regional plan has been developed for Regional Economic Development. Other challenges raised in interviews in relation to the regional approach include the lack of natural regional counterparts and viable organisations to work and have a dialogue with, lack of regional data for baselines etc. and difficulties to travel and cope with Arab speaking countries in the region where the knowledge in English not is well developed.

## 4.3 Focus Countries

According to the Strategy, Swedish development cooperation in the region should be restricted to states defined as developing countries by the OECD/DAC. The support should focus on the five countries in which projects adopting a regional approach had already been launched – Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Syria.

The selection of the focus countries follows rather well, but not completely, the income levels for the countries. Four out of the five focus countries are Lower Middle Income Countries according to OECD/DAC criteria. The fifth country, Lebanon, is categorised as Upper Middle Income Country. Yemen, which is not one of the focus countries, is the only country in the region in any of the two lowest categories, classified as Least Developed Countries. We have also looked at the income level for the five focus countries compared to the 41 countries selected for Swedish development assistance<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.sida.se/Svenska/Bistand--utveckling/Detta-ar-svenskt-bistand/Sveriges-bistandslander/>

These two groups together include 46 countries. Based on Gross National Income per capita 2008<sup>11</sup> the focus countries are on the richer half of these 46, ranked as number 3, 13, 17, 20, 23 – with Lebanon as number 3 (6,350 USD) and Egypt as number 23 (1,800 USD).

As a whole, the focus countries dominate the interventions, even if West Bank and Gaza, Algeria and Tunisia are included in interventions almost as often. There are also many interventions covering a large part of the region, often through multilateral organisations and international NGOs, see Table 3. There is a clear difference in that the focus countries are dominant in the two first areas of cooperation, but not in the new areas Sustainable Use of Water and Regional Economic Development.

**Table 3** Number of reviewed projects involving different countries

Area	Number of projects
Total no. of reviewed projects	32
<b>Focus countries</b>	
Jordan	18
Egypt	17
Lebanon	14
Morocco	14
Syria	14
<b>Other countries</b>	
West Bank/Gaza	15
Algeria	10
Tunisia	10
Iraq	7
Yemen	6
Iran, Israel, Libya, Turkey	2–3
Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, United Arab Emirates	1
“Regional” or not defined	8

None of the interviewees has argued for maintaining the concept of focus countries in the future. Some have highlighted that it sometimes is more relevant to work on a sub-regional level like the Maghreb region (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) or the Middle East. Transboundary water issues are also typically sub-regional. Already the current Strategy is open for support to sub-regional programmes. Sometimes the focus countries have clearly influenced which countries that are involved in an intervention. According to interviews with Sida, however, the interest of involving focus countries in interventions have not been imposed on implementers or local cooperating partners.

#### 4.4 Selection of Aid Instruments in the Implementation

The interventions Sida has supported have used a plethora of aid instruments (see Table 4 and Annex IV). Different types of training are the mostly used aid instruments (ITPs, contract-financed technical cooperation and other trainings). With the exception of ITP programmes, training has often been used together with other types of support. Out of the 32 reviewed interventions, all but five have included training components. 13 interventions only include training. The focus on training goes for all four cooperation areas.

<sup>11</sup> According to the World Bank’s Atlas method.

The Strategy tasks Sida with using the ITP and contract-financed technical cooperation instruments in certain cases. Nine ITPs have been funded, one each in the areas of Democracy and Good Governance, three in the area Sustainable Use of Water and four in the area Regional Economic Development. Contract-financed technical cooperation has been supported in one intervention each in all areas but Sustainable Use of Water.

**Table 4** Aid instruments used in Swedish development cooperation in MENA region 2006–2009  
– reviewed interventions

Aid instrument	No. reviewed	Democracy & Good Gov.	Human Rights	Water	Economic Development
Number of reviewed projects	32	7	11	7	7
Training	18	5	7	3	3
ITP	9	1	1	3	4
Contract-financed technical coop	3	1	1	–	1
Core support	8	2	6	–	–
Organisational development	11	4	6	–	1
Support to studies/research	10	2	3	3	2
Awareness raising	7	–	4	2	1
Publications	4	1	1	1	1

Organisational development has been part of 11 interventions, however only one of them in the area of Regional Economic Development. Eight of the interventions have included provision of core support. Since the some of these programmes have been like an umbrella channelling support to local NGOs, many more local NGOs have received Sida-funded core support. Three interventions have been of the type contract-financed technical cooperation. Other aid instruments applied have been support to studies/research, awareness raising and production of publications. 15 interventions include at least one of these aid instruments.

In Table 5 we have categorised the support according to the approach in terms of support to and through local NGOs, ITPs, institutional development (direct support to institutional change in regional or national institutions) and multilateral cooperation and initiatives.

**Table 5** Categories of Swedish support to the MENA region 2006–2009  
(figures not comparable with other tables)

	Total MSEK	%	Democracy & good gov.**	Human Rights**	Water	Economic development***
Total	467.0	100	97,6	212,9	78,6	77,9
Supporting local NGOs	189.9	41	80%	50%	8%	–
ITP programmes	108.6	23	2%	7%	51%	66%
Institutional development	72.9	16	7%	25%	–	15%
Multilateral initiatives	94.0	20	10%	18%	41%	19%
Not classified	1.6	0,3	2%	–	–	–

\* Including 11,3 MSEK promised by Sida for extending Children's Literature to 2011 – not formally decided

\*\* Including 5,3 MSEK to the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation of Support to Human Rights Defenders, not included on the list of decision from Sida

\*\*\* Including the Agadir initiative 4,6 Million SEK

There are interventions of all four types in all four cooperation areas. The support in the area Human Rights is the most balanced in combining different approaches. In all areas, however, the supported projects and programmes are more stand-alone efforts than efforts that interact and strengthen one another towards a common Strategy objective.

The Strategy directions on how to reach the objectives are mostly related to capacity development of individuals and organisations and awareness rising. Hence, the Team esteems the selection of aid instruments as relevant, in relation to the overarching goal of improving the situation of the poor.

However, it is more questionable whether the selection of aid instruments has increased intra-regional cooperation or cooperation between the region and Sweden. The design of the activities in several interventions is such that individuals are coming together, i.e. for training, focusing on the same subject but not including cooperation on an organisational level. An exception to this is the Regional Training Programme for Employment Agencies. Interviews have also revealed that some participants have afterwards stayed in touch and some may have exchanged information and eased contacts between their countries, but there is also one example where the result has been increased cooperation between countries in international process (see Section 5.4.3).

The selection of aid instruments has in general been sensitive to the political and conflict context in the region as appropriate, even if it varies whether there any explicit assessment has been made. The ITP Journalism and Democracy is an exception where this context does not seem to have been considered appropriately. The programme was considered unrealistic by the participants unrealistic as to what was learnt about freedom of speech and not possible to apply in their home countries.

## **4.5 Cooperation Partners and Sida's role**

In the absence of strong regional organisations or dialogue with governments Sida has depended on a dialogue with implementing partners. The dialogue with the multilateral organisations seems to have worked well, but focused on Swedish co-funding of multilateral initiatives. The dialogue with local partners has largely been taken care of by the implementing organisations.

### **The general impression of Sida among partners**

In contrast to many other donor countries, Sweden is perceived to be more neutral and is not suspected for having a hidden agenda. On the whole, Sida and Swedish support seem to have a very good reputation.

During the Evaluation no interviewees have expressed any critical views on Sida and Swedish development cooperation, with the exception of Sida's own personnel. Actors that have been directly involved in Sida-funded interventions have a clear positive view of Sida and Swedish support. The supported interventions are appreciated and Sida is seen as showing a sincere interest, and frequently participating in activities. The experience is, however, usually limited to specific interventions and not based on any broader knowledge or cooperation with Sida. Actors not directly involved in the interventions do not know much about Sida and its operations in the region.

### **Cooperation with governments and intergovernmental organisations**

In bilateral cooperation, the normal practice is to have a dialogue with the government when developing a strategy as well as during the implementation phase. As far as we have understood, no such strategic dialogue has taken place with governments or regional intergovernmental organisations. One reason may be that no intergovernmental organisations cover the entire region, despite MENA being an internationally accepted geographical area.

The absence of natural regional partners for dialogue has been a problem for Sida during implementation of the Strategy. Unlike the Swedish Institute in Alexandria, Sida does not have any Memorandum



of Understanding with the League of Arab States, which could be a relevant dialogue partner. Individual desk officers have occasionally been in contact with different departments within the League, but not entered into any systematic or strategic dialogue. There are also examples when contacts with government institutions have been necessary in order to operate in the country.

### **Cooperation and coordination with other donors**

While donor support to the region is massive, most donors mainly work bilaterally, even if regional elements can be supported through bilateral programmes. This has also complicated the strategic dialogue for Sida. Our understanding is that the consequence has been that the dialogue with other donors mainly has been oriented to individual interventions.

At the same time we see clear signs that Sida has made efforts to coordinate the Swedish support with other donors, at least in the new cooperation area Sustainable Use of Water and the on-going programmes in Democracy and Good Governance and Human Rights. The support in the area Sustainable Use of Water was prepared through a comprehensive study of transboundary cooperation, Integrated Water and Resources Management (IWRM) and opportunities for Swedish engagements in the MENA region. The study identified the needs, experiences, relevant actors and potential cooperating partners for Swedish development cooperation. In 2006–2007 Sida co-funded a study mapping out the funding to the culture sector in eight Arab countries – including the focus countries. In 2007, Sida funded a study mapping out and analysing donor-funded human rights and democracy programmes with a regional dimension. One conclusion was that Sida was quite alone in having a comprehensive regional MENA Strategy, while many development agencies supported similar interventions through bilateral programmes – including support to regional organisations. The study also concluded that there was more donor coordination on the country level than on the regional level. We have not observed any changes in the directions of Sida support because of the studies.

Most donor representatives we have interviewed have a limited knowledge of Sida's operations in the region – partly due to staff turnover. However, we believe the main reason to be that Sweden is a small donor in the region, one of few with a regional programme and have had limited staff resources in the field during most of the Strategy period. Under such conditions it is not reasonable to expect Sida to pursue the Swedish agenda within the donor community.

However, on a programme level it seems like Sida have influenced donor coordination by supporting multilateral initiatives through UNDP, OECD and the World Bank. According to interviews, Sida has been a driving force for donor coordination regarding the Jordan River and the Euphrat-Tigris cooperation. Sweden is also an important actor in the OECD programmes and has chaired the steering group for the *Good Governance* programme. Sida has been among the very first donors to commit to the programme and have allocated funds for an evaluation of it. Interviews with UNDP have also revealed that Sida is perceived as a positive actor promoting donor coordination. It has been mentioned that a supportive voice from Sida in some multilateral programmes can be as important as funding programmes. Without exaggerating, we have a clear impression that Sida is an appreciated partner.

Coordination of donors can also emerge as a side effect when Sida's support has built a structure that start to attract the interest and support from other donors. This has been the case in the *Performing Arts* programme.

### **Implementing organisations and their local partners**

Table 6 shows that 52% of the Swedish support in the region is implemented by Swedish government organisations or Swedish NGOs. With the exception of Democracy and Good Governance, all interventions implemented by Swedish government organisations agencies are ITP programmes based on open tender procedures. Swedish NGOs dominate as implementer in the area of Human Rights, but UN organisations and international NGOs also play an important role in this area. The third largest

type of implementer is multilateral organisations. The interventions implemented by consulting companies are also ITP programmes, with one exception in the area of Regional Economic Development.

**Table 6** Implementing organisations in Swedish development cooperation in MENA region, allocations 2006–2009  
– reviewed projects only

Type of organisation	Total allocation 2006–2009		Allocations in different sectors 2006–2009, MSEK			
	MSEK	%	Democracy & good gov.	Human Rights	Water	Economic development
All organisations, reviewed projects	445,0	100	85,9	207,2	78,6	73,3
Swedish government organisations	128,5	29	57,2	–	15,7	55,6
Swedish NGOs* – **	101,0	23	1,1	99,3	0,6	–
Multilateral organisations	99,6	22	9,5	44,1	31,5	14,5
UN organisations	50,6	11	–	44,1	6,5	–
World Bank	25,0	6	–	–	25,0	–
OECD	24,0	5	9,5	–	–	14,5
Other International Org. & Regional NGOs***	73,1	16	18,1	48,5	6,5	–
Consulting companies*	42,8	10	–	15,3	24,3	3,2

\* Excluding 2 evaluations of projects carried out by consulting companies for a total cost of 716,000 SEK.

\*\* One project has been promised additional 1.1 Million Euro for an extension to 2011

\*\*\* One more project of 5.3 Million SEK has been reviewed on request by Sida even if no decisions are listed 2006–2009. According to paper copies, however, such decisions exist.

It is difficult to find any logic for assessing the balance between different types of implementing organisations. Our assessment is that Sida has followed the directions given in the Strategy regarding cooperating partners. According to the Strategy:

*“In addition, existing cooperation mechanisms must be fully exploited, together with other development assistance actors, and contracts/mandates must be issued to Swedish organisations and institutions to a greater extent than at present. Although still bound by Sida guidelines, these organisations and institutions must be instructed to act independently in implementing programmes in various thematic areas.”*

The phrasing “to act independently” indicates that it is mainly Swedish NGOs and government organisations that are referred to. The Strategy also states that Sida should seek cooperation with a few named Swedish-related organisation as well as UNDP, UNICEF, OECD, World Bank and EU.

Swedish government organisations, Swedish NGOs and multilateral institutions referred to in the Strategy have implemented 74% of the support. International NGO’s, together with a regional NGO and an international foundation linked to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, has implemented another 16% of the Swedish support.

We have not observed any cooperation with the Section for Turkish-Swedish Cooperation at the Consulate-General or the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. The Swedish Institute in Alexandria has received 3.2 Million SEK in project support from Sida, a cooperation requested in the Strategy, on top of the core funding and project funding they receive from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Institute as well as Sida has proposed that all funds from the Swedish government should be allocated to the Institute by the Ministry.



In the absence of a systematic dialogue on the strategic level with governments, regional inter-governmental organisations and other donors, the implementing organisations have been the most important dialogue partners for Sida in implementing the Strategy. Some of the implementing organisations are multilateral donor organisations like UNDP and UNICEF.

As already mentioned, Sida is an appreciated partner. Our understanding is that Sida has been responsive to needs expressed by implementing partners and their local collaborators. At the same time, our overall impression is that Sida has been driving the Swedish agenda actively in terms of the Strategy and increasingly focused more on results. For example Sida has in a cultural programme actively been driving the overall objective of democracy. The regional dimension and promotion of local ownership through active involvement of local NGOs in project planning and efforts to create sustainable structures are other issues that have been on Sida's agenda. This said, it must also be concluded that many interventions do not have clear definitions of objectives and expected results with elaboration of how these are expected to lead to the achievement of the Strategy objectives. The last years' development in Swedish development cooperation, with clear orientation towards results, has not influenced the Strategy with its objectives, and has due to the time lag only started to influence planning and design of interventions.

#### 4.6 Reporting of Results in Relation to the Strategy

Sida has submitted two reports to the Ministry on the development of the interventions in the MENA region covering a part of the Strategy period, a regional report 2007 and a Strategy Report 2009. As the reports are expected to provide information against the Strategy objectives, the vagueness and multitude of objectives makes that a difficult task. Reports do not follow-up on all the different tasks and assignments in the Strategy, but rather focus on main cooperation areas or categories as described in Table 7. The vagueness can partly be explained by the fact that the people behind the Strategy felt that these were all important areas, either from a political perspective or the fact that different actors were already engaged in different areas and therefore needed a ground to continue their activities. The team behind the current Strategy also felt that achieving results in these areas in the MENA-region would be difficult and it would therefore be better to keep ambitions down and formulate less ambitious objectives such as "to promote".

**Table 7** Main cooperation areas or objectives in the Strategy and subsequent headings of reports

The MENA-strategy	Sida's 2007 report	Sida's 2009 Strategy Report
<b>Areas and objectives:</b>	<b>Narrative report categories:</b>	<b>Narrative report categories</b>
Promotion of regional interaction	Democratic Governance	Democracy/Human Rights
Democracy and good governance	Human Rights	Water resources
Respect for human rights equal rights, structures for dialogue etc.	Transboundary Water Resources	Economic development
Sustainable use of water resources	Regional Economic Growth	
Regional economic development and growth	Other	

Even under these difficult circumstances, clearer and more analytical reports could have been produced discussing developments on a strategic level and the connection between the cooperation areas as well as financial performance. For example, in the most recent report 2009 budget figures are presented without any targets, sequence or context. This makes it very difficult for the reader to understand the financial performance. From the 2007 to the 2009 report, a merger of four areas into three is made in the reporting structure, but without any explanations or comments on the reasons for this change.

With a strategy outlining vague objectives in four broad areas – reporting on results becomes almost “mission impossible”. Either you accept that reports are vague – just like the objectives – or else you have to try and “put handles” on those objectives, brake them down and identify indicators that can help assess if objectives have been met or not. Sida has chosen not to elaborate that kind of results framework due to time and staff constraints. From interviews with both Sida and the Ministry it is clear that neither party have been happy with the reporting on results or have a clear understanding of what has been achieved through the programme.

When studying the work of programme officers, interviewing implementing partners and other donors, the Team has noticed a general picture of Sida as really concerned about results, with examples of Sida insisting on log frames (existing in some, but not all interventions) and following up with great interest on the implementation and results of interventions. It has to be said that there has not been enough staff allocated for the management of the different areas, at least not before late 2009.

Based on interviews and documentation, it appears that the problem of results and reporting concerns several issues:

- Vague and too many Strategy objectives, with no clear description of what impact that is expected on the Strategy level;
- No clear focus on results in terms of outcomes, describing and monitoring change for individuals, organisations and/or society;
- A mix of too diverse and more or less result-oriented contracts with implementing partners often focusing on the activity level; and
- Partners not always providing analytical reports against clear and relevant objectives connecting their interventions to the Strategy.

## 5 Assessment of Outcomes in Cooperation Areas

During the Strategy period Sida decided to allocate SEK 518 million to different interventions. 96% of the allocation went to interventions classified to be within the four cooperation areas. The remaining SEK 21.2 million were mainly allocated for combating avian flu (bird flu) by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (SEK 18 million) and to a Swedish government agency working with Land Administration in a bilateral project (SEK 2.7 million). For the purpose of this Evaluation we have reviewed interventions covering 89% of the funds allocated by Sida during 2006–2009. For the four cooperation areas the coverage is between 87 and 97%, see further Table 8.

**Table 8** Sida allocation and disbursement 2006–2009 (MSEK) in the regional programme and proportion reviewed in the Evaluation.

Area	Allocation 2006–2009	Disbursed 2006–2009	Remain to disburse	of allocation reviewed
Total	501.8	331.5	170.3	89%
Democracy & Good Governance	88.9	56.2	32.7	97%
Human Rights	224.0	135.8	88.2	93%
Sustainable Use of Water	88.7	68.8	19.9	87%
Regional Economic Development	79.0	49.5	29.5	93%
Other	21.2	21.1	0.0	0%

In practice, Sida has worked integrated with the cooperation areas Democracy and Good Governance and Human Rights, labelled as “democracy and human rights”. The main cross-cutting theme has been support to civil society and enhanced participation with the intention that this should support a democratic development and improved respect for human rights. Some interventions are considered to contribute to the strategy objectives for both these areas.

In the following, the different interventions will be described. Also, a brief assessment of the results of interventions in terms of *effectiveness*, *efficiency*, *achieving regional cooperation* and *sustainability* has been made.<sup>12</sup> Finally, an overall assessment of the achievements in each cooperation area will be presented.

## 5.1 Democracy and Good Governance

### 5.1.1 The Cooperation Area in the Strategy

The Strategy brings forward a direction for the support to the cooperation area Democracy and Good Governance initiated already 2002–2003 in a Position Paper from Sida. While the position paper defined culture and media as a separate area of cooperation, it was in the Strategy included in the broad area Democracy and Good Governance. According to the Team’s interviews the intention with the Strategy was that the initiatives that had already been taken should continue.

The Strategy’s objective for the cooperation area Democracy and Good Governance is to:

*“promote democracy and good governance, e.g. by taking steps to promote the emergence of a strong civil society.”*

According to the Strategy, Swedish assistance should promote the four principles of non-discrimination, openness and access, accountability and participation. It should also encourage understanding and respect for gender equality and responsible exercise of authority. It is stated as a basic principle that all interventions “must have a regional impact”. The assistance should promote the development of:

- Stronger parliaments;
- Stronger civil societies; and
- In general improve the prospects for a more democratic course in the region by:
  - The growth of networks;
  - Capacity building in democracy and human rights;
  - Initiatives with a pro-dialogue, conflict prevention approach; and
  - Initiatives in culture and media – aiming at strengthening democracy, for examples focusing on children’s literature, promoting of reading or media programmes targeting women and young people.

In the strategic considerations it is mentioned that support in the four cooperation areas should be provided to various levels in the state apparatus and in civil society. It is stated that contract-financed technical cooperation should be used to strengthen the institutional capacity of government agencies and organisations in such areas as water, natural resources and economic development, improving the trade policy skills and supply capacity. For the cooperation area Democracy and Good Governance, however,

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<sup>12</sup> Five key words have been used in the assessment of each criteria:

*None* – not relevant/not addressed,

*Unlikely* – achievement of the criteria does not appear probable,

*Possible* – the criteria may be achieved, however with some reservations due to uncertainties,

*Likely* – the criteria should be achieved, despite some uncertainties,

*Most likely* – criteria will most certainly be achieved.

nothing is mentioned about administrative good governance. Our understanding of the Strategy is that it in this area targets Democratic Governance.

The Strategy acknowledges that lack of effective regional inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations means that a natural partner is not always available at regional level. It is also stated that “If the strategy is to help promote the development of democracy, better governance and greater respect for human rights, a long-term perspective and mutual trust must be present. An ongoing dialogue should therefore be sought between Swedish and regional partners concerning the form and direction of cooperation programmes.”

### 5.1.2 Initiation and Design of Interventions

The Evaluation has reviewed projects corresponding to 97% of the resources allocated to the area during 2006–2009. Some of these interventions started before 2006 and some are still ongoing. Table 9 gives an overview of the interventions in the cooperation area, the allocation to them and the disbursements during 2006–2009.

**Table 9** Interventions related to Democracy and Good Governance with decisions on allocations 2006–2009. MSEK.

	Allocation 2006–2009	Disbursed 2006–2009	Implementation period
Total Democracy and Good Governance	88.9	56.2	
Total, Reviewed Projects	86.3	54.1	
Performing Arts	47.3	25.8	2004–2012
Children’s Literature	18.1	17.6	2006–2011
OECD-MENA Governance Programme	9.5	4.5	2005–2010
Regional Training Pgm for Employment	7.0	2.2	2008–2010
ITP Journalism and Democracy	1.7	1.5	2008
Inception Phase for a Media Programme	1.6	1.5	2008–2009
Animate it	1.1	1.1	2007–2008
Not Reviewed Projects	2.6	2.1	

\* Additionally SEK 5 million disbursed 2006 based on allocation before 2006.

\*\* Additionally Euro 1.1 million promised to the project for extension to 2011.

\*\*\* Additionally 6 Million disbursed 2006–2007 based on allocations before 2006.

We have not found any clear strategic approach from Sida on how to achieve the Strategy objective. In most cases there are no clear inter-linkages between different interventions strengthening each other. The selected projects are in line with the strategy, mainly focusing on promoting civil society and the long term development of a more democratic course. The support to good governance has targeted the administration rather than democratic institutions. Almost all projects build on previous initiatives, the projects in culture and media mainly based on initiatives from Sida and projects supporting good governance emerging from the beneficiaries and implementers. The Interventions Design Matrix gives an overview of the selection and design of the reviewed projects. Most of the interventions we have not reviewed (7 out of 10) are small allocations to twinning activities for government agencies.

The supported interventions can be divided in three sub-areas – culture, media and good governance. The *culture and media* interventions are in line with the Strategy and have been justified by their support to a democratic development. All interventions started or followed initiatives taken before the Strategy period, between 2002 and 2005.<sup>13</sup> There has been a clear focus on supporting the development of civil society, through support to local NGOs and work with individual journalists. Sida has been the driving

<sup>13</sup> In the case of the ITP Journalism and Democracy it was a regionalisation of a course that had already been running with other participants.

# Intervention Design Matrix: Democracy and Good Governance

	Main area	Relevance	Initiative	Implementer	Beneficiary	Type of support	Regional approach
<b>Performing Arts</b>	Culture Civil society	Clear, but long term – development of freedom of expression; citizen development	Sida/Implementer. Regionalisation of experiences from Palestine. Started before the strategy.	Swedish government institute – based on previous coop. Local NGO network	NGOs – theatre groups Performers Audiences – incl. women, poor & children	Funding Training & org. dev. Exchange of experiences Opportunities for coop	Regional exchange & coop based on groups selected by the implementer. Participative planning.
<b>Children's Literature</b>	Culture Civil society	Clear, but long term – development of creative individuals	Sida. Regionalisation by Sida of experiences from Palestine. Pre-pared before the strategy.	International foundation identified by Sida Local NGO network	NGO's Sector actors Children	Funding Capacity building Exchange of experiences	Regional exchange & coop based on countries and groups selected by Sida/ project
<b>Animate It</b>	Culture Civil society	Clear, but long term – development of creative individuals	Consultant/Sida. Originally part of Performing Arts	Swedish NGO – a new host for the project	NGO's Trainers Children	Training Equipment for animation	Weak. National workshops and a regional evaluation meeting
<b>Media Inception Period</b>	Media Civil society	Clear, probably medium- term – freedom of expression	Sida initiative to establish a media programme, following earlier attempts	A media institute in a Swedish university	None. Only preparations for a programme	None. Only preparations for a programme	Not sufficient involvement of partners in design
<b>ITP Media</b>	Media Civil society	Clear, but long-term – promote freedom of expression through training of journalists	Sida. Regionalisation of existing ITP course	A media institute in a Swedish university already running the ITP with other participants	Individual journalists and their organisations	Training Exchange of experiences	Course for training and exchange for individuals –promoting individual networking
<b>OECD/MENA Governance</b>	Governance	Indirect and probably long-term – promote national reform	Multilateral – the OECD-MENA initiative. Started before the strategy	Multilateral cooperation through OECD	Governments/Ministers Government agencies	Exchange of experiences Peer review and advice Opportunities for coop	Partner-created platform for demand-driven exchange and support to national initiatives
<b>Regional Training Programme Employment</b>	Governance	Direct – capacity building for im-proved employment services	Beneficiaries/ Implementer. Regionalisation of previous bilateral support.	Swedish government agency	Government agencies Employment seekers	Exchange of experiences	Workshops for training and exchange for sub-regional agencies. Close links to institutional reform.

force with the main idea to regionalise experiences from the West Bank/Gaza in the areas performing arts, children's literature and media. While the intervention supporting performing arts was developed together with the implementer in West Bank and Gaza, Sida searched for an implementing organisation for programmes supporting children's literature and media. According to our interviews, it was understood from the outset that substantial time would be needed for these programmes to provide any sustainable results, maybe 5–10 years.

The idea is that support to civil society, culture and media in general should improve the prospects for a more democratic course in the region and also influence the respect for human rights. In our interviews with independent experts, it has been stated that while support to media may have a direct influence on the freedom of speech and democracy, cultural projects often have an indirect and long-term effect on the democratic development where there may be a need for perspectives of maybe 30–50 years to achieve any real impact.

Our assessment is that also the interventions focusing on *good governance* are in line with the Strategy, even if it could be discussed which Strategy objective they are related to. The link to democratic governance is long-term and indirect. Both initiatives are related to economic development, an area where the Strategy states that contract-financed technical cooperation should be used to strengthen the institutional capacity of government agencies and organisations. The underlying logic for the *OECD-MENA Governance Programme* is that increasing efficiency, accountability and transparency of the public sector is a pre-condition for a stronger, fairer and less corrupt economy. The programme is also linked to an investment programme. The Regional *Training Programme for Employment Agencies* is more directly linked to strengthening institutional capacity related to economic development.

According to the Strategy, the assistance should promote *stronger parliaments*, but only a small support to election observers to Lebanon 2009 has been carried out in this area. We have also seen references to an initiative to support women parliamentarians that partly seem to have been implemented during the strategy period. In addition, Sida assessed a support to UNDP's programme for enhanced participation for women in public life during 2008/2009, but the proposal was finally rejected due to cut down of the budget. Another request for support to election observers in Jordan will be declined due to the absence of a regional dimension.

All projects are implemented by Swedish or international organisations, in which Sweden is a member. The three largest programmes channel support to national structures – NGO's as well as governments. All initiatives include or focus on capacity building of national organisations, or in one case of individuals. In the area of culture and media Sida's intention has been to build on and complement regional interest for cooperation. In the *Children's Literature* programme no regional cooperation existed before the intervention while in the *Performing Arts* programme the Sida intervention has an ambition to establish a stable regional network based on the interest of the participating local groups. The support to administrative governance has been directed to an existing multilateral initiative and a twinning-like project developed by the involved government agencies.

The idea of indirect support using Swedish or international organisations has clearly been used in the two largest programmes – *Performing Arts* and *Children's Literature*. A large proportion of Sida funds have been used by the implementer to support the operations of local NGOs based on approved work plans – between SEK 500,000 and SEK 1.5 million per organisation and year<sup>14</sup>. Both programmes also include capacity building for supported organisations and/or other actors important for the development of the subject area. While the implementer and local NGOs in the *Performance Arts* programme already were active in the area, such organisations could not be identified for the *Children's Literature*

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<sup>14</sup> The independent theatre groups receive an annual support of approx. SEK 500,000–600,000 each based on approved work plans. The national host organisations for the Children's Literature has received USD 200,000 per year from October 2008 based on approved work plans for themselves and 3–4 local cooperating partners.



programme. Neither the implementing international foundation nor three out of the five local partners had any previous experience from work with children's literature. On the other hand the Strategy mentions that "efforts should also be made to engage in cooperation" with this particular foundation.

Similar for the programmes for *Performing Arts* and *Children's Literature* are that they build on a Swedish idea for regional cooperation, where the selection of countries for interventions are clearly influenced by the focus countries in the Strategy and where the local NGOs are selected by the implementer. There has been a development driven by Sida towards a greater involvement of the groups in planning and ambitions for establishing a sustainable regional network. This is in particular the case for the current phase of the *Performing Arts* programme in which two LFA seminars has been held with a participatory approach involving the local theatre groups. The regional dimension also includes opportunities for exchange of knowledge and experiences and regional capacity building initiatives. The project *Animate It* was originally a part of the *Performance Arts* programme, but was not continued. The initiative got separate funding for capacity building of local organisations for one year, but with no clear regional dimension.

The *OECD/MENA Governance Programme* is demand-driven and includes peer support to national reforms, national analysis, implementation support and evaluation of national reform progress. The resources for supporting implementation on the national level is however very limited. A main purpose of the initiative is to facilitate policy dialogue and sharing of experience on public governance among policy makers from the MENA countries and their OECD counterparts. The steering committee and working groups are co-chaired by a MENA country and an OECD country, which shows the clear ambition of regional ownership. Coordination with initiatives from bilateral and international development agencies are considered important.

The *Regional Training Programme for Employment Agencies* focuses training linked to institutional capacity building through a twinning-like regional cooperation between the employment agencies in the Maghreb region (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) and Sweden. The intervention builds on previous bilateral support and the ITP concept – providing training and opportunities for exchange of experiences and networks, but with a closer link to institutional development. The project was developed by all involved agencies.

The *Inception Phase of the Media Programme* was a study preparing for a programme that never started, while the ITP Media was planned as a complement to the Media Programme and meant a regionalisation of a course in Journalism and Democracy running since 2004.

We have noticed clear indications that Sida officers have tried to implement directions in the Strategy by working with the selected areas, promoting civil society, work with Swedish organisations and organisations named in the Strategy, using a regional approach and including focus countries in the support. It can be discussed whether it was appropriate to choose the foundation mentioned in the Strategy to host the *Children's Literature* programme, even if Sida had problems in finding an organisation.

### 5.1.3 Intervention Results

The Evaluation is based on a limited amount of written documentation on results. The *Performance Arts* programme was evaluated 2006. Sida recently procured an evaluation of *Children's Literature* and has set aside funds for evaluating the OECD/MENA programme. We have also had access to reports on results from five of the seven reviewed interventions.<sup>15</sup> This documentation has been supplemented by interviews with representatives of Sida and some of the interventions. Our understanding of the results are summarised in Intervention Results Matrix.

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<sup>15</sup> The exceptions are the Inception Study for the media programme, which Sida rejected, and the Regional Training Programme for Employment. For the latter we have received some impressions of the programme from staff employed by SIPU International.

## Intervention Results Matrix: Democracy and Good Governance

	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Achieving regional coop.	Sustainability
Performing Arts	Most likely. Created a critical mass for independent performing art with broad outreach. Stronger independent theatre groups. Improved democracy perspective and outreach over time. Directly reached out to citizens. Evaluated.	Uncertain. International co-ordination and administrative support for the programme is rather expensive.	Achieved cooperation and exchange of experiences between local groups. Potential for establishment of a sustainable regional network through	Not on the same level without donor support. Capacity built and most groups likely to remain, but not on the same level without support. Uncertain for the regional network. High degree of participation, but ownership still to be proved and dependant on donor funding.
Children's Literature	Possible but too early to assess despite 3.5 years of implementation. Slow start and initial problems. Directly reached out to citizens. To be evaluated.	Low. Almost 2 years before becoming fully operational.	Primarily focus on national activities, but regional support and exchange of experiences for different actors in the sector.	Uncertain. Primarily focus on sustainable local NGOs, but they are dependant on donor funding. Unclear ownership for the regional network.
Animate It	Likely. Reached the target group and developed capacity of civil society organisations. Indirectly reached out to citizens.	No information.	No clear ambition to establish regional cooperation.	Questionable. Supplied equipment lacked manuals in English or Arabic. Some organisations a lack of funds to continue.
Media Inception	None. Proposed programme rejected by Sida.	Irrelevant. Proposed programme rejected by Sida.	None. Proposed programme rejected by Sida.	None. Proposed programme rejected by Sida.
ITP Media	Unlikely. An appreciated course, but did not help participants to promote change	Rather low cost, with no initial country visits or follow-up course.	Not much. Exchange of experiences not perceived relevant.	Unlikely, see the other columns.
OECD/MENA Governance	Possible and have a potential, but also a risk of not directly influencing operations on the ground. Process oriented with small means to support national implementation. 4 out of 7 countries elaborating a national reform plan are among the focus countries. Stronger focus on evaluation of national reform progress. To be evaluated.	Uncertain. Risk for high costs for networking and international coordination and administrative support. Possibly risk for bureaucracy and difficulties to directly influence operations on the ground.	Achieved regional outreach on a high level with demand-driven cooperation and support. Partner-created platform for exchange on governance reform on a level of policy and senior officials	Uncertain for national reform initiatives, due to lack of capacity for national institutions. Highly uncertain for the regional initiative – this has been dependant on the OECD secretariat.
Regional Training Programme Employment	Likely. Appreciated by beneficiaries and linked to institutional development. Likely to indirectly effect citizens.	No information	Provides a platform for coop. and ex-change of experiences between similar agencies. Potential for harmonisation.	Most likely for capacity building and reform within each agency. A potential for sustained regional cooperation and harmonisation.



Reasonably positive results are shown from the interventions in the area of culture and administrative governance. *Performing Arts* has since the start 2004 been allocated more than SEK 60 million and has established independent performance arts in the region through local theatre groups, involved a lot of performers as well as reached out to audiences, increasingly in poor areas and to vulnerable groups. Capacity has been built in the independent groups. According to the evaluation of the first phase sensitive issues of human rights and democracy may not have been portrayed in a very direct way – as this would also cause problems for the artists. But there has been a genuine attempt to portrait issues related to humanity and conditions faced by present Middle East Societies that can generate reflection and debate. It is also stated that the implementer has been very cautious in pushing development issues like democracy and freedom of speech and that problems with self censorship mainly has been discussed on a bilateral level. As requested by Sida, the current phase of the programme has been designed and planned with a high degree of involvement of the theatre groups with the objective to build a sustainable regional network and phase out the support from the Swedish organisation. On the level the groups are operating now, however, the groups are most likely to be dependent on continued donor funding just as the regional network. Funding is a global challenge for the culture sector, and the lack of support from governments to the independent sector is a problem in the MENA region. The network may also be vulnerable if the ownership from the involved groups turns out to be insufficient once the Swedish support is withdrawn.

While similar in design, the programme for *Children's Literature* has been less successful. It took longer time to get the programme started at all, and after it had started it took more or less two years for the programme to become fully operational. There have been problems to identify organisations to cooperate with, in particularly in one of the five involved countries, and during some periods the ownership for the implementing foundation has been very weak. According to our interviews, Sida has raised the problems with management for the foundation and also tried to assist the programme in other difficulties they have encountered. After the initial problems, the programme is now up and running and reaches out with support to local NGOs, establishment of libraries for children, promotion of good children's literature and capacity building of actors in the sector. There is a potential for the programme to be effective. Sida has recently decided to extend the support<sup>16</sup> and to evaluate the programme. Being a cultural programme, the local NGOs will almost certainly depend on continued donor funding to maintain their activities related to *Children's Literature*. It is not clear to us whether there is a chance of establishing a sustainable regional network or not.

Animate It is likely to have achieved its objectives but there was no clear objective of regional cooperation and the sustainability is questionable. The Regional Training Programme for Employment Agencies in the Maghreb region is likely to be effective, since we know from in-house sources at SIPU International that the programme is clearly appreciated by participating agencies, at the same time as it is clearly linked to institutional development. The direct cooperation between similar agencies contrasts to the more comprehensive approach to public sector reform in the *OECD/MENA Governance Programme*. The latter has a high potential of effecting reform initiatives since it is a demand driven cooperation with clear regional ownership. On the other hand there is a risk that the cooperation stops with studies and exchange of experiences. Only seven of the participating MENA countries have developed national reform plans, but four of them are focus countries in the Swedish Strategy. A problem is that there is very limited resources to support implementation of the national reform plans, at the same time as national institutions have a limited capacity. It is also unclear whether the initiative is sustainable. The regional cooperation has been dependant on the OECD secretariat, but there is a discussion on phasing out the role of the secretariat.

<sup>16</sup> According to interviews Sida has promised additional Euro 1.1 million to extend the programme up to June 2011.

The *Inception phase of a media programme* followed an attempt from Sida to establish a media programme already 2006. Just as the decision to award a contract was to be taken there was turmoil linked to the publication of the Mohammed cartoons in a Danish newspaper. The planned three year SEK 24.5 million programme was halted. A few years later Sida made new attempts to get a programme started and funded this inception implemented by a media institute in a Swedish University. The proposed programme was however not developed enough and was rejected by Sida. The *ITP media programme* was planned as a complement to the media programme, and was implemented by the same media institute. While the lecturers and the training were appreciated by the participants, it did not help them to promote change in their home situation since the ideas were perceived to be utopian and not contextualised to their reality. The report stated that “A course in journalism and democracy set in a, for the participants, foreign country will be more theoretical than practical since there is no way for the participants to practice in their own working environment.”

While the results vary, we have observed clear indications that Sida officers have been results oriented – focusing on promotion of democracy – and increasingly required programmes to use systematic approaches like LFA. As mentioned before, Sida has also been a driving force for evaluating major programmes. A clear orientation towards results is also shown by rejecting the proposal for a media programme after the inception phase.

#### **5.1.4 Overall Achievement of the Strategy Objective**

It is difficult to observe any real strategic approach to Democracy and Good Governance in the MENA region, neither in the Strategy itself nor in the implementation of it. Even if most interventions have been rather successful, or show a potential to be so, there are reasons to doubt that the Swedish support has been effective in promoting Democracy and Good Governance – in particular since our interpretation is that the Strategy refers to democratic governance rather than administrative governance.

Almost no activities have been carried out in the area closest to democratic governance – supporting strong parliaments. The efforts in the second most important area for promoting democracy – media – the initiatives to start a programme was not successful. The support to development of the cultural sector and administrative governance are important objectives in themselves. It is more questionable when these interventions are expected to promote democracy in societies with authoritarian regimes and a weak civil society. At least there is a need for a very long perspective for these efforts to have any effect on democracy and democratic governance.

In our interviews with Sida it has been pointed out that cultural project can be a tool to affect cultural change which in turn can have profound effects on possibilities of democracy. It has been argued that rather than discarding cultural projects as such the problem seems to be to find interventions which are able to relate to and have an effect on significant aspects of the political culture. It is probably true that the support to performing arts in general terms has opened up a space for freedom of expression, even if the theatre groups are careful with addressing sensitive issues. It is difficult to know to what extent this has led to any more concrete results relevant for a more democratic development. An additional concern is that for the cultural programmes the financial sustainability without continued donor funding is highly uncertain. This is true also for many cultural initiatives in Sweden. On the other hand, a clear advantage of the design of these programmes is that they have reached all the way out to citizens and may have made a difference for them in their daily lives.

In retrospect, it is important to consider that most likely it was difficult to find any means at all to work with the Swedish policy of promoting democracy and human rights in a non-provocative way in a region where these issues are sensitive and where there are suspicions that western donors have a hidden agenda. Independent observers we have interviewed have not been surprised that Sida has not worked together with parliamentarians since that is very difficult in the region. With democracy and human rights as the main perspective, it was probably not perceived as natural to seek cooperation with governments and the

regional structures were non-existing or weak. Additionally, at that time there was only one Sida employee working in the field, the Swedish support should have a regional approach, promote exchange within the region and between cultures and not duplicate what others were doing. Cultural support to NGOs through Swedish or international organisations was one way to make a concrete positive contribution, realising that it would need to be a long-term support and that the effects on the democracy in the region would not be significant. The Strategy was also clear in that *“taking steps to promote the emergence of a strong civil society”* was an important way to promote Democracy and Good Governance – indicating that there was an awareness of a very long perspective in time for such achievements.

## 5.2 Human Rights

### 5.2.1 The Cooperation Area in the Strategy

Like for the area Democracy and Good Governance, the support in the area of Human Rights took off in 2002–2003 and is built on Sida’s Position Paper from 2003. The Teams interviews have suggested that the intention, when developing the Strategy, was to continue already initiated interventions.

The Strategy objective for the cooperation area Human Rights is to:

*“...promote respect for human rights, including equal rights, conditions and opportunities for women and girls, and to encourage the development both of regional networks and of structures for dialogue on rights perspectives and basic universal values, etc.”*

Within this area, Swedish assistance is to focus on promoting respect both for human rights and for the principles of the rule of law, and to encourage a strengthened regional cooperation. A number of “appropriate interventions” within this area as set out in the Strategy:

- Efforts to establish ombudsman functions;
- Promotion of the development of an independent judiciary;
- Capacity building in other parts of the judicial system;
- Projects aimed at strengthening civil society’s faith in and access to the machinery of justice;
- Strengthening the position of women and young people in the political arena and in the public debate, where target groups should include women lawyers, human rights advocates, parliamentarians and journalists;
- Assistance to regional and national organisations and institutes in the MENA region, in developing research and education/training capacity in the areas of democracy and human rights, including culture and media; and
- Support for regional interventions aimed at strengthening countries’ capacity to absorb refugees in need of international protection.

### 5.2.2 Intervention Initiation and Design

In terms of allocations, the Human Rights area is the significantly largest cooperation area among the four. Allocations to the area under the period amounted to SEK 224.0 million. Out of this, a sample of 10 interventions was selected for review, covering in total SEK 207.6 million, equalling 93% of total allocations. One additional programme with allocation of SEK 5.3 million during the strategy period has also been reviewed even if the decision did not appear on the list received by Sida. See Table 10.

The interventions included in the sample can broadly be categorised under two themes:

- *Women and youth* – the strengthening of these groups’ position on the political arena and in the public debate,
- *Organisational capacity building* – in terms of assistance to regional and national organisations and institutes in the MENA region.

**Table 10** Interventions related to Human Rights with decisions on allocations 2006–2009. Million SEK

	Allocation 2006–2009	Disbursed 2006–2009	Implementation period
Total Human Rights	224.0	135.8	
Total, Reviewed Projects	207.6	123.0	
Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network	36.8	28.2	2004–2011
Academic Human Rights Training	36.1	20.1	2003–2011
UNICEF Youth Participation	29.0	16.0	2005–2011
Women's Empowerment	22.5	16.5	2003–2010
Children's Rights	20.9	8.4	2008–2010
Civil Society Advocacy	20.2	6.2	2009–2011
ITP Gender Equality	15.3	3.5	2007–2011
Juvenile Justice	11.8	9.0	2003–2010
UNDP Arab Human Development Report	8.9	8.9	2009–2010
Human Rights in Egypt	6.2	6.2	2006–2009
Euro-Mediterranean Foundation of Support to Human Rights Defenders	*	*	2004–2009
Not Reviewed Projects	16.6	12.7	

\* 5.3 Million SEK allocated during the strategy period for 2007–2009. The decisions are not on the electronic lists received from Sida and therefore not included in the statistics. Included in the review since the project was evaluated.

The Intervention Design Matrix summarises the main aspects of the interventions. The portfolio consists of a large number of small or medium scale projects. This can be explained by the weak formal or informal regional structures, hence natural cooperation partners with the capacity to carry out larger-scale projects and programmes at the regional level are difficult to find. Since there are several diversified interventions in this cooperation area we have included brief descriptions of the projects in Annex IV.

All interventions under review appear *relevant to the strategy objective* related to Human Rights. In view of the objective being broadly defined, this could be more or less expected.

*Initiatives* for interventions appear, in most of the cases, to have been taken by Sida. At some occasions, initiative has been taken in collaboration with international or non-governmental organisations (Swedish or local/regional). The great majority of interventions were initiated before the approval of the Strategy. It becomes clear from the review that most programmes have had a long starting-up phase, most commonly due to the time-demanding but highly important task of finding appropriate collaborating partners, sometimes also due to weak structures or bureaucratic constraints. Only two interventions within the sample have been decided upon during the Strategy period. These were identified through two calls for proposals (2007, 2008) launched by Sida, where Swedish non-governmental organisations were invited to develop regional programmes in the field of Democracy and Human Rights.<sup>17</sup> Each of the two processes resulted in around ten proposals, from which Sida selected two (one in 2007 – the *Children's Rights program*, and one in 2008 – *The Civil Society Advocacy program*).

<sup>17</sup> The calls for proposals were the result of a mapping study of regional Human Rights and Democracy programmes in the MENA region, commissioned by Sida in line with provisions in the Strategy. The purpose was to situate the developing Sida programme in the context of other regional donors. The study was delivered in June 2007 and identified that Sida is one of few donors with a clear regional cooperation framework and that this remains a relevant way of operating. Further, the study emphasised that much efforts needs to be invested in strengthening regional structures both at state and civil society level and in supporting long-term efforts to build ownership and well founded strategies relevant at national and regional levels. (Sida Regional Report, MENA, 2007, p. 33)

## Intervention Design Matrix: Human Rights

Intervention	Relevance	Initiative	Implementer	Beneficiary	Type of support	Regional approach
<b>Women and Young people: strengthening these groups' position in the political arena and in the public debate</b>						
Juvenile justice	Long-term – promote respect for human rights	Sida and International NGO	International NGO	Adolescents in claim with justice	Org. development through training programmes	Partner-created opportunities for regional exchange and learning
UNICEF Youth Participation	Long-term – promote the rights of youth	Sida and multilateral	Multilateral. Regional & Country Offices and national NGOs	Adolescents in the region	Programme support	Regionalisation dimension mainly within the int. org. however reg database on adolescents to be est.
Women's Empowerment	Long-term – promote the equal rights & conditions for women	Sida and Swedish NGO	Swedish NGO through local NGOs (women organisations)	Local NGOs and women in the region	Training and institutional capacity development	Partner/beneficiaries-created platform for demand driven exchange and support to national initiatives
Children's Rights	Long-term – promote the rights of the child	Sida initiative, asking for proposals	Swedish NGO and local advocacy groups	Local NGOs and children in the region	Programme support	Partner-created opportunities for regional exchange and learning
ITP Gender Equality	Long-term – promote respect for human rights	Sida	Swedish company	Women, girls in the region and their organisations	Training (ITP)	Sida-created opportunities for regional exchange and learning
Human Rights in Egypt	Promote respect for human rights.	Partner country	Multilateral and relevant ministry	Gov officials, journalist, police	Training	Not regional – one country intervention.
<b>Organisational capacity building: Assistance to regional and national organisations and institutes in the MENA region</b>						
Academic Human Rights Training	Long-term – promote respect for human rights	Sida	Swedish research institute and university and Lebanese Foundation	Academic institutions and human rights experts	Training and institutional capacity development	Regional exchange aiming at Partner-created regional platform for academics in the long term
Euro-Med. HR Network (EMHRN)	Long-term – strengthen regional network for dialogue on rights	Denmark and NGOs in the region	International NGO local networks, 2 coordinators in the region	Local and regional organisations: network of 82 European and Arabic HR organisations	Core support and support for a conference and a study	Partner-created platform for regional exchange between NGO
Euro-Med. Human Rights Foundation (EMHRF)	Short-term, rapid response interventions to HR activists	International NGO	Regional network (see EMHRN)	Individual HR activists, organisations in the region	Core support	See EMHRN – same regional coverage
UNDP Arab Human Dev. Report	Improve the knowledge of HR related	Multilateral	Multilateral	Wider public	Dissemination of report	Regional dissemination of HR related information
Civil Society Advocacy	Improve the knowledge of HR related	Sida initiative, asking for proposal	Swedish NGO and NGOs based in the region	NGOs and the wider public	Organisational development	Existing Beneficiaries created platform for watchdog function strengthened



*Implementers* of interventions are Swedish actors (research institutes or NGOs), international organisations or regional/local NGOs. While Sida appears to have a close dialogue with its direct implementing partners, there does not appear to be any direct dialogue between these partners' collaborators in the region and Sida. As far as interviewees have any direct experience from working with Sida, the general view is that it is a trusted collaborator, open for dialogue, with the added value of being regarded as "neutral", as opposed to several other bilateral donors. The latter is an aspect well worth to take into consideration – Sida (Sweden) appears to be in a better position to successfully work with more sensitive issues of human rights than many other donors intervening in the region.

As to *beneficiaries* of the interventions under review, these represent a wide diversity and appear relevant for achieving the Strategy objective. It should be noted that, while for some of the programmes the direct beneficiaries are the poor or marginalised people in the region (e.g. the *Women's Empowerment programme*), for other interventions, these groups are rather indirect beneficiaries while direct beneficiaries consist in academia, or more well-established NGOs (e.g. the *Academic Human Rights Training program*, the *Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network*).

The type of support offered from Sida varies depending on collaborating partner (e.g. support to international organisation; through Swedish NGO; to regional NGO network). Sida is the only financer for the great majority of programmes, but efforts appear to be undertaken to diversify sources of funding. The prospects for the different programmes to – in the long term – become self-financing, appears varying. While the support to, e.g. the *HR Women's Empowerment programme* quite certainly will depend on further donor financing also in a long-term perspective, others might have better potential to become self-financing, e.g. the *Juvenile justice programme*.

The *regional approach* in the interventions under review shows important variations. The regional dimension in the *UNICEF Youth Participation programme*)<sup>18</sup> mainly is support to the multilateral organisation in establishing more exchange between its country offices in the region. Other interventions appear focused on strengthening already existing regional networks and collaborations (e.g. the *Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network programme*, the *Civil Society Advocacy program*). Again other interventions have as their objective to establish regional exchanges while these do yet not exist, or exist but only to a limited extent (e.g. *Women's Empowerment programme*).

Broadly categorised under the three types of regional interventions set out by the Strategy, the *Academic Human Rights Training program*, the *Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network program*, the *UNDP Arab Human Development Report dissemination*, *ITP Gender Equality programme* and the *Civil Society Advocacy programme* appears to fall under the first category, "regional or sub-regional interventions". The aim is in these interventions to develop the region or the sub-region as a whole. The *Juvenile justice program*, the *UNICEF Youth Participation program*, the *Women's Empowerment programme* and the *Children's Rights programme* can be sorted under the second category, "interventions that are undertaken bilaterally in a number of countries but which include elements of regional exchange and cooperation between these countries". Only the *Human Rights in Egypt* intervention falls within the third category, "interventions undertaken bilaterally at country level or with two countries, where these are expected to strengthen regional efforts or have a favourable regional impact, or may develop into a regional intervention". Since this intervention has been esteemed not having the potential to strengthen regional efforts (nor to develop into a regional intervention) Sida has, as mentioned above, decided to withdraw.

### 5.2.3 Intervention Results

Based on available documentation and interviews with relevant stakeholders, a brief assessment of project results – in terms of the *effectiveness*, *efficiency*, *achieving regional cooperation*, and *sustainability* – in relation to the Strategy objective for Human Rights has been made. It is presented in the Intervention Results Matrix below.

<sup>18</sup> It is also an attention to establish a regional database on adolescents, expected to be launched in October 2010.

## Intervention Results Matrix: Human Rights

	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Achieving regional coop.	Sustainability
<b>Women and Young people: strengthening the position of these groups in the political arena and in the public debate</b>				
<b>Juvenile justice</b>	Most likely. Changed legislation. Trusted and perceived neutral implementer	Possible. Work through existing structures	Most likely. National programmes with strong elements of regional exchange and cooperation.	Likely. Working methods involve high participatory elements of regional and local partners (e.g. continuous dialogue).
<b>UNICEF Youth Participation</b>	Possible. Experienced implementer, but serious delays in starting pgm.	Possible. Work through existing structure, slow start & risk for bureaucracy	Unlikely. The regional dimension limited to exchange between UNICEF country offices	Uncertain. Unclear to what extent regional/local actors have been involved in programme formulation.
<b>Women's Empowerment</b>	Most likely. Reforms in the right direction, capacity in local NGOs built. Reached out to vulnerable women.	Possible. Support is channelled through NGOs focused on strengthening these.	Most likely. Facilitated regional initiatives for broader cooperation and promoting exchange within the region.	Likely. Reforms in the right direction, local capacity built and ownership secured by demand-driven advice and cooperation. Dependent on donor funding to maintain activity level.
<b>Children's Rights</b>	Uncertain. Programme has recently been initiated.	Uncertain. Use of local and regional partners. Risks for fluctuation in USD	Likely. Enables communication between project members, creates a platform for regional exchange and collaboration.	Likely. Active participation of partners, local capacity and ownership built during inception
<b>ITP Gender Equality</b>	Likely. Focus on five countries to reach a critical mass of participants from each of these countries. Links to org. change	Unknown. No independent information available.	Likely. Opportunities for exchange, learning and network between participants.	Possible. Links to organisational change, follow-up of training planned
<b>Human Rights in Egypt</b>	Possible, however no information on follow-up of training results.	Unknown.	None.	Possible. Capacity built, the intervention implemented in close collaboration with relevant ministries.
<b>Organisational capacity building: Assistance to regional and national organisations and institutes in the MENA region</b>				
<b>Academic Human Rights Training</b>	Likely. Stepwise increased focus on institutional capacity strengthening, clear results orientation	Possible. Risk for high costs for regional meetings.	Likely. Opportunities for regional exchange and learning, creation of a platform for regional exchange	Possible, but not clear if it will be possible to create a sustainable platform and funding
<b>EMHRN</b>	Likely. Added value with a NGO network. Process-oriented with relatively weak concrete results	Uncertain. By nature a meeting-intensive initiative that is resource-demanding	Most likely. A NGO network established with substantial regional exchange and dialogue between the region & EU	No exit planned. Dependent on donor funding.
<b>EMHRF</b>	Likely – as long as beneficiaries' work is valuable in terms of project and strategy objectives.	Possible. The support of activists and organisations in need appears efficient	Possible. Which org. EMHRF supports is confidential, but probably facilitates regional cooperation	Uncertain. Aim at making HR defenders' work more sustained and sustainable. No proper ownership by beneficiaries but close dialogue. Dependent on donor funding.
<b>UNDP Arab Human Dev. Report</b>	Possible. A very concrete project with the set-up of activities assessed as effective.	Possible. Experienced implementer in participatory processes and outreach activities	Likely. Dissemination of results of the Arab Human Dev. Report with potential to improve regional transparency	Possible. The capacity building component and the participatory process should provide for sustainability.
<b>Civil Society Advocacy</b>	Uncertain. Programme has recently been initiated.	Possible, but initial problems with institutional structures	Likely. National interventions undertaken with elements of regional exchange and cooperation	Uncertain. Active work with anchoring, but a risk for lack of interest and capacity among partner NGOs

Most interventions included in the review show reasonably positive results. Implementing partners, in terms of status and experience, appears relevant for achieving project objectives in an effective manner.

Even though several of the interventions have undergone some kind of evaluative exercise, it is difficult to assess *effectiveness* in terms of achieving the Strategy objective. This is partly due to the formulation of the objective: whether the *promotion of human rights* has been effective – that is, whether (positive) changes in this area can be observed.<sup>19</sup> This can only be measured in a long-term perspective. The *encouragement of development of regional networks and of structures for dialogue on rights perspectives and basic universal values* also requires a long-term perspective, even though the very existence of such initiatives obviously appears relevant for an effective achievement of this part of the objective.

It should be noted that most interventions under review are the result of already established contacts and collaborations between Sida and implementing partners. This appears appropriate, since country and regional context awareness probably is a prerequisite for any effective achievement of development objectives in the area of Human Rights. Some of the programmes seem to have a better potential for concrete achievements related to the Strategy objective than others. For example, the *Juvenile justice programme* has been able to show some tangible outputs in terms of revision of laws concerning juveniles related to its activities. Others, like *Women's Empowerment programme* might not be able to show any similar (tangible) outputs. At the same time, the work that is undertaken under this programme is undoubtedly building some ground for stronger participation of women in the society – but more concrete results of this may be harder to identify, or are yet not to be expected.

As to *efficiency* of undertaking interventions, the regional approach poses some important challenges. First of all, regional collaborations imply meetings across national borders and are in this respect more costly than national interventions due to costs for travels, accommodation etc. Bureaucracy and coordination between different country systems may pose additional challenges to efficiency. However, working through existing structures – e.g. through a regional network that is already established (as opposed to establishing a new one) – should provide for a higher level of efficiency in achieving project and Strategy objectives.

When it comes to whether, and to what extent, the interventions have contributed to *achieving regional cooperation*, it should be noted that the regional dimension of the interventions under review vary in character (see Section 5.2.2). In general, the sustainability potential for interventions that focus at strengthening regional dialogue is obviously higher where it is demand-driven. Several of the programmes have clear regional dimensions that appear strongly appreciated and enriching at the national context, e.g. the *Juvenile justice programme*, the *Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network programme*, etc.

Ensuring *sustainability* is essential for most interventions within the area of Human Rights. To this end, inclusion of the partner countries, e.g. relevant stakeholders, in the inception phase of the programme is of key importance to ensure a sufficient level of ownership of the programme to be executed. Further efforts might be necessary to ensure a demand-driven process in some cases. While the *Women's Empowerment programme* appears to put strong efforts in achieving a demand-driven working process (bottom-up approach), others, like the *Academic Human Rights Training programme* or the *Children's Rights programme* seems to apply more of a top-down approach. National/regional capacity building, both at individual and at institutional level, is obviously highly relevant for ensuring sustainability and forms part of most programmes within this area.

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<sup>19</sup> Preferably also attributable to the undertaken interventions



#### 5.2.4 Overall Achievement of the Strategy Objective

The Strategy objective regarding human rights is broadly defined and does not provide much strategic guidance in identification of relevant interventions. A consequence has been that the interventions within this area present a rather wide diversity in terms of approach, main beneficiaries and implementing partners. The majority of ongoing interventions are a continuation of collaborations already established before the approval of the Strategy. Since changes within the human rights sphere require a long-term approach, it appears relevant to draw on already established collaborations. The absence of a strategic guidance and a clear results framework does, however, imply a risk of too shattered interventions with little coherence. This does not provide for any effective, nor efficient, achievement of more long-term development objectives.

Despite these weaknesses in the Strategy, the undertaken interventions under the Human Rights area show relatively positive results. Sida is generally seen as a good and “neutral” collaborator – the latter a highly valuable feature for undertaking activities within the area of Human Rights, commonly associated with rather sensitive cultural and political issues.

In general, context understanding and sensitiveness are of core importance when undertaking Human Rights interventions. In the majority of the countries in the region, the relationship between civil society and the state is characterised by serious tensions and defensive attitudes. For a sustainable strengthening of civil society in the region, it appears appropriate to put further emphasis on institutions having the ability to anchor the work of these organisations into the national political and cultural context. An example of this is the *Academic Human Rights Training programme* with its focus on strengthening academic institutions on human rights issues. In a long term perspective, these institutions will be able to play the role of competent and knowledgeable dialogue partners, for both civil society and for the state. Further emphasis on institutions having the ability to provide a link – and/or to reduce the gap – between civil society and government institutions appears relevant as a means for a sustainable strengthening of civil society.

There is a regional dimension in all except one of the reviewed interventions under the Human Rights area. In general, regional exchanges and collaborations appear highly valuable and of mutual benefit for participating partners – several interventions under review appear having experienced important added value through their regional dimension. It should, however, be noted that regional collaborations are associated with some particular challenges: They are normally both cost- and time demanding. It appears sensible to take advantage of already established regional exchanges/networks as far as possible and to strengthening these. A further refinement of the regional cooperation objective in the Strategy, in terms of what it aims at achieving, would probably provide a more strategic guidance in future selection of interventions.

### 5.3 Sustainable Use of Water

#### 5.3.1 The Cooperation Area in the Strategy

The Strategy objectives for the water component are:

*“to promote the sustainable use of water resources, focusing in particular on regional and transboundary water issues, from both a poverty reduction and a conflict prevention viewpoint.”*

The Strategy further states that Sweden is considered having a comparative advantage in, among other areas, the Sustainable Use of Water. The ongoing ITPs should continue to be used to build competence and capacity and develop regional networks. New strategies are said to be needed, and regional cooperation on water matters to strengthen an efficient national water resource management. Development of sustainable use of water resources of a regional, transboundary nature is highlighted. The Strategy further identifies a need for a survey in the water field to identify sub-areas where Sweden has a com-

parative advantage. Transboundary cooperation takes time, but can help prevent future conflicts. Interventions can contribute through areas like:

- Promotion of greater trust between countries;
- Strengthening negotiation capacity;
- Willingness to harmonise water regulations;
- Necessary investments; and
- Exchange of knowledge and information on transboundary issues.

The Strategy also identifies Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) as one of the key actors to be used, which Sida also has done for subject matter expertise, context analysis and partner assessments. SIWI has been contracted as a help desk by Sida and provided strategic reports, including extensive mapping and recommendations of partners (2007) as well as expert matter support especially during the first years of implementation of the Strategy when Sida was short of staff.

A first Water Sector Plan was produced in November 2008. The Team has only received and analysed Sida's Sector Plan for Water from October 2009<sup>20</sup>. In the Plan, a Strategy for portfolio development describes the ongoing search for partners, trust building and the focus on sub-regions like the Jordan River Basin and the Euphrates-Tigris basins. Potential partnerships are described as well as general ambitions on coordination and dialogue and the portfolio of interventions expected to be funded.

### 5.3.2 Intervention Initiation and Design

The evaluation has reviewed interventions corresponding to 89% of the decided allocations for the period 2006–2009. Table 11 clearly shows that the water sector had a very late start – six of seven reviewed interventions started only in 2009. Operating in reality only 1.5 years, the water sector's share has been around 23% of the annual MENA budget.

**Table 11** Interventions related to Sustainable Use of Water with decisions on allocations 2006–2009. Million SEK

	Allocation 2006–2009	Disbursed 2006–2009	Implementation period
Total Water related interventions	88.7	68.8	
Total reviewed projects	78.6	60.3	
Red Dead Sea Conveyance study	25.0	24.0	2009–2011
MENA Climate change fact find and ITP	15.7	7.0	2009–2011
ITP Transb. Water Mgmt Euphrates & Tigris	8.7	2.9	2009–2011
ITP Transb. Water Mgmt MENA	15.6	12.9	2006–2010
FoEME Good Water Neighbours	6.5	6.5	2009–2010
UNDP – water governance Phase 1	6.5	6.5	2009–2010
Water Week MENA-seminar water-energy	0.6	0.6	2009
Not reviewed projects	10.1	8.5	

<sup>20</sup> Sector Plan and Strategic Directions MENA Regional Cooperation – Sustainable Use of Water Resources, Sida October 2009

Three water related interventions have not been studied; firstly *Prep water MENA/SIWI*, is not really an intervention but an internal fund or pot consisting of the money not yet designated for any intervention. Funding for new interventions is taken from this line. Secondly, *TUN maritime good governance* is one of the few bilateral training projects (KTS) left when Sida was reorganised, now terminated. This was a remnant of the old, bilateral system, here between the Swedish Maritime Administration and their Tunisian counterpart, receiving training on UN-regulations on Maritime law and different conventions and resolutions and support to administrative reforms. Thirdly, the Study *Water security in the Middle East* concerns mainly the Jordan River and Euphrates & Tigris.

### **The regional water programme**

Despite pressure from Ministry, Sida did not recruit any field based programme officers to work with Sustainable Use of Water until mid 2008. Operating only with 10% of a full time officer in Stockholm before that seriously delayed the implementation of the water related interventions. In its 2009 Strategy Report, Sida states that the regional programme had been operating for a year (September 2008–August 2009). The appointment of a full time staff in Amman meant that the building of a regional programme could finally begin.

In the 2009 Sector Plan for water, a strategy for portfolio development, focal regions, potential partners, linkages to bilateral programmes and humanitarian support as well as expected interventions up to 2011 are briefly described. A volume of SEK 30 million per year is budgeted which is in line with the SEK 37 million disbursed in 2009. In this Sector Plan – the most strategic document for the area Sustainable Use of Water – the *key principles* suggested to guide the development of the programme are; promotion of regional ownership and institution building; a balanced power relation between cooperation partners; and development of sustainable cooperation relations. These principles are not crystal clear, nor further elaborated. There is also no discussion on which strategic, long-term objectives the sector will promote or linkages between water and the other cooperation areas in the Strategy.

A basic portfolio of projects had been established by November 2009 and was expected to be further developed. The funded projects involve areas like training, studies/research, awareness raising, policy, governance and confidence building. All interventions seem relevant for a general ambition of promoting a sustainable use of water resources.

The general problems related to finding functioning and viable regional partners are also true for the water programme. The solution has been to at least initially channel a large part of the funding through international organisations such as the UN and the World Bank.<sup>21</sup> In addition Sida-funded ITPs constitutes a major component drawing on Swedish expertise and building capacity with individuals working with water in the region. Friends' of the Earth Middle East constitute the only regionally based organisation present in the water portfolio.

Since the implementation of support in the sector is so recent, the broad mix of partners can be seen as a testing phase to get started and maybe later focus on more strategic choices. The presence of Swedish institutions is obvious in the ITPs with the part of the training in Sweden.

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<sup>21</sup> SEK 37 million out of 68 million disbursed in 2009, including ITP.

# Intervention Design Matrix: Sustainable Use of Water

Main area	Relevance	Initiative	Implementer	Beneficiary	Type of support	Regional approach
Red Sea– Dead Sea Water Conveyance Project	Clear but long-term – promoting cooperation.	A World Bank initiative – facilitated by SIWI	The World Bank subcontracting consulting companies	The three governments	Funding for feasibility study. No commitment to a possible implementation	River basin riparians; fully in line with Transboundary discussion in the strategy
MENA Climate Change Mitigation	Clear, medium- and long-term – Capacity building for individuals on sustainable use of water	Sida – reviewed its ITP and developed a climate focus	Sw. Resource institutes	Middle management for planning of agriculture, water resources, energy, transport, infrastructure	Full funding for training and capacity building to mitigate effects of climate change	Individuals from the region; will create interaction on individual level but not institutional
Transbound water mgmt Euphrates & Tigris	Clear, short- and medium-term – strengthening individuals, exchange and networking	Sida, built on the existing MENA ITP	Sw. Resource institutes	25–30 individuals, Decision makers, planners, in Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran	Exchange of experiences Peer review and advice Opportunities for coop.	Individuals from the region; interaction on individual level but not institutional
Transbound water mgmt MENA	Short and medium term – strengthening individuals, exchange and networking	Sida initiative, spin-off from the Global TWM.	Sw. Resource institutes	Governments Government agencies	Exchange of experiences Peer review and advice Opportunities for coop.	Individuals from the region; will create interaction mainly on individual level
UNDP Water governance	Medium-term – addressing common regional problems	Building on existing interventions	UN agency	Participating Government agencies	Co-funding (USAID, Japan)	Seven Arab States, probably more, exchange of info, harmonization of policies
Good Water Neighbours	Short-term – dialogue and awareness on water and environment	Building on existing project – (2002)	Sub-regional NGOs – Friends of the Earth Middle East (Israel, West Bank & Gaza and Jordan)	Local communities, youth, mayors, farmers	Co-funding	Clearly regional intervention with neighbouring communities
Seminar on Water and Energy in MENA	Mainly short-term – with long term impact	Sida initiative, asking for proposals	Institute identified by Sida	Experts, researchers from the region and Sweden	Full funding	Individuals exchange information and network

## The interventions

The backbone of the intervention is made up of three ITPs. *The first Trans-boundary Water Management for the MENA-region* ran from 2006 to 2008 and has been extended for the period 2009–2010. The course is implemented by SIWI and Rambøll Natura AB and the Jordanian University as local counterpart. The training programme runs over 10 calendar months with 25–30 participants, a mix of decision makers, planners and experts from Government departments and ministries, from civil society and private companies – all actively involved in transboundary water management. After an initial visit at each participant's working place and start up in their home organisations, a two-week full time training is implemented in Jordan followed by individual projects and one week training in Sweden.

Objectives as they are presented in Sida's Assessment Memo are described on both organisational and individual level, involving both improved personal skills and outcomes like engagement in networks and dialogue on transboundary water management. Outputs are confirmed from participants in terms of learning new skills while outcomes – to what extent they then do things differently – is less clear and documented. The course is now running in its fifth year and is expected to be evaluated before a possible continuation.

*The ITP on Regional Development in the Euphrates-Tigris Region* has been modelled after the MENA-course described above and is managed by the same consortium. It targets the riparian states of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran – a highly complex and volatile area with virtually no cooperation around water issues and reluctance to accept external actors to deal with these issues. Extensive work has been invested in relation building in different ministries and government agencies in the relevant countries, resulting in an opening where Sweden's historical and political neutrality seems to be a key asset opening doors. A first round of training has been implemented in Syria.

*Good Water Neighbours* implemented by the NGO Friends of Earth Middle East (FoEME) aims at advancing community based reconciliation by focusing on the shared water resources of some 30 neighbouring Palestinian, Jordanian and Israeli communities. FOEME is the only regional organisation with offices in all three countries. Sida is funding the ongoing first phase, focusing on grass root involvement while a second phase on advocacy for sustainable water management has not been possible to start due to the political environment.

*Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation for MENA* is another ITP with participants from the MENA region implemented by SMHI. It's a 12-month capacity building programme with 4 weeks training in Sweden and one in the region. Decision makers responsible for planning in agriculture, water, energy, transport and infrastructure are targeted. The programme is based on Swedish Competence and knowledge, even if regional experts are being used as lecturers during both the Swedish and the regional part. In a preparation phase, consultations were held with "Africa Partnership on Climate Change Coalition" including northern African countries. The focus on training in Sweden could risk making it less relevant for local and regional issues.

*Red-Dead Sea Water Conveyance Feasibility Study* is a feasibility study managed by the World Bank, which Sida decided to fund after a long discussion. It is perceived as a support to the cooperation process between Jordan, Israel and the West Bank and Gaza. The studied project aims at; saving the Dead Sea from drying up and degradation; desalinating water and generating energy at affordable prices; and building a symbol of peace and cooperation in the Middle East.

The project is relevant to the Strategy from different angles: 1) to elevate transboundary water understanding; 2) to support existing transboundary water programmes; 3) to promote Integrated Water and Resources Management (IWRM) mechanisms 4) long term alleviation of poverty through creation of jobs and provision of livelihood resources, such as water and energy. The feasibility study with the different sub-reports is expected to be completed in 2011. Neither Sweden nor the World Bank has made any

commitments to a continued funding of the potential project before that. Sida considers the study and the knowledge generated worthwhile whether it ends up in a recommendation of the mega-project or not.

*UNDP – water governance, Phase 1.* The programme was identified by SIWI as a potential intervention. A contract was finally signed in December 2009 and will last to June 2011. It is an ambitious regional programme involving eight Arab States; Jordan, West Bank and Gaza, Yemen, Djibouti, Tunisia, Libya, Qatar and Egypt with others almost ready to sign (Bahrain, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco).

The UNDP intervention is a truly regional intervention, backed by the League of Arab States. Sweden supports research/studies and training programmes as the main instruments; regional capacity development seminars to influence socio-economic and environmental dimensions in national plans; convene an Expert Group Meeting on national capacity needs; support preparations of an Arab Water Report; and raise public awareness on water rights. Sida will be involved through presence in the steering committee and participation in the reporting. A comprehensive results-resources framework has been elaborated, clearly describing five major outputs, targets and their relevant inputs – including Sida contribution per component.

*Sida/SIWI seminar on Water and Energy Linkages in the Middle East.* The intervention was a half-day seminar during the Water Week, focusing on the important linkage between water and energy. The main output of the seminar was a Seminar Report based on background papers and seminar contributions studying the water situation, energy demand, alternatives for cost effective solutions to growing needs for electricity and water.

### **5.3.3 Intervention Results**

As discussed previously, six out of the seven reviewed interventions started in 2009. Only the first phase of the transboundary water management ITP had been completed before 2009, but has not been evaluated. With one exception, the water programme is in the contradicting situation of being a start-up and coming to an end of the five year period at the same time, having little conclusive results to show. Current contracts are signed up to maximum 2011 where they will have had time for at least a first phase.

*The first Trans-boundary Water Management ITP for the MENA-region* produces narrative or technical reports mainly based on participants' auto-evaluation of the course and their own performance. Generally satisfaction is high and there is no doubt that participants acquire new knowledge and skills. This is probably the strongest component where Sweden is actively involved and making use of Swedish know-how, and actively connecting back to Sweden in the process. The aspect of creating change in the sending organisations is not monitored and questioned by people interviewed. Stories of bilateral initiatives are reported, but according to our interviews the follow-up is not systematic and it would be possible to capitalize more on this investment, the existing network and the good will. The idea of creating small funds for research projects has been suggested, if the grant management can be arranged for outside Sida due to the existing work load.

*The ITP on Regional Development in the Euphrates-Tigris Region.* With the first round of training implemented recently, it can only be concluded that the programme has started out well. The positive attitude by the participants, political clearance to participate in a delicate setting, good will for Sweden and a possibly unique opening for Sweden to play an important role in this complex region are some preliminary results. Bringing riparian's together in this highly vulnerable area is by itself an achievement. It allows for dialogue between countries which as an indirect effect can decrease the risk for future conflicts. As an indirect effect, the dialogue or the training courses may contribute to improvement of equitable distribution of water among riparian's, as well as a more efficient use of water.



# Intervention Results Matrix: Sustainable Use of Water Resources

		Effectiveness	Efficiency	Achieving regional cooperation	Sustainability
Red Sea – Dead Sea Water Conveyance Project	Study	Very Likely for the feasibility study but still uncertain about the project implementation	Standard procedure for WB, but no analysis made.	Potential, if feasible and funded it contributes much to the regional cooperation and socio-economic development	Possible. If implemented, the project can be sustainable.
MENA Climate	ITP	Likely, just beginning implementation but building on previous experience	Likely, based on previous performance.	Likely. Opportunities for exchange, learning and network between participants.	Possible – plans for organisational change included
Transbound water mgmt Euphrates & Tigris	ITP	Likely, very complex region but building on MENA experience and first successful phase	Likely, based on previous performance. Some uncertainty given the security and political situations	Likely. Opportunities for exchange, learning and network between participants.	Possible – plans for organisational change included
Transbound water mgmt MENA	ITP	Likely, has been running for four years with a good track record. Continuous improvements.	Likely, based on previous performance.	Likely. Opportunities for exchange, learning and network between participants.	Possible – plans for organisational change included but weak follow-up
UNDP Water governance	Study, awareness	Difficult to know, just signed	The level of Swedish support could be discussed, given Swedish bilateral support to UNDP	Clear ambition, involving 7–12 Arab States on joint policy and harmonisation	Possible, if adopted by respective governments
Good Water Neighbours	Awareness	Likely, has a good track record in the three countries. Limited in coverage and involvement of civil society, especially in West Bank & Gaza and Jordan	Low cost approach, but no analysis made	Likely, on community level and through the organisation	Uncertain, interest groups are not strongly involved; project interests are not shared by the public (ownership).
Prep Water MENA	Study – conference	Not applicable, short seminar with no follow-up on objectives	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable



*Good Water Neighbours* has been ongoing since 2002. A previous period has reportedly been evaluated (we have not received the report) and shown both realistic objectives and good goal achievement.

According to narrative reports to Sida, the first phase has been implemented but not the second that should target impact on the broader policy and management issues at the municipal, regional and national government levels of decision making. Despite the limited outreach of the involved NGOs due to political conditions, encounters among young people, mayors, tour guides, concerned adults and others have created possibilities for identifying and solving common problems with water as entry point.

*Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation for MENA* is too early to assess. *Red-Dead Sea Water Conveyance Feasibility Study* – Despite political problems, the process runs relatively well according to the responsible Sida-officer. Outputs in terms of sub-reports processed and approved by the Steering Committee.

UNDP – *water governance, Phase 1* is recently signed, therefore no results yet.

#### **5.3.4 Overall achievement of the strategy objective**

The Strategy's highest objective in the area Sustainable Use of Water "*to promote the sustainable use of water resources, focusing in particular on regional and transboundary water issues, from both a poverty reduction and a conflict prevention viewpoint*" has been met to some extent. However, as discussed above, "to promote" is rather vague and difficult to assess. There are also a number of more detailed instructions in the strategy that have been applied, like to continue with ITPs.

There are a couple of factors that have had negative effects on both results and the assessment of results. Firstly, there was a delay from Sida to assign enough staff to implement the Strategy. Secondly, Sida's decision to not develop any kind of results framework or documented interpretation of what these vague objectives should mean and how they should be achieved. Thirdly, Sida has not been systematic in dealing with partners and application as to guide or force them to have a clear line of thought from the Strategy through outcomes of the intervention to activities and budgets. This type of requirement is no news for the World Bank and UN-organisations, but it is Sida's responsibility to tie all this together and make sure that sensible results are reported into a structure that makes sense and can be communicated both internally and externally – and also be used for assessment of progress.

These weaknesses have somewhat been compensated by Sida's involvement in the follow-up of the different interventions, wherever possible. Several interviewees highlighted the fact that Sida is known to be a donor that follows implementation closely with great interest.

Despite the absence of clear objectives, results have apparently been achieved. People have learned new skills, new knowledge about water management has been generated, networking is taking place and communities discover the importance of shared water resources. In the absence of a more structured results framework, results are being collected through different types of reports, stories and sporadic evaluations. But is there a greater plan?

SEK 30 million per year to make a change in the area of water in the vast MENA-region is a difficult equation. A small, diversified portfolio has been established and would need much more time to develop and grow. In addition, a strategic thinking and robust planning and follow-up are necessary ingredients in order to know what is happening and be able to report about it. The very transnational nature of water makes it a potential problem and reason for conflict, just as a potential source of life and prosperity for countries and regions who know how to manage it.

## 5.4 Regional Economic Development

### 5.4.1 The Cooperation Area in the Strategy

Within the cooperation area Regional Economic Development the Strategy objective is to:

*“promote economic development of a regional character, focusing in particular on the development of trade policy skills and supply capacity.”*

Besides the over-arching goal, the Strategy gives directions on specific interventions to be retained or initiated. For example, the two ITP programmes that was ongoing already in 2005 were to be retained. Another instruction in the Strategy is that support should be provided to regional initiatives aimed at strengthening investment infrastructure insofar as such initiatives contribute to fulfilment of the objectives of the Strategy. A third instruction is that contract-financed technical cooperation should continue to be used with the overarching goal of poverty alleviation, and also bring about a greater exchange of skills and experience between Sweden and the partner countries in the region and an increased level of exchange and cooperation between institutions and organisations.

The Strategy also provides proposals for interventions: the prospects for linking together Swedish institutions in the area of trade, accreditation and social responsibility with Arab institutions should be examined, and the prospects of capacity-building for regional interventions promoting private sector development in the region in cooperation with other actors should be explored. In connection with the latter, due attention should be given to the potential importance of migrants' remittances to their countries of origin.

### 5.4.2 Intervention Initiation and Design

Sida has supported eight interventions in this cooperation area since 2006. These eight interventions have been allocated SEK 78 million, out of which SEK 49 million have been disbursed, see Table 12. On average, SEK 19.5 million has been allocated and SEK 12.2 million disbursed on an annual basis. This is not a lot considering the vast and diverse region and the difficulties involved. Reasons the Team found for the limited scope are difficulties finding suitable partners and that it was a region where Sida had limited contacts and experience. Sida's staff resources dealing with this area has consisted of two Stockholm-based part-time officers.

Table 12 Interventions related to Regional Economic Development with decisions on allocations 2006–2009. MSEK

	Allocation 2006–2009	Disbursed 2006–2009	Implementation period
Total Regional Economic Development	78.0	49.1	
Total, Reviewed Projects	73.3	48.7	
CEPEX	4.0	2.9	2008–2010
OECD/MENA Investment Programme	14.5	8.4	2008–2010
Carbon Footprints	3.2	2.5	2009–2010
ITP 276 Quality Infrastructure Dev	16.0	8.5	2008–2011
ITP 097 World Trade and Conformity	8.6	8.1	2006–2010
ITP 229 Quality Infrastr. for Food Safety	14.1	9.7	2008–2011
ITP 239 Negotiating Trade Agreements	13.0	8.6	2008–2011
Not Reviewed Projects	4.6	0.4	

The supported interventions focus mainly on trade policy skills and supply capacity, which is in line with the Strategy as well as in line with the guidelines for trade-related development cooperation issued by the Swedish Government<sup>22</sup>. However, the Team has found no clear strategic approach from Sida on how to achieve the objectives and the dialogue with regional stakeholders seem to have been limited.

<sup>22</sup> "Riktlinjer för handelsrelaterat utvecklingssamarbete" från 2007 resp 2008

The interventions, apart from the ITPs, are not interlinked. Two ITPs were started already before 2006 while the other two were initiated through regionalisation of existing programmes by the same implementer. The other interventions were initiated before the Strategy period, except one.

Governmental institutions are directly or indirectly the main beneficiaries, while only one regional structure is supported. To support national governments is in line with the regional ambitions when the interventions contribute to concrete inter-governmental cooperation. However, most of the supported interventions are rarely involving people and institutions from different MENA countries in activities towards a common goal, but include individuals and institutions in common activities where the aim has national goals.

The *CEPEX* intervention is a bilateral project, providing capacity building to CEPEX<sup>23</sup> implemented by the Swedish Trade Council.<sup>24</sup> It has focused on market research capacities but partnerships have developed between Swedish and Tunisian companies as well as concrete trade deals. The Swedish Trade Council and CEPEX have signed a memorandum of understanding and plan to participate jointly in trade fairs etc. The project has no regional components or specific regional aims.

The *OECD/MENA Programme* was initiated in 2005 before the Strategy took effect. The Programme consists of two pillars – the *Investment* and *Governance* pillars. It is cooperation between OECD and 19 governments in the MENA region<sup>25</sup> aiming to improve the climate for both domestic and foreign investments. Sida has classified the Governance pillar as governance support and it is addressed above under Section 5.1. The Investment Pillar work is organised in working groups where peer reviews and peer-to-peer learning is undertaken. OECD is providing trainings in several subjects as the work proceeds. The basis for the work is the countries' own reform agendas.

The *Carbon Footprint* project is implemented by the Swedish Standards Institute (SIS) together with National Standards Bureaus in the MENA region and supports the countries' participation in international trade related standardisation processes in connection with climate change.

The only truly regional initiative – the *AGADIR* Agreement for the establishment of a free trade area between Jordan, Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco – has just begun and will comprise trainings of staff in the secretariat of the AGADIR trade agreement. This agreement, however, has partly been superseded by the four countries' membership in GAFTA.<sup>26</sup>

The *ITPs*<sup>27</sup> are implemented by SWEDAC<sup>28</sup> which has sub-contracted a consultancy firm, AQS, for the actual organisation of the programmes. Participants are invited from appropriate public institutions and organisations for trade and industry. The ITPs are all inter-connected when it comes to subjects, aiming to develop capacities in modern organisation of the national level of trade and ultimately make the countries better able to participate in world trade. The cluster of ITPs has evolved over time and has been initiated by a combination of Sida, SWEDAC and stakeholders in the region.

All interventions except the OECD/MENA Programme are implemented by Swedish organisations. One intervention is contributing to a regional organisation (AGADIR), while all other are channelling support to national governments. All supports are in different forms of capacity building.

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<sup>23</sup> Centre de Promotion des Exportations de Tunisie

<sup>24</sup> In Swedish language: Exportrådet

<sup>25</sup> Including some countries not eligible for Swedish support, footing the Programme bill themselves.

<sup>26</sup> Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement

<sup>27</sup> The ITPs address three inter-related subjects but in different forms. ITP 097 and 276 *Quality Infrastructure Dev and World Trade and Conformity* address mainly the same issues using different designs of the programmes.

<sup>28</sup> The Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment

# Intervention Design Matrix: Regional Economic Development

	Main area	Focus	Initiative	Implementer	Beneficiary	Type of support	Regional approach
CEPEX	Trade policies	Export promotion agency development	Beneficiary	Swedish Gov institution (Swedish Trade Council)	Tunisian Gov Institution (Trade Council)	KTS Training Exchange of experiences Opportunities for coop.	Bilateral project
OECD/MENA Investment Programme	Investment infrastructure and trade policies skills	Improving investment conditions	MENA countries	Multilateral organisation (OECD)	Gov institutions (investment promotion agencies)	Programme working groups on specific subjects organise training, peer-to-peer dialogue and learning.	OECD-led platform where beneficiaries take part in individual activities
Carbon Footprints	Standardisation for trade purposes	Standardisation of carbon foot print	Implementer	Swedish non-profit organisation (SIS, Swedish Standards Institute)	Gov institutions (National Standardisation Bureaus)	Pre-seminars as introduction of carbon footprints standardisation	Coop btw MENA countries as well as with rest of world on climate change standardisation issues.
ITP 276 Quality Infrastructure Development	Trade policies and supply cap	Establishing and operating national frameworks for trade and quality infrastructure development to enable MENA participation in world trade	Sida	Swedish Gov institution (SWEDAC)/Consultancy firm (AQS)	Individuals and their organisations active in industry and trade institutions	ITP Training course	Participants from several MENA countries, but no specific measures to spur regional coop
ITP 097 World Trade and Conformity	Trade policies and supply cap	Conformity assessments and accreditation to enable MENA participation in world trade	Sida	Swedish Gov institution (SWEDAC)/Consultancy firm (AQS)	Individuals and their organisations active in industry and trade institutions	ITP Training course	Participants from several MENA countries, but no specific measures to spur regional coop
ITP 229 Quality Infrastructure for Food Safety	Trade policies and supply cap	New principles and requirements related to food safety, and trade in food products to enable MENA participation in world trade	Sida	Swedish Gov institution (SWEDAC)/Consultancy firm (AQS)	Individuals and their organisations active in industry and trade institutions	ITP Training course	Participants from several MENA countries, but no specific measures to spur regional coop
ITP 239 Negotiating Trade Agreements	Trade policies and supply cap	WTO trade agreements and trends to enable MENA participation in world trade	Sida	Swedish Gov institution (SWEDAC)/Consultancy firm (AQS)	Individuals and their organisations active in industry and trade institutions	ITP Training course	Participants from several MENA countries, but no specific measures to spur regional coop

Sida's decisions to support ITPs are made with very little documented justification, which has made it difficult for the Evaluation Team to assess the grounds for these decisions. The aspects which the Team was requested to assess are therefore impossible to comment on. It is only possible for the Team to assess whether the outcomes are in line with the Strategy directives.

The decisions regarding the other three interventions contain discussions on a few topics. In the case of the *CEPEX* project, it is considered in the assessment memo to be able to contribute to the economic and social development of Tunisia and have positive effects on poverty. Regional aspects are not mentioned (as it is a bilateral project). Sida's justification for the support to the *Carbon Footprint* project is that its goal is in line with the Swedish Government's goal on climate change. The assessment memo is not specifically mentioning contribution to poverty reduction or regional cooperation. No assessment of the political or conflict context is presented. The assessment memo for the *OECD/MENA Investment Programme* states that the programme is considered highly relevant in view of the Strategy and is elaborating on poverty implications and the Programme's relevance to regional economic integration. The conflict context is not mentioned.

Sustainability issues have been addressed in some assessment memos, while sustainability is the Team's greatest concern in connection with these interventions. The beneficiaries are expressing their appreciation for the cooperation and support but it seems more uncertain to what extent governments are willing and able to reform and use what has been achieved. There is a need for clearer assessments of the ownership, results and impact of these interventions.

#### **5.4.3 Intervention Results**

It seems to the Team that it is likely or at least possible that the ITPs have been effective in achieving their objectives. The Evaluation has found that capacities have been developed among participants and that they have in some cases been able to influence their home institutions and countries with their newly-gained competencies. According to interviews with Sida concrete results have also been achieved in that countries sending representatives to ITPs have started to cooperate in international processes regarding standardisation and trade policy issues to a larger extent than before.

The progress report from the Investment Pillar of the *OECD/MENA Programme* does not give a clear overview of results and impacts. It is clear though, that some of the member countries are very active pointing to ownership and therefore the relevance to these countries of the programme. The main achievement seems to be as a push factor for reforms. To what extent the programme has spurred concrete self-sustainable regional cooperation outside of the programme itself is unknown, but it seems plausible that enough contacts have been developed in number and depth for some to go on.

The results from the *CEPEX* project are capacities built among *CEPEX* staff in market research and established contacts and cooperation between Swedish and Tunisian firms. If and how the skills in market research are used is not ascertained. The *Carbon Footprint* project started last year, and no results have been reported to Sida from the parties.

An apparent lack of focus on impact in set-up and implementation is a shortcoming in all these seven interventions. For example are progress reports to a large extent focused on activities and direct results. No follow up of what the interventions have led to for the participating organisations and countries has been documented. How have the intervention results affected poverty or trade in the individual countries? As stated above, there are also some interventions where the ownership may be a concern.

# Intervention Results Matrix: Regional Economic Development

	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Achieving regional cooperation	Sustainability
CEPEX	Likely CEPEX has acquired cap to make modern market analysis. Partnerships btw Swedish and Tunisian companies established incl. trade deals. Coop Swed Trade Council – CEPEX continues. No IMPACT yet (besides trade deals).	Possible, but depending on how CEPEX will use the results of the project.	Not relevant.	Uncertain, due to weak ownership and commitment.
OECD/MENA Investment Programme	Capacity buildngs are likely to have been effective. Impact not known.	Uncertain due to huge programme budget and impact not known.	Likely, regional initiatives aimed at strengthening and broadening cooperation with the region, promoting interaction within the region, but not with Sweden specifically.	Uncertain, due to impact never followed up. However since ownership is clearly in place in some countries results should be sustainable in these.
Carbon Footprints	Unknown. No reporting produced, why no effectiveness assessment made	Relatively small budget points to cost-efficiency but ownership and sustainability uncertain making efficiency <b>uncertain</b> .	See effectiveness	See effectiveness
ITP 276 Quality Infrastruc-ture Development	Possible to likely to be effective. Impact in participants' home countries unclear.	Possible but varying from case to case.	Likely. Opportunities for exchange, learning and network between participants.	Possible. Awareness raised in MENA countries thru participants. ITP request-ed by beneficiary institutions but reform willingness seems mixed.
ITP 097 World Trade and Conformity	Judging from questionnaires possible to likely, with capacity built amongst the participants, which ought to in long run have effects in line with strategy objec-tive. Overall impact on countries not followed up.	Possible but varying from case to case.	Likely. Opportunities for exchange, learning and network between participants.	Possible. Awareness raised in MENA countries thru participants. ITP request-ed by beneficiary institutions but reform willingness seems mixed.
ITP 229 Quality Infrastruc-ture for Food Safety	Possible to likely to be effective, with capacity developed. However, overall impact on countries not followed up.	Possible but varying from case to case.	Likely. Opportunities for exchange, learning and network between participants.	Possible. Awareness raised in MENA countries thru participants. ITP request-ed by beneficiary institutions but reform willingness seems mixed.
ITP 239 Negotiating Trade Agreements	Likely to most likely to be effective; however with uncertain concrete effects on participants' home institutions.	Possible but varying from case to case.	Likely. Opportunities for exchange, learning and network between participants.	Possible. Awareness raised in MENA countries thru participants. ITP request-ed by beneficiary institutions but reform willingness seems mixed.



#### 5.4.4 Overall Achievement of the Strategy Objective

The cooperation area is broken down in the Strategy in three sub-areas: 1) support to the development of trade policy skills and supply capacity; 2) linking Swedish and Arab institutions in trade, accreditation and social responsibility, and 3) strengthening investment infrastructure. The first sub-area is part of all interventions, while the *ITPs* and the *CEPEX* project have established links between Swedish and Arab institutions. Only the *OECD/MENA Investment Programme* has contributed to investment infrastructure in the region.

Sida has continued to support the two *ITPs* which the Strategy directed Sida to do and has extended them with two more. The Strategy's directive for Sida to use the contract-financed technical cooperation instrument for projects aiming to strengthen institutional capacity of government bodies in the area of Regional Economic Development has also been followed but only in the case of the *CEPEX* project in Tunisia. The Regional Training Programme for Employment Agencies in the Maghreb region<sup>29</sup> is also relevant in terms of strengthening the institutional capacity. The Team's assessment is that Sida has achieved the objective in the area, as the supported interventions "promote economic development of a regional character, focusing in particular on the development of trade policy skills and supply capacity". However, the fact that regional economic development has been "promoted" doesn't say much, almost any intervention towards regional economic development would fulfil the objective.

To conclude we like to point out that Sida has disbursed SEK 19.5 million per year to eight interventions covering a whole region, and therefore wonders cannot be expected. However, the Team is strongly convinced that with more staff resources for the implementation an even better result would have been achieved with these funds.

## 6 Assessment of the Regional Approach

The regional approach is one of the main features of the Strategy. In the introduction, it is declared that the Strategy "*is to facilitate the introduction of regional initiatives aimed at strengthening and broadening development cooperation with the region and will promote greater interaction and exchange both within the region and between the region and Sweden.*" However, the wording is somewhat ambiguous: while the first part of this sentence appears to point out that the Strategy is to facilitate regional initiatives for the sake of strengthening *development cooperation* (as opposed to developing the region/alleviate poverty), the latter part is clearly indicating regional cooperation as an objective in itself.

The MENA region, as defined in the Strategy, is the focus of the regional approach. Through interviews for this Evaluation, it has come clear that *the MENA region* might not constitute the most relevant delimitation: identification of commonalities at a sub-regional level (e.g. Maghreb, the Middle East or even more narrowly defined sub-regions) is often easier, hence providing better opportunities to focus the support. While the Strategy allows for sub-regional interventions and several interventions operate on this level, there are other examples where the Strategy's five focus countries appear to have been important in the selection of countries to be included in the intervention. A more flexible approach as to what countries to involve in interventions, based on needs and interests, would probably strengthen the prospects for achieving sustainable regional cooperation.

The weak existence of regional structures and initiatives has made Sida use *Swedish and international organisations* to channel its support to national organisations and initiatives. An apparent risk with channelling support through organisations not domiciled in the region is weak ownership. Another risk relates to the fact that collaborating partners might feel "forced" into regional cooperation, as a condition for obtaining Swedish support.

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<sup>29</sup> Addressed in this report under "Democracy and Good Governance" above.



Several of the Sida supported interventions do not have *direct regional cooperation* as their focus. Instead, they consist in several national activities executed under a regional umbrella organisation (a number of human rights and governance interventions and the Carbon Footprints project have this set-up). This can certainly be an efficient and effective way of organising support to these countries, but it is the Team's view that the prospects for establishing sustainable regional structures are relatively weak with this approach. Still, the regional approach has had a value in terms of providing opportunities for exchange and networking, whether sustainable or not.

The Strategy states that *opportunities for interacting with and supplementing the efforts of other bilateral and multilateral actors* should be sought for, since this is seen to improve the impact of the Swedish programme. There are, however, only a few examples of such creation of "interaction opportunities" among the interventions supported by Sida, e.g. the OECD/MENA (both the Governance and Investments Pillars) and the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network and Fund (EMHRN and EMHRF). Sida is clearly interacting with and supports the efforts of multilateral/international organisations. In many other cases, though, the Swedish support is provided to interventions where Sida is the only financing donor. This does obviously not provide for interaction with, and possibilities to supplement, the efforts of others. The Team sees an unused potential for Swedish programmes to complement and strengthen programmes run by multilateral organisations by, for example, providing ITP courses linked to the OECD/MENA programme or supporting NGOs linked to the UNDP Water programme.

Nevertheless, the Strategy also opens up for *national interventions* when these are i) undertaken in several countries and include regional exchange and cooperation and/or ii) expected to strengthen regional efforts or have the potential to develop into a regional intervention. The Team sees a clear added value in supporting national interventions to some extent even in with a regional approach. This since purely regional interventions, not targeting national institutions, run the risk of staying at a macro level with weak reaching-down to the situation of the poor in the national context.

As the number of regional actors of sufficient quality and strength is low, it has proven difficult to conduct a substantive *dialogue around the form and direction of the programme with the region*. Due to the fact that this is a regional programme, Sida has established direct dialogues with national structures such as governments only to a limited extent. Still, much of the support has been directed to government administrations.

The Evaluation has found that most of the interventions involving participants from the government administration – mainly ITP programmes – have shown good results and that they have been appreciated. As much of the Swedish support has been delivered in the form of trainings of individuals, the impact on the individuals' home organisations or countries are uncertain, but we have observed positive examples. Without such impact, poverty alleviation is not to be expected.

According to the Ministry's instructions for elaboration of regional strategies, these are to focus on the regional added value.<sup>30</sup> Much of the rationale of having a regional approach is to support regional perspectives and the resolution of issues which are not confined within national borders. Considering the many transboundary issues in the MENA region, it appears relevant to opt for a regional approach in the Swedish development cooperation with this region. The approach would, however, benefit from some further elaboration in terms of the issues raised above.

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<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, February 2009

## 7 Conclusions and Reflections on the Strategy

### 7.1 Conclusions

As a whole, the Strategy points out some broad cooperation areas, focus countries and the use of a regional approach, however without offering any strategic guidance as to how Swedish development cooperation with the MENA region should be implemented. With the political uncertainties in the region and Sweden's limited experience of working with a regional approach, it may to some extent have been intentional to provide for flexibility in implementation of the Strategy. However, as a result, implemented interventions have more had the character of stand-alone efforts – with a variation of partners and aid instruments – than coordinated initiatives contributing to a common objective. All reviewed interventions fall within the objectives of the Strategy.

The Evaluation shows that the Strategy was not preceded by any strategic dialogue with governments or intergovernmental organisations in the region. The selected cooperation areas seem relevant in relation to the region's needs and Swedish comparative advantages. The concept of focus countries, on the other hand, seems to have been less relevant during the strategy period. Only some of the documentation from the interventions indicate that the political and conflict context have been taken into account in decisions and designs. Regardless of this, it seems to the Team that interventions have been reasonably conflict sensitive.

The challenges in implementing the Strategy for the regional MENA programme 2006–2010 have come clear through this Evaluation. These are related to the following reasons:

- The Strategy itself is not applying a strategic approach and has unclear linkages between vague objectives, the regional approach and other more specific directives;
- Sida has not developed a strategic approach to the different Strategy objectives or to the regional approach;
- Sida has not further elaborated on the Strategy objectives and directions into a comprehensive results framework for each area; partly because of the broad cooperation areas, the vague formulation of the Strategy objectives and a culture – at the early stages of the implementation – that did not systematically use a results-based approach;
- Sida has not, during the implementation of the Strategy, developed a strategic dialogue with regional or local actors in the MENA region and has mainly depended on the dialogue with Swedish and international implementing organisations;
- It has been difficult to work with a regional approach covering many countries and four broad cooperation areas in a region with weak regional structures and cooperation. There are limited number of initiatives satisfying the criteria of being regional;
- It has been challenging to work with issues that are sensitive in the region – in particular Democracy and Human Rights but also Sustainable Use of Water; and
- During the first two years and a half of the Strategy period, Sida only had one officer in the field while no staff resources were directly allocated to work with the new areas Water and Regional Economic Development in the MENA region<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Staff in Sida HQ with a general responsibility for water and trade was responsible also for the MENA region.

Summarising the achievements against the Strategy objectives we conclude that *the objectives have been met – the Swedish support has promoted:*

- Democracy and Good Governance;
- Respect for Human Rights;
- Sustainable Use of Water Resources; and
- Regional Economic Development.

A concern is the Strategy's vaguely formulated objectives, where the ambition is limited to "promote" the development in the four cooperation areas. At the time of the drafting of the Strategy, expectations were rather modest regarding concrete development achievements. This is obviously due to the inherent challenges in achieving any direct influence within these aspects of development in the region.

Due to the absence of a comprehensive approach to each area with elaborated results frameworks, we would, however, claim that it *remains uncertain whether the Swedish support has been the most appropriate for achieving results* in terms of contributing to sustainable improvements. Adding to this uncertainty is also the fact that the support to the Democracy and Good Governance and the Human Rights areas to a large extent have been indirect with a long-term perspective, and that the support in the areas Sustainable Use of Water and Regional Development started late.

The support has *clearly contributed to a higher level of exchanges of experiences within the region and between the region and Sweden*. The interventions have included a wide selection of types of support – training, arenas for exchange, core support to civil society, studies and research as well as institutional development. To a varying degree, the interventions have also included ambitions to establish regional structures or networks, however with the inherent risk that these initiatives will not be sustainable. We have only observed two examples where Sida has strengthened regional structures that are developed independently of donor support. One reason for this is obviously the limited number of regional cooperation initiatives and organisations.

## **7.2 Reflections on Adjustments of the Strategy**

Based on the experiences and difficulties in implementing the current regional Strategy, there are good opportunities for developing a new Strategy that will be more instrumental in guiding a results-oriented Swedish development support in the MENA region 2011–2014. The weaknesses in the current Strategy and its implementation appear to be rather well-known within Sida and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and there are clear intentions and many ideas for how to develop a more effective strategy for the coming years.

In this section we present our reflections on the needs for adjustments of the Strategy. We hope that this discussion will provide an input when developing a new strategy, where our reflections are discussed and confronted with other knowledge and points of views.

### **A point of departure for our reflections on adjustment of the Strategy**

Our understanding is that the underlying rationale for Swedish development support are 1) poverty reduction in the broad sense, in which lack of democracy and respect for human rights are seen as important elements, and 2) a wish for increased exchange and cooperation between the region and Europe, in particular Sweden. With the exception of Yemen, the countries in the region are not among the least developed countries. A reasonable conclusion is that improved democracy and respect for human rights are at the forefront of the Swedish development ambitions for the region.

While it is rather obvious that there is a need for a long-term perspective regarding development of democratic societies and respect for human right in the region, it remains uncertain what should constitute the most effective approaches and methods for achieving concrete improvements. In the cooperation areas Democracy and Good Governance and Human Rights, support to civil society and enhanced participation has been the main cross-cutting theme. In the cooperation area Regional Economic Development, on the other hand, the support focuses on cooperation involving government officials while the area Sustainable Use of Water involves a mix of actors.

Democracy and respect for human rights depend on a complex interaction between governments, public sector organisations, business communities, non-governmental organisations and citizens in different capacities. It is likely that it is the interaction between these actors that in the long run will bring democracy and respect for human rights to the region – like it did in western societies. The difficult question regards the most appropriate approach for Swedish development cooperation to contribute to this development

Based on our interviews with local and regional actors, there are reasons to question whether the best approach is to separate work specifically focused on democracy and human rights from work on issues more related to the development of institutions and welfare for citizens. Instead, we would argue that the development of institutions and the improvement of the welfare for citizens (starting to demand their rights to respect and to influence) have the potential to bring democracy and respect for human rights to the region, in the long term perspective.

Hence, we see some strong reasons to provide support to institutional development and improved welfare for citizens in the MENA region – but a support that also contributes to a Swedish agenda of a long-term development towards democracy and respect for human rights. This is our main reflection on the needs to revise the Strategy and it will be further elaborated below.

### **The option of a regional approach**

There appears to be a demand – both from civil society and from government entities in the region – for enhanced regional and international exchanges and collaborations. Should Sweden decide to continue with a regional approach, it is nevertheless imperative to articulate clear arguments for how such an approach shall contribute to achievement of results in areas selected for cooperation. Sweden's rather limited resources allocated to the region can be seen as an argument against as well as in favour of using a regional approach. The risk is that limited resources may be scattered around the region, not achieving much of concrete and sustainable results. If a regional approach shall be used, it is crucial to make a strategic analysis of where Swedish intervention can make a difference in terms of supporting existing regional and multilateral initiatives with a realistic scope. In addition, a Swedish regional approach can be complementary to the (mainly bilateral) donor initiatives in the region, strengthening others' regional efforts. Sweden is well-known to be a “neutral” partner, generally free from suspicions of imposing any “hidden agenda” through its development interventions. This should be seen as an important comparative advantage and a highly valuable feature when promoting enhanced collaborations between countries in politically sensitive situations – a common case for countries in this region – and exchange between the region and Sweden/Europe.

We see three applications of the regional approach to be considered for the coming period:

- Support to regional cooperation emerging from local/regional initiatives;
- A strategic role for Sida in complementing other donors' initiatives and strengthen initiatives from multilateral organisations; and
- Providing opportunities for exchange within the region and between the region and Europe/Sweden, for example through ITP or regional training programmes.

In particular, there are reasons to *focus on regional cooperation/networks emerging from local/regional initiatives* (or at least regional initiatives with strong local/regional ownership) rather than on those emerging from donor initiatives. This provides for necessary ownership, hence stronger sustainability potentials. The drawback, though, is that such initiatives are few in the region.

Sida may also consider to put further emphasis on *playing a strategic role in complementing other donors' initiatives and to strengthen initiatives from multilateral organisations* to which Sweden is a member, or other regional initiatives. The current approach of directly supporting such initiatives can be complemented by separate projects and programmes that are linked to and reinforce initiatives from multilateral organisations. This could, for example, consist of providing ITP courses related to OECD/MENA Investment Programme, supporting the implementation of national reform plans linked to the OECD/MENA Good Governance Programme or to provide capacity building and core support to local NGOs related to the UNDP Water Programme.

Most of the concrete development takes place on a national or local level. It is likely that regional initiatives can be strengthened through support to national or local implementation of them. This is an argument for opening up for bilateral Swedish support, strengthening regional initiatives by achieving concrete results on the national or local level.

In cases where the Swedish support does not build on regional initiatives or relates to multilateral initiatives, we believe that it *may be good enough to provide opportunities for exchange within the region, and between the region and Europe/Sweden*. This could be combined with efforts to facilitate and support regional networks if such initiatives are taken. However, we do not think that Sida or the implementing organisation should be the driving force for establishing regional networks. Such networks must build on the local and regional interest to be sustainable. The ITPs, or regional training programmes, seem to have been a good way to promote regional exchange of experiences and exchange between Sweden and the region. If the programmes are designed and implemented with the objective to achieve organisational change they can be good instruments for affecting the development in the region – but there is a need for more systematic information on the impact.

The idea of twinning and partnerships between Swedish and regional or a group of national actors could also be considered. Sweden's experience in building a welfare state could be relevant for a number of areas, from vocational training to care for the elderly. In line with Sida's recent promotion of the partner-driven cooperation, Swedish actors could consider to engage in relevant joint ventures aiming at self-supporting partnerships of a catalytic nature, limited in time and with a potential of being sustainable. This could involve different types of actors, like business/industry, public administration, research institutions or civil society organisations.

Furthermore, a *high degree of pragmatism in view of collaborating countries* would provide opportunities for more effective regional exchange and collaboration. Support to "natural" sub-regional initiatives may be considered also when these include countries outside the MENA region or countries in the region not defined as developing countries.

*Consider to focus the Swedish support on fewer and more narrowly defined areas and use a more result-oriented approach*

Through this Evaluation, the difficulties in dealing with four broad cooperation areas in a large and diverse region have become evident. Our conclusion is that there is a need for a more focused Swedish support, limited to one or two areas and to establish clearer target issues within each area. We believe this to be a pre-condition for success in the more results-oriented approach that Sida intends to adopt for the coming strategy period, in particular if a regional approach is to be kept. A more focused Swedish support should improve the opportunities for a strategic dialogue and coordination with regional as well as bilateral initiatives. It would also make it easier to use a mix of cooperating partners and of aid



instruments aiming to contribute to a common objective and results framework – involving government organisations as well as civil society.

*Consider to enter into a strategic dialogue with governments or regional intergovernmental organisations*

Whenever possible, it is a strong advantage to have a clear counterpart in international development cooperation. Usually the government is an important partner. With a regional strategy covering 18 countries and two territories, it is challenging to establish fruitful strategic dialogue with governments as counterparts. An alternative would be to enter into a strategic dialogue with the League of Arab States.

The League of Arab States is commonly described as a weak organisation, lacking the capacity to enforce implementation of agreements on the national governments. At the same time, it is obvious that it is a legitimate regional representative for the Arab states (which includes most of the countries in the MENA region). Our understanding is that there have been recent changes in the role of the League of Arab States, in particular as they have established a development agenda. This is confirmed by the seemingly fruitful cooperation developed with UNDP regarding development issues. We believe that this evolvement has opened up opportunities for a Swedish strategic dialogue and cooperation with the League of Arab States that may not have existed before.

Furthermore, we would like to argue for Sweden and Sida to consider the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the League of Arab States, like the Swedish Institute in Alexandria has done, regarding development cooperation involving the Arab states. This should, at the least, cover exchange of information. We would also like to recommend Sweden and Sida to consider the possibilities of entering into a strategic dialogue with the League of Arab States during the process of developing a strategy for the MENA region 2011–2014. If these initial contacts on a strategic level are successful, it also seems appropriate to establish a regular contact and dialogue on the strategic level as well as on a more technical level during implementation of the strategy.

*Consider to align the Swedish development agenda with the agenda defined by the Arab states*

As previously discussed, we see arguments for aligning the Swedish agenda with the development agendas of the involved countries. This does not mean that Sweden should accept values which are contradictory to Swedish and international policies and conventions in any area. On the contrary, the idea is to promote development based on the local/regional needs and, when doing so, also work systematically to achieve concrete results towards improved democracy and respect for human rights.

We believe that it is possible to use the perspectives of democracy and respect for human rights in most areas for development. Supporting improved welfare for and service delivery to citizens can be combined with an increased involvement of civil society as well as with initiatives focusing on institutional change towards administrative good governance and legislation promoting the respect for human rights. We have avoided the word “main-streaming” since it would be misleading in this case. Instead, we argue that improved democracy and respect for human rights should constitute *main perspectives* when working with other development needs by, for example, focusing on institutions that have an influence on these issues (e.g. property rights for women, access to labour markets for youth and women) and by involving civil society in public sector development.

We would like to argue for Sida to consider the feasibility of using the main development challenges for the Arab region identified by the League of Arab States as a point of departure when selecting cooperation areas for Swedish support. The support would need to be further narrowed down to sub-areas within one or two of these main challenges. While working with these sub-areas, Sweden should be open with and work systematically towards the Swedish agenda of promoting the long-term development of democracy and respect for human rights in the region.

### *Consider to balance different approaches in coordinated efforts to achieve common strategic objectives*

With a more results-oriented Swedish support focused on fewer and more narrowly defined areas, it appears relevant to cooperate with a variety of actors and to use a wide range of different aid instruments. Within such a framework it will, also in the future, be relevant to support civil society organisations (for example linked to human rights, media and/or culture), to use ITP programmes, to support institutional development and multilateral initiatives. In order to be effective, however, different initiatives need to be related to and strengthen each other to a much greater extent. This will permit the achievement of more concrete and narrowly defined strategy objectives.

### *Areas to consider for Swedish support*

The experiences from previous regional support show that it takes time to build up regional programmes. While no area should be taken for granted for future support, it is also important to consider the investment needed to engage in completely new areas. We would argue that one or two of the four areas in the current Strategy could be relevant as main cooperation areas also in the strategy period 2011–2014, but that these would need to be narrowed down further.

*Good Governance* – It is questionable to keep democratic governance as a main area for cooperation. Hardly any activities have involved democratic institutions and the planned media programme failed to start up. Support to civil society as well as to culture and media initiatives may, however, be relevant in a concrete context of any selected cooperation area. There are arguments for choosing *Good Governance* as a main cooperation area for the future, mainly targeting public sector reform and administrative governance: This is linked to the challenge of institutional development pointed out by the League of Arab states; there are multilateral regional programmes through OECD/MENA and UNDP; it is a comparative advantage for Sweden and clearly relevant for the Swedish development agenda. Support to development of democratic institutions could be included *should* such initiatives arise. While *Good Governance* is a broad area, application of the perspectives of democracy and respect for human rights narrows it down to certain institutions and certain kinds of reform initiatives supporting such a development.

*Women and/or Youth* – In our view, it appears relevant to keep Human Rights as a main area for cooperation, but we believe it to be important to further elaborate on the links to institutional development. Narrowing down the area to *Women and/or Youth* would make it easier to elaborate on such links and to open up for support to institutional development and good governance in areas important for the rights for women and/or youth. The rights of youth are clearly linked to two of the development challenges identified by the League of Arab States: Generating Employment and Reforming Education Systems. The Arab League also has a Technical Secretariat for the Permanent Arab Committee for Human Rights working with these areas. It is also an area where many international organisations and bilateral donors as well as local and regional NGOs are active. The respect for the rights of women is clearly a strong Swedish development cooperation area and Sweden has experience of working with these issues in the region.

*Sustainable Use of Water* – Water is by its very nature sub-regional, especially in the Middle East. Thus, both maximizing its potential as well as preventing water related conflicts require transboundary cooperation. Water is also a condition for life and can therefore serve as a natural driver and entry point for other aspects of development like a long-term development towards democracy and human rights. Further, water is included in the development agenda of the League of Arab states and UNDP has a regional water programme. Sweden's mix of political neutrality and technical know-how can be an added value, in particular in politically sensitive regions.



*Pro-poor Economic Development* – It is also an option to continue the support to regional economic development. As stated now, however, it is not clearly linked to poverty reduction or promotion of a long-term development towards democracy and human rights. This link would be clearer if the cooperation area was narrowed down to Pro-poor Economic Development. Pro-poor Growth and Generating Employment are among the challenges identified by the League of Arab States. Since the region is suffering from pockets of poverty, it appears relevant for Sweden to share experiences of income distribution and social welfare systems.

# Annex I Terms of Reference

## 1. Introduction

Sida has co-operation strategies for partner countries with which Sweden conducts long-term development cooperation. Every country's co-operation strategy outlines conclusions and guidelines for Swedish development co-operation for the whole strategy period. These include goals and targets for the cooperation, prerequisites for partnership, key issues for the continued dialogue, sectors for co-operation and forms of co-operation.

The current regional strategy for development cooperation with the MENA region is valid from 2006 up to 2010. In the beginning of 2010 the Swedish Government is expected to commission Sida to draw up a proposal for a new regional strategy for the MENA region. As part of the process, Sida intends to commission an evaluation of the current MENA strategy.

Sida is guided by an overarching objective to contribute to preconditions for the people living in poverty to improve their level of living. Based on a multidimensional perspective and concept of poverty, development cooperation needs to embrace the important imperatives for every specific context.

Swedish development cooperation is based on two perspectives: the rights perspectives and the perspectives of the poor. The rights perspective implies that the principles of non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability should always permeate our work, while the second stands for departing from the priorities of people living in poverty when making priorities and choices.

The multidimensional perspective and concept of poverty does not only include lack of resources, but embraces also terms such as human security, possibilities and influence over one's own life.

## 2. Background

The aim of the strategy is to define the direction of Sweden's regional development cooperation with the MENA region. The strategy is to facilitate the introduction of regional initiatives aimed at strengthening and broadening development cooperation with the region and will promote greater interaction and exchange both within the region and between the region and Sweden. The strategy's regional approach and its focus on four cooperation areas will enable the programme to have a greater impact in a wider regional perspective by creating opportunities for interacting with and supplementing the efforts of other bilateral and multilateral actors, particularly the EU, the UN agencies and the multilateral development banks.

The key objectives are:

- to promote democracy and good governance, e.g. by taking steps to promote the emergence of a strong civil society;
- to promote respect for human rights, including equal rights, conditions and opportunities for women and girls, and to encourage the development both of regional networks and of structures for dialogue on rights perspectives and basic universal values, etc;
- to promote the sustainable use of water resources, focusing in particular on regional and trans-boundary water issues, from both a poverty reduction and a conflict prevention viewpoint; and
- to promote regional economic development and growth, particularly capacity enhancing measures to strengthen trade policy skills and supply capacity in a regional perspective.

The MENA region is defined to comprise 18 countries<sup>32</sup>, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and Western Sahara. Regional cooperation is to focus primarily on those countries in which projects adopting a regional approach have already been launched – Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Syria. Other countries should however also be considered, in particular when deemed relevant in a regional or sub-regional context. This also applies to Iraq and the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza areas, for which bilateral development cooperation strategies already exists. Out of these, five countries have been identified as focus countries: Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco.

The financial framework for Swedish development assistance to the region amounted to SEK 120 in 2008, SEK 200 million in 2009 and SEK 130 million in 2010.

### **3. Purpose, users and use of the evaluation**

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the outcomes achieved from Sida's support as part of the Strategy for Development Cooperation with MENA 2006–2010. The evaluation is also expected to provide systematic information and generate new learning on the regional approach as a model for development cooperation.

The primary intended users of the evaluation are Sida MENA operational staff and managers, staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Swedish and international NGOs, multilateral organisations, and development partners active in the MENA region.

The evaluation is to be formative with a strong learning element, by generating knowledge and creating discussions. The evaluation should discuss key lessons that can be drawn from the findings and reflect on adjustments of Sida's support and strategy in the MENA region. The evaluation will feed into the process of developing the new strategy for the period 2011–2014.

### **4. Objectives and evaluation questions**

The main objectives of the evaluation are:

- 1 to assess the outcomes achieved per sector and strategy objectives from Sida's support to the MENA region 2006–2010, and formulate key lessons from these;
- 2 to assess the choice of areas of cooperation, partners, aid instruments and Sida's role as a development partner in the MENA region, and formulate key lessons from this; and
- 3 to assess the regional approach applied by Sida to development cooperation in the MENA region during 2006–2010.

The evaluation is to be based on the standard DAC Evaluation Criteria. The priority issues/questions to be examined are:

The *context* in which the regional strategy is implemented:

- Political, social and economic context (including conflict/post-conflict situations);
- Key events over the period, regional agreements and strategies, including factors beyond the control of Sida and other development partners;
- Policy dialogue in regional fora and between actors, and how this has developed during the period;

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<sup>32</sup> Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Qatar, Yemen

- Importance, role and trends in development assistance, development partners, multilateral organisations, and other stakeholders (e.g. regional development banks, NGOs) active in the MENA region.

The *relevance* of the regional objectives:

- Where the targeted sectors (water, promotion of human rights, democracy and good governance and economic development and growth) relevant in relation to the regional needs and in relation to Sweden's comparative advantages?
- Is the selection of the focus countries Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco relevant in relation to the dynamics in the region?
- To what extent were Sida's interventions under the current regional strategy conflict sensitive?
- To what extent did Sida's interventions contribute to deeper regional integration and strengthen regional structures? What factors were essential for successful regional cooperation?

The *effectiveness* of the programmes and interventions in achieving the objectives set out in the regional strategy, including choice of aid instruments, policy dialogue and influencing, coordination with other development partners and stakeholders, as well as fulfilling the commitments made as part of the Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action:

- To what extent were the objectives and goals set out in the regional strategy achieved in practice? Were objectives for individual interventions and programmes achieved? What may explain successes and failures?
- How effective was the mix of aid instruments in achieving the objectives? To what extent did choices about aid instruments reflect the political and conflict context?
- How effective has Sida been in pursuing its agenda with partners, including other bilateral donors, multi-lateral organisations (World Bank, the League of Arab States, United Nations and European Commission), civil society and NGOs? Was the balance among partners right?
- How did Sida work with Swedish actors e.g. the Swedish Alexandria Institute as per the Swedish cooperation strategy?
- To what extent did Sida seek to strengthen harmonisation amongst development partners active in the region and enhanced coordination (joint analysis, pooled funding, joint reporting etc)?

The *efficiency* with which the strategy and programmes are translated into activities. There are four cross cutting themes that should be considered in the assessment;

- *Needs*, as perceived and expressed by the cooperation partners
- *Response*, i.e. how Sida has responded in relation to the needs expressed by the cooperation partners
- *Relevance*, i.e. if the Swedish response have been relevant in the relation to the partners' needs
- *Impact*, i.e. what effect the Swedish contribution and the cooperation between the parties has had in the different key areas.

To the extent possible, the evaluation should consider:

*Sustainability* – are the reforms/ changes supported moving in the right direction and are they likely to be sustained? Has local capacity been built?

## 5. Methodology

The evaluation shall be based on: (i) a review of documentation and literature; (ii) structured/semi-structured interviews (iii) stakeholder analysis and mapping; and (iv) fieldwork in the following countries, Jordan, Egypt and Morocco.

The methodology and evaluation framework should be developed and presented in the Inception Report.

In order to promote learning, the evaluation team shall propose a suitable and effective ways for feedback of the evaluation findings and lessons to stakeholders through a participatory approach, taking into account e.g. the geographical locations of stakeholders.

The inception phase should also ensure that Sida HQ and country/regional office staff, through a participatory approach, have an opportunity to feed in key questions and issues they want the evaluation to address and contribute as appropriate to the evaluation process.

The evaluation team shall present in the inception report how they intend to promote a participatory approach to feedback and dissemination throughout the evaluation process.

The evaluation team shall take care to establish the reliability and consistency of the information by triangulation, i.e. comparing and checking similar information from various sources.

No fieldwork will commence until the Inception Report has been approved. Prior to undertaking fieldwork, the evaluation team need to be familiar with the Sida programme and interventions, the regional context and the full range of Sida policy papers that are relevant to the regional strategy.

### Case studies on areas of cooperation

The questions for examination listed above (context, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, sustainability) should be applied to each of the areas of cooperation identified in the regional strategy: (i) water; (ii) promotion of human rights, democracy and good governance; and (iii) economic development and growth.

The case studies should focus on the Sida supported interventions, results and outcomes from these. The case studies should also include an assessment of stakeholder perceptions with respect to the importance and relevance of Sida's support in each area of cooperation as well as a stakeholder analysis/mapping for each sector area.

The sector case studies should consider:

- the relevance of Sida's support in each area in relation to the strategic objective in the strategy, goals and the needs of the target beneficiary
- the effectiveness and efficiency of Sida's support to the areas of cooperation, based on the interventions;
- the involvement and dialogue with key stakeholders in each area of cooperation; and
- efforts made to ensure sustainability of the different interventions in each area of cooperation.

### Key informants

The evaluation team will interview staff at Sida, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and partners (in government, multilateral organisation, other donors, NGOs and civil society etc.) about all aspects of the regional strategy and programme – using checklists as appropriate. Where applicable, interviews with beneficiaries may be carried out. Sida will inform the relevant stakeholders about the evaluation, its purpose, and use. It is, however, the responsibility of the evaluation team to make all practical arrangements for field visits and interviews.

## Documentation

Relevant documentation for the literature review will be identified and collected during the inception phase. The MENA team will provide supporting documentation. This will include project/programme documentation and relevant documentation about the design, implementation and monitoring/evaluation of the regional strategy and individual programmes, background on policy information etc.

Relevant document include:

- “Sida at Work – Manual for the preparation, implementation and follow-up of cooperation strategies”.
- Sida’s Country Strategy for the Middle East and North Africa
- Sida’s Perspectives on Poverty
- Sida’s policy “Promoting Peace and Security Policy through Development Cooperation”
- Sida’s Policy for Peace, Justice and Human Rights Policy, Part 1
- Promoting Gender Equality in Development Cooperation

## 6. Reporting and timing

### Inception report

The inception report shall be submitted two weeks after signing of the contract. The inception report should clearly state the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, why the evaluation is being done, who the primary intended users of the evaluation are, and how these will be involved in the evaluation process. Furthermore should the inception report present an approach and methodology, including detailed description of the methodology, research strategy, and analytical approach specifying how the analysis will be performed, evaluation questions, description of sources of evidence, and data collection process and methods to be used. The inception report should also include a work and time plan, with key activities and plans for field work, report submissions and dissemination activities. Annexes to the inception report should include the Terms of Reference, a draft evaluation report outline, list of key documentation to collect and review, and a list of key informants to consult.

### Evaluation report

The evaluation report shall be no more than 45 pages long, excluding annexes. The structure of the report should facilitate assessments of the key evaluation questions. Possible limitations of methods and findings should be discussed in the report. The report should also discuss lessons that can be drawn from the findings and reflect on possible adjustments of Sida’s support to the region. Annexes to the report should give more detailed information on Sida’s support to each area of cooperation case study; the context, results, and methods used in the evaluation (including questionnaire/checklist and material). For guidance on report structure, see Sida’s Evaluation Manual (2007).

A first draft evaluation report should be submitted *22 February 2010*. Sida staff and other stakeholders will provide feedback factual errors, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned. The final report should reflect these comments and acknowledge any substantive disagreements.

The final report will be published and distributed, electronically and in hard copy. The final report should be of publishable quality and professionally edited. It is the responsibility of the evaluation team to ensure that the final report is professionally edited. The final report should be submitted no later than *5 March 2010*.

### Meetings/workshops

The draft report will be followed up by a meeting on the 26 February 2010 where the consultants will participate in discussions with the parties involved, including Sida and other stakeholders.

## Timing

The consultants are free to begin the assignment after an agreement has been signed.

An indicative outline of the timeframe is given below.

Within one week of start date of the assignment, an outline of the study should be presented to Sida

22 February 2010	Submission of draft report
26 February 2010	Meeting in Stockholm where draft report is to be presented and discussed. Sida provides comments in writing and orally.
5 March 2010	Final report submitted

## 7. The evaluation team

The evaluation team, as a whole, must have strong evaluation skills, understanding of Sida, and the regional context. The team leader must have extensive evaluation experience, and good knowledge and relevant experience from the MENA region. Each team member must have good knowledge about one or several of the areas of cooperation for the evaluation, e.g. water, human rights and democracy, and economic development and growth.

In addition to the above, the evaluation team should cover the following competencies:

- Higher relevant academic degree and research competence
- Experience as team leader for multi disciplinary teams (for the Team Leader)
- Experience as team member in multi disciplinary teams
- Experience in evaluative research
- Experience in evaluation of development assistance
- Knowledge of development assistance policies, strategies and aid management
- Experience in political economy and conflict analysis.

## 8. Organisation of the evaluation

The evaluation will be commissioned by Sida's MENA team and managed by a joint steering group with members from the MENA team and the Secretariat for Evaluation. The group will:

- Ensure quality throughout the evaluation process;
- Comment on and approve the draft version of Inception and Evaluation report, including choice of methodologies;
- Ensure that relevant stakeholders are aware of the evaluation and fully involved and available to contribute to the evaluation;
- Chair meetings, organise the presentation of the evaluation results, and assist with necessary follow-up of the evaluation.

A reference group will also be established representing relevant teams at Sida and comprising members based both at Sida headquarters and at embassies in the region. The group will advice on factual and methodological issues and provide input to the draft evaluation and approach and inception report, provide comments on the draft version of the reports, and participate and meetings/workshops organised.



## **9. Budget**

The estimated number of professional staff-days are [ange antal dagar]

The ceiling budget for the evaluation are [ange takbelopp i SEK]

## **10. The proposal**

The proposal must include the following:

- a short description of the methodology by which the Tenderer proposes to execute the evaluation, including field work, transfer of know-how or similar activity included;
- a financial proposal following the attached financial proposal form (attachment 1);
- CVs of each individual team member in the attached format (attachment 2); and
- acceptance of the attached draft contract (attachment 3).

# Annex II Evaluation Matrix– Evaluation of the Swedish Strategy for the MENA Region

Main analysis	Issues to cover	Sources	Main resp.	Comments
Regional development	Political, social, economic, conflict/post conflict Key events, regional agreements and strategies Policy dialogue in regional fora and between actors Role and trends in development assistance – donors, banks, NGOs Sector development (if possible)	WB/UNDP materials Arab Human Dev. report Development Challenges for the Arab Region	Robert	Only main events & developments
Achievement of strategic objectives: Objective I – Assess the outcomes achieved by sector and strategic objective from Sida's support; formulate key lessons				
Covering context, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability	Overall summary	Possibly sector development	Lars F	High priority
	Democracy and good governance	Field interviews	Lars F	
	Human rights	Project studies	Viktoría	
	Water	Reports from Sida	Robert	
Economic development				
Development strategy: Objective II – Assess the areas of cooperation, partners, aid instruments and Sida's role as a development partner; formulate key lessons				
Choice of sectors/objectives	Relevant to regional needs	Analysis of	Overall	Over arching assessment of selection of sectors, countries and conflict sensitivity
	Relevant to Swedish comparative advantages	Regional development	responsibility:	
Selection of focus countries	Relevant to dynamics in the region	Achievement of Strategic objectives	Lars O	
Interventions conflict sensitive	Extent interventions that were conflict sensitive	Interviews Sida, UD	Assisting and responsible for different perspectives:	
Contributing to regional cooperation	Extent interventions contributing to regional integration/structures	Field interviews		
	Key factors for successful regional cooperation	Project studies	Lars F:	
Partners	The right balance among partners (donors, multilateral, banks, UN, EU, civil society, NGOs)	Special documents:	results	No need to map out donors/stakeholders.
	How did Sida work with Swedish actors as of the strategy	The Strategy, other	Robert:	Governments are not partners.
	Sida's response to needs expressed by partners, translated into activities	Ministry documents and Sida policy	regional	
		M&E reports	Lars O:	
Aid instruments	Fulfilling commitments in the Paris Agenda		Swedish development policy	Over arching assessment
	Effectiveness of the mix of aid instruments in achieving objectives			
	Choices of aid instruments reflecting the political and conflict context			
Sida's role as development partner	Effectiveness of Sida in pursuing it's agenda with partners (donors, multilateral, banks, UN, EU, civil society, NGOs)			The regional approach means low expectations on Sida to pursue it's agenda and promote donor harmonisation
	Did Sida promote donor harmonisation and coordination (joint analysis, pooled funding, joint reporting)			
	Policy dialogue, Sida's response to need expressed by partners, translated into activities			
Regional approach: Objective III: Assess the regional approach applied by Sida				
		Interviews Sida, UD	Lars F	Focusing on Sida's implementation
		Ministry documents	Lars O	
		Field interviews	Robert	
		Projects studies		

Supporting data collection		Issues to cover	Sources	Main resp.	Comments
<b>Review of project design and results</b>					
Design	Relevance to strategic objectives Relevance to partner needs/beneficiary needs Relevance to Swedish comparative advantages Conflict sensitive Designed according to the regional approach Contributing to regional cooperation Partners – right balance of partners, Swedish actors as of the Strategy Choice of aid instrument relevant to achieving objectives as well as reflecting political and conflict context Policy dialogue, involvement of stakeholders and response to their needs Coordination with other donors and stakeholders		Case studies, with review of assessment memo-randums and external evaluation/moni-toring report and/or the latest report of results for a selection of projects. 5 prioritised projects per sector. 38 projects out of 76 selected in total (but only approx 70 in the 4 sectors). Democracy 9 Human Rights 13 Water 8 Economic development 8	Dem. & Good Gov: Lars F Human Rights: Viktoria Water: Robert Economic dev: Lars O	High priority of information on results and difficulties Some projects may be dropped if difficulties to cover all selected Incl. interviews of some desk officers and Swedish implementers
Effectiveness	Achieving project objectives (outcomes)				
Efficiency	Achieving strategic objectives				
Sustainability	Use of resources The supported reforms moving in the right direction Local capacity built				
Lessons learned	Explanation of success and failure				
<b>Field visits</b>					
Regional development	Political, social, economic, conflict/post conflict Key events, regional agreements and strategies Policy dialogue in regional fora and between actors Role and trends in development assistance – donors, banks, NGOs Sector development (if possible)		Interviews at the Swedish Embassies in Egypt and Jordan Interviews with actors identified by Sida: Donors with a regional support Other regional actors Recipients of support, to be selected by SIPU from lists provided by Sida. Sipu may choose additional actors	1 week visits in selected countries. Egypt: Lars F, Viktoria & Jakob Jordan: Robert & Abdul-Hamid Marocco: Lars O & Crister (intern)	Limited number of personal interviews. Consider to increase coverage of recipients through telephone interviews.
Swedish development strategy	Choice of sectors/objectives Selection of focus countries Interventions conflict sensitive Contributing to regional cooperation Stakeholders, Sida partners, incl. involvement/dialogue and response to needs Aid instruments Sida's role as development partner				
Results of Swedish development assistance	Design (mainly relevance, importance, partners, aid instruments, coordination) Effectiveness Efficiency Sustainability Lessons learned				
Materials	Ask for reports on regional development and donor assistance				

## Annex III Sources of Information

Organisation	Interviewee	Position	Location
Agadir Technical Unit Jordan	Mohammed Samir	Senior Advisor	Jordan
Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue between Cultures	Susanne Abou Ghaida	Programme Administrator	Egypt
Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue between Cultures	Doaa Chalaby	Programme Officer	Egypt
Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue between Cultures	Marian Nabil	Accountant	Egypt
AQS, Anrika Quality Services AB, Göteborg/ Stockholm, Sweden	Lennart Gibo	Consultant	Telephone
AQS, Anrika Quality Services AB, Göteborg/ Stockholm, Sweden	Agust Jonsson	Expert/organiser	Telephone
Arab NGO Network for Development, Beirut, Lebanon	Ziad Abdel Samad	Director	Telephone
BAYTI	Khalid Hanefioui	Managing Director	Morocco
Center for Strategic Studies, Arab Reform Initiative, University of Jordan	Mohammad Al-Masri	Researcher Political Science	Jordan
Danida, Danish International Development Assistance, Copenhagen	Pernille Brix Jørgensen	Desk Officer	Telephone
Danida, Danish International Development Assistance	Gerd Elmark	First Secretary Cooperation & Programs	Jordan
Dramatiska Institutet	Boel Höjeberg	Vice President	Egypt
Dramatiska Institutet	Brita Papini	Programme Coordinator	Egypt
EC, European Commission	Omar Abu-Eid	Programme Manager – Environment & Energy	Jordan
EC, European Commission, Brussels, Belgium	Corinne André	Programme Desk Officer	Telephone
Friends of the Earth Middle East	Gideon Bromberg	Israeli Director	Jordan
Friends of the Earth Middle East	Munqeth Mehyar	Co-director	Jordan
Friends of the Earth Middle East	Abdel Rahman Sultan	Deputy Director	Jordan
GTZ, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit	Yousry Mustafa	Programme Coordinator	Egypt
Heya Foundation	Afaf el Sayyed	Chairman of the Board	Egypt
The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Stockholm, Sweden	Ingrid Wetterquist	Head of Presidency Project	Telephone
Kvinna till Kvinna	Boriana Jönsson	Regional Field Coordinator	Jordan
League of Arab States Development & Social Policies Department	Dr. Ibrahim Elsour	Director	Egypt
League of Arab States, Politics Department	Fares Abdel Kariim	European Relations Office	Egypt
League of Arab States	Mahmoud Raashed Ghaleb	Director of Civil Society Observatory and Professional Unions Department	Egypt
League of Arab States	Dr. Thamer M. Zaidan	Director of Studies and Strategic Economic Relations Department	Egypt
Mena.se, Kista, Sweden	Marianne Laanatza	Expert	Telephone
Ministry of Foreign Trade	Jamaa Hakim	Officer of studies	Morocco
Ministry of Industry, Trade & Upgraded Economy	Rim Oumalek	Head of Department	Morocco
Ministry of Justice	Amina Ofroukhi	Director Youth Department	Morocco

Organisation	Interviewee	Position	Location
Ministry of Trade & Industry, Food Safety Agency Management Unit	Ehab M. W. Ayad	Lead Inspection Advisor	Egypt
National Council for Human Rights, Ombudsman Network	Choukry Fouad	Project Director	Egypt
New Jordan Research Institute	Dr. Hani Hourani	Director	Jordan
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland	Fateh Azzem	Regional Representative	Telephone
RWI, Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, Lund, Sweden	Hanna Johansson	Programme Officer	Telephone
Secretariat of State in charge of Water	Farah el Aoufir	Project Manager of AGIR – in partnership with the GTZ	Morocco
Secretariat of State in charge of Water	Abderafia Benbouziane	Head of Service in the Research and Planning of Water Department	Morocco
Secretariat of State in charge of Water	Naima Houmy	In Charge of a Mission	Morocco
Sida Stockholm	Eva Asplund	Former Head of Unit Asien/MENA	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Maria Bendel	Desk Officer Human Rights	Telephone
Sida, Swedish international development cooperation agency, Stockholm	Marco Blixt	Former Administrator Water	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Birgitta Danielsson	Former Counsellor Democracy and Human Rights in Cairo	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Margareta Davidsson-Abdelli	Desk Officer Regional Economic Development	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Annelie Hartmann	Desk Officer ITP	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Kristin Olson	Former Desk Officer Culture and Media	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Helene Rask	Regional Team Director, MENA	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Christina Regnell	Former Country Strategist at Sida	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Ingrid Sandström	Administrator Water	Telephone
Sida Stockholm	Eva Smedberg	Former Head of Unit, Asia/MENA	Telephone
Sida, the Swedish Embassy in Cairo, Egypt	Malin Stawe	Counsellor Democracy and Human Rights	Egypt
Sida, the Swedish Embassy in Amman, Jordan	Muna Barghouth	Regional Programme Officer	Jordan
Sida, the Swedish Embassy in Amman, Jordan	Annika Johansson	Counsellor, Regional Water Cooperation	Jordan
The Swedish Embassy in Cairo, Egypt	Malin Kärre	Ambassador	Egypt
The Swedish Embassy in Rabat, Morocco	Michael Odevall	Ambassador	Morocco
The Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Stockholm	Mats Nyström	MENA Deputy Director	Telephone
Swedish Trade Council, Stockholm, Sweden	Robert Wentrup	Representative in Maghreb region	Telephone
UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, Regional Center in Cairo, Egypt	Sameh Afifi	Regional Programme Advisor	Egypt
UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, Regional Center in Cairo, Egypt	Shaima Hussein	Democratic Governance Specialist	Egypt
UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, Regional Center in Cairo, Egypt	Noha el Mikawy	Government Practice Leader for the Arab States Region	Egypt
UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, Regional Center in Cairo, Egypt	Mitra M. Motlagh	Human Rights Specialist	Egypt
UNDP Water Governance Programme for Arab States	Dr. Hosny K. Khordagui	Regional Programme Director	Egypt

Organisation	Interviewee	Position	Location
UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund	Liv Indreiten	Adolescent and Youth Development Specialist	Jordan
UNICEF Country office, the United Nations Children's Fund	Salma Wahba	Youth advisor	Egypt
UNIFEM, United Nations development Fund for Women	Zineb Touimi Benjelloun	Sub Regional Director	Morocco
University of Jordan, Water Research Center	Dr Manar Fayyad	Head of Department	Jordan
USAID, The U.S. Agency for International Dev.	Jim Wright	Middle East programs dept. dir.	Egypt
World Bank	Ibrahim Dajani	Head of Department	Jordan

### Reviewed reports

Arab Human Development Report. UNDP, 2009
DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance. OECD, 1991
Development Challenges For The Arab Region: A Human Development Approach Volume 1. UNDP, 2009
Development Challenges for the Arab Region: Food Security and Agriculture, Volume 2. UNDP, 2009
Economic Integration in the Arab World. The World Bank, MNA Knowledge and Learning ... Fast Brief, no 36, October 2009
Evaluation of Sida's Work with Culture and Media. Sida, October 2004
Growth Performance in MENA, 1970–2008 – Four Decades of Volatility. The World Bank, MNA Knowledge and Learning ... Fast Brief, no 35, October 2009
Interna anvisningar för utformning av strategier för stöd till regionalt samarbete. Regeringskansliet, Utrikesdepartementet February 2009
Interna anvisningar för sektorfokusering. Regeringskansliet, Utrikesdepartementet February 2009
Managing Water Resources and Enhancing Cooperation in IDB Member Countries. IDB Occasional Paper No 11, June 2005
Mapping and analysis of regional human rights and democracy programmes in the MENA region. Margareta de Goys, SPM consultants. August, 2007
Mapping of Cultural Funding Landscape in Eight Arab Countries: Policies, Initiatives and Opportunities. Information and Research Centre at King Hussein Foundation, March 2007
Mena Water Overview: Transboundary Cooperation, IWRM and Opportunities for Swedish Engagement. SIWI, June 2007
Middle East and North Africa Governance News & Notes. The World Bank, Volume 3, Issue 2, June 2009
Perspectives on Poverty. Sida, October 2002
Regeringens riktlinjer för handelsrelaterat utvecklingssamarbete 2007. Regeringskansliet, December 2006
Regeringens riktlinjer för handelsrelaterat utvecklingssamarbete 2008. Regeringskansliet, December 2007
Regional Institutions of the MENA REGION. Ancillary Regional Water Intelligence Report. SIWI, January 2009
Regional Water Intelligence Report, Middle East. Update Report July to December 2008. Drought and Financial Crisis. Report to Sida. SIWI, December 2008
Regionalt utvecklingssamarbete i Mellanöstern och Nordafrika – MENA-regionen – inom områdena demokrati, mänskliga rättigheter, kultur och medier för perioden 2003–2005. Sida, March 2003
Sida Country Report 2005 MENA. Sida, May 2006
Sida Regional Report 2007 MENA. Sida, June 2008
Strategy for development cooperation with The Middle East and North Africa January 2006–December 2008. Regeringskansliet, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 2006
Strategy report 2009 for the regional MENA strategy. Sida
Sveriges politik för global utveckling. Regeringskansliet, Skr. 2007/08:89, March 2008
Trade Brief: Trade in the Middle East and North Africa. GTZ Trade Programme, March 2009
WATER AND ENERGY LINKAGES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. Middle East Seminar Report World Water Week 2009. SIWI, 2009



## Annex IV Aid Instruments used in Reviewed Interventions

Aid instrument/Intervention	Training	ITP	Contract-Financed Technical Cooperation	Core support	Organisational development	Support to studies/research	Awareness raising	Publications
Democracy & Good Governance								
OECD/MENA Governance	X				X	X		X
Animate It	X							
Performing Arts	X			X	X			
Media Inception Period						X		
ITP Media		X						
Regional Training Programme Employment	X		X		X			
Children's Literature	X			X	X			
Human Rights								
ITP Gender Equality		X						
Human Rights in Egypt	X		X					
Academic Human Rights Training	X							
Women's Empowerment	X			X	X			
UNICEF Youth Participation	X					X	X	X
Juvenile Justice	X			X	X			
Children's Rights	X			X	X	X		
UNDP Arab Human Development Report							X	
Civil Society Advocacy				X	X	X	X	
EMHRF				X	X			
EMHRN	X			X	X		X	
Sustainable Use of Water								
UNDP Water governance	X					X	X	
Good Water Neighbours	X						X	
ITP Transbound water mgmt MENA		X						
ITP Transbound water mgmt Euphrates & Tigris		X						
ITP MENA Climate Change Mitigation		X						
Seminar on Water and Energy in MENA	X					X		
Red Sea Dead Sea Water Conveyance Project						X		X
Regional Economic Development								
CEPEX	X		X			X		
OECD/MENA Investment Prg	X				X	X		X
Carbon Footprints	X						X	
ITP Quality Infrastructure Dev		X						
ITP World Trade and Conformity		X						
ITP Quality Infrastr. for Food Safety		X						
ITP Negotiating Trade Agreements		X						
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>70</b>							

## Annex V Brief Description of Interventions in the Area of Human Rights

### Brief description of interventions targeting women and young people

#### *The Juvenile Justice Programme*

The implementer of the programme is an international organisation. It develops programmes on a regional basis, assisting both non-governmental organisations and individuals to establish projects in their own countries. It promotes the exchange of information and good practice between countries with related conditions in the case of the MENA region. Sida supported its Juvenile justice programme since its beginning in March 2004 to March 2006, later expanded to March 2008, and has also contributed with a three-year global core support 2007–2009.

The organisation has been in demand from national governments and specialist NGOs when reviewing legislation, e.g. regulating age of criminal responsibility. A PRI training manual on juvenile justice for the Arab region has been published and used in series of workshops for officials in the judiciary.

An advantage for successful implementation of programme objectives appears to be the implementer's status as an international organisation – it is seen as neutral and hence a trustful collaborating/training partner. The regional dimension of the programme appears highly valuable. A cross-sector review seminar was held in November 2007.

#### *UNICEF Youth Participation*

The overall objective of the programme is to create an enabling policy environment allowing adolescents to grow to their full potential as citizens and participate in national development. Sida has advocated for UNICEF's mandate to strengthen its work with adolescents (not only children); this has in particular been regarded as highly relevant for the MENA-region that has a high population of youth. A position of an adolescent's adviser has been established at the regional office in Amman together with a regional work plan and annual country plans. The regional dimension of the programme consists of an exchange between country offices in the region, coordinated by the regional office.

The programme was initiated in 2005 and Sida has provided support for the periods 2006–2008 and 2008–2011. The programme has had a slow starting-up with serious delays in implementation. A review was published in 2008. There was no regional coordination in place until September 2009. This has obviously affected the program, resulting in an absence of a regional overview and hence weak coordination possibilities.

#### *Women's Empowerment*

The objective of the programme is to empower women in the region to take part in the development of the society in their own countries, to strengthen the regional cooperation between women's organisations and to facilitate the development of a sustainable women's movement in the whole region.

Sida signed the first agreement with the Swedish NGO (implementing partner) in 2004, for support to a regional programme based in Amman, and has continuously supported the further development of the program.

There was a slow starting-up of the programme. However the implementing partner has proved to be a relevant partner with high expertise in the area. The regional dimension is seen as important and of great value for strengthening organisations' capacity. Also smaller, less well-established organisations are reached through the programme which is seen as an added value, but also associated with greater risks. The link to the NGO network programme (see below) is seen as important. Sida has until recently been the only financer of the programme but efforts have been made to seek other financing.

### *Children's Rights program*

The main objective of the programme is to enhance and enable the watchdog role of the NGOs both on the local and regional level in connection to child rights. The programme intends to enable and foster exchange of expertise and strengthening of NGOs and other local actors capacities within the area of child protection and rights.

The programme was decided upon in 2007 – after an application process initiated by Sida. The programme shows strong elements of partner involvement in defining strategic direction of the project, enabling interaction of expertise and know-how. The programme is to be implemented as a bilateral project with numerous partners, but includes elements that supposedly will increase regional exchange and cooperation.

Sida is the only financier of the programme that to a great extent will make use of established local and regional partners, thus profiting from their structural traits and knowledge in the area.

### *ITP Gender Equality program*

The programme is the only ITP intervention included in the review of the Human Rights area interventions. Its main objective was, in the short-term perspective, to give participants an overview of international Human Rights law related to women, with the aim that – in a longer-term perspective – these participants can contribute in implementing international HR standards in their home countries. Training was provided to 25 participants from different countries in the region. It was initiated by Sida and implemented by Swedish actors, such as private sector actors, state agencies, universities and NGOs. The programme has been entirely financed by Sida.

According to interviewees, ITPs have great potential in the MENA-region. There is a great need to become part in the international debate. As to sustainability, it has proved appropriate to include several participants from the same organisation in the training – this provides for better prospects that gained knowledge will be used and put into practice.

### *Human Rights in Egypt*

The main development objective of the programme is to familiarise Egyptians – in particular government officials associated with the legislative system – with international Human Rights standards as well as with Egyptian treaty commitments. The project objective is to create a critical mass that can support a change of behaviour and attitude regarding international Human Rights standards. The programme has not had a regional approach and was initiated before the entering into force of the Strategy, on request from the Egypt Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The Swedish support was in the form of contract-financed technical cooperation. The programme has been implemented by UNDP together with the Egyptian MFA, with civil servants in the judiciary and police. Sida has been one of several financing partners and recently decided to withdraw from the project, mainly since it is not regarded as relevant in relation to the regional approach set out in the Strategy.

The programme appears to have had positive results, even though goal formulation was rather modest. A mid-term evaluation in 2009 assessed the programme effective through its contribution to the Egypt MFA's strategy to spread the Human Rights culture and increasing awareness of basic rights. Further, it was assessed having high sustainability prospects, since the Egyptian MFA has shown strong commitments to supporting the program.

## **Brief description of interventions assisting regional and national organisations**

### *Academic Human Rights Training*

The overarching objective of the programme is to strengthen the region's capacity to respect international Human Rights commitments. It was initiated by Sida in collaboration with a Swedish academic research institute (RWI), which undertook three different training courses (with participants from different countries in the region) per year in 2004–2006, in cooperation with a Lebanese organisation. The 2004–2006 programme was evaluated in 2006 before the signing of a new agreement. The overall content of the training programme was assessed relevant and implemented in efficient way. Concerns were however raised as regards impacts (sustainability) in terms of more long-term local and institutional capacity building. Based on lessons learned, the RWI elaborated on an improved programme approach in 2007–2008 with more focus put on institutional capacity building through academic training and Judicial Training Academy.

It has taken some time to elaborate the programme, mainly due the fact that establishment of contacts with appropriate counterparts in the region is time-demanding. The programme's relevance in relation to Sida's overarching objective is indirect: poor people will benefit through strengthened regional knowledge and capacities in the Human Rights sphere. Strengthening the capacities of academic institutions is thought to provide an important link between government and civil society. Due to financial restrictions at Sida, the proposed programme of five years was reduced to cover a three-year period.

### *Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)*

This is a regional network consisting of Human Rights organisations from EU member states and countries in the MENA region, based on the Barcelona process. Sida signed an agreement with the network in November 2004 on support to a foundation (EMHRF, see below) and a website and have subsequently contributed with core support. An external review of the network was published in 2009. The review concluded that the network is attentive to creating synergies with like-minded NGOs and that its strength and added value lays in its regional specificities and highly visible presence in Brussels.

The network has strengthened its organisational structure in order to respond to new requirements induced by its expanding intervention areas and partners. It has been successful at diversifying funds – despite several periods of funding insecurity. The network appears to be of clear relevance for achieving broader Human Rights capacities in the region.

### *Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Foundation (EMHRF)*

The Foundation was established in the framework of the EMHRN, with the purpose to provide rapid, flexible and small scale support to Human Rights activists (individual and organisations) in the MENA region. The activities of the Foundation should be seen as complementary to the more long-term objectives of the Network.

The network has strengthened its organisational structure in order to respond to new requirements induced by its expanding intervention areas and partners. It has been successful at diversifying funds – despite several periods of funding insecurity. The network appears to be of clear relevance for achieving broader Human Rights capacities in the region.

### *UNDP Arab Human Development Report dissemination*

The objective of the intervention was to disseminate the report (AHDR) to the wider public and consists in outreach and follow-up activities to the report.

### *The Civil Society Advocacy program*

The main objective of the programme is to enhance and strengthen the involvement of NGOs in the MENA region in social and economic policymaking processes. Implementer is a Swedish NGO working on equal terms with Beirut-based NGO. Bi-annual reports with special attention paid to effects of trade agreements on women and poor communities will be produced. The watch-function is to be placed within existing structure of the Beirut office and work will be carried out within existing regional networks of member organisations. However, new regional and national networks of policy-makers, NGOs, academia and media will also be established.

The approach of involving and strengthening the capacity of NGOs to be part of socio-economic policy processes appears relevant. An apparent risk for successful achievement of programme objectives is the reported risk of lack of capacity and interest among NGOs.

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## THE SWEDISH STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, 2006–2010

Sipu International – The Swedish Institute for Public Administration has been commissioned by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to evaluate the Swedish Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa 2006–2010. The purpose has been to generate knowledge, create discussions and reflect on the need for adjustments of the current strategy as input to the development of a strategy for the period 2011–2014. The main objectives were to assess the regional approach, the outcomes in four areas of cooperation and the choice of cooperation partners, aid instruments and Sida's role.

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Address: SE-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden.

Visiting address: Valhallavägen 199.

Phone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Fax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64.

[www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se) [sida@sida.se](mailto:sida@sida.se)

