

Sida's anti-corruption work is given a high priority and has become more important in recent years. In all parts of the world, people's everyday life is affected by corruption. The poor suffer the most. Corruption weakens the trust in a community and thereby risks undermining democracy; at worst, the entire social structure may be eroded. Corruption impedes economic development, among other things, by reducing investments. Access to social services such as health and education is undermined. All in all, corruption is a serious obstacle to development.

Definition

Sida defines corruption as an

“ Abuse of trust, power or position for improper gain. Corruption includes, among other things, the offering and receiving of bribes – including the bribery of foreign officials – extortion, conflicts of interest and nepotism.”

Sida's approach to anti-corruption is

“ Always prevent; Never accept; Always inform; and Always act.”

Fight against corruption

It is part of Sida's mission to counteract irregularities and corruption in the management of projects and programs, and to support the cooperation countries' efforts to fight corruption. Sida's anti-corruption work is conducted at four different levels:

- Promote ethics and integrity within our own organization.
- Counteract corruption in Swedish-funded projects and programs.
- Support partner countries' efforts to combat corruption through strategic interventions.
- Participate in international anti-corruption work.

Fight against corruption in Swedish-funded contributions

Sida has raised the level of ambition in recent years in terms of risk analysis, auditing and the reporting

of results in order to, among others, strengthen anti-corruption efforts in our project management.

An increased focus on control and risk management is necessary. But the corruption context in our partner countries is too complex to be addressed with control measures only since corruption is a political and social phenomenon, rather than a technical or legal problem.

Support to partner countries' efforts to combat corruption

Efforts to strengthen human rights and democratic governance include actions that have a direct or indirect impact on the corruption situation. Sida supports efforts aimed at increasing democratic participation, transparency and accountability, essential to change corrupt prone environments. Civil society has a crucial role to play. Sida also helps to strengthen institutions such as tax authorities, audit institutions and systems for public financial management. Furthermore, Sida supports anti-corruption organizations such as Transparency International, the build-up of judicial systems, free media, parliaments and political parties. It is important to strengthen the sense of citizenship and to promote a rights perspective. Sida also contributes to several global and regional anti-corruption initiatives.

“Joint Evaluation to Anti-Corruption Efforts 2002–2009” – (cited from an Evaluation Brief by the evaluator Charlotte Vaillant in 2012)

“Sweden's support for the 2005 Vietnam corruption survey was instrumental in fuelling the national debate and providing the communist party with a more informed basis to address corruption”

“In Tanzania and Zambia, donors have helped national audits offices to produce timely and credible audit reports, which donors and national stakeholders alike have used increasingly to scrutinize governments”

“Donor support to private sector reforms has not acknowledged the role that private sector can play in fuelling corruption”

“Linkages with global initiatives, dealing with transparency and money laundering have remained weak”

Sida's managing of corruption cases

All reported suspicions of corruption are investigated. Sida uses accounting firms to help out with audits and, when necessary, a forensic audit is arranged. Sida has established a whistle-blower system. The system makes it possible to report allegations of corruption anonymously, both from own staff and from people outside the agency. This system further enhances the control to ensure that Swedish development assistance funds are used for intended purposes.