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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Review of the Strategy for Swedish Aid Initiatives in Zimbabwe: January 2011 – December 2014

Final Report

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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.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CIVSAM	Sida's Unit for Support to Civil Society
COPAC	Constitution Select Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EISA	Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa
EU	European Union
FODPZ	Federation of Organisations of Disabled People in Zimbabwe
FOJO	FOJO Media House (Swedish based organisation)
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GNU	Government of National Unity
IFI	International Financial Institution
JOMIC	Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (of the Constitutional reform process)
LGBTI	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex persons
MISA	The Media Institute of Southern Africa
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
PDA	Poverty and Development Assessment
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
STERP	Short-term Economic Recovery Programme
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
YETT	Youth Empowerment and Training Trust
ZANU-PF	The Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF)
ZEC	Zimbabwe Election Committee
ZESN	Zimbabwe Election Support Network
ZIMASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
Zimfund	Zimbabwe Multi-Donor Trust Fund
ZUNDAF	Zimbabwe UN Development Assistance Framework

Preface

This Review of the Strategy for Swedish Aid Initiatives in Zimbabwe: January 2011-December 2014 was commissioned by the Embassy of Sweden in Zimbabwe and undertaken by an evaluation team from Indevalop during the period of April-July 2014 under Sida's Framework Agreement for Reviews and Evaluations.

The team consisted of Ian Christoplos (team leader), Annika Nilsson, Tsitsi Maradze and Katarina Persson. Anna Liljelund Hedqvist was the project manager for the review and external quality assurance was undertaken by Niels Dabelstein.

Executive Summary

This evaluation assesses the outcomes, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of efforts undertaken within the Swedish Strategy for Aid Initiatives in Zimbabwe 2011-2014, as well as analysing how the strategy addressed gender equality, risk and anti-corruption efforts. The strategy was developed at a time of political and economic uncertainty to provide a somewhat structured basis for choosing priorities in lieu of normal bilateral relations with the Zimbabwean government. These uncertainties still exist today, as the last year has seen a contested election result and a rapid economic decline. In this context a commitment to addressing poverty, livelihood stress and food security requires a readiness to combine “normal” development modalities with continued efforts to prop up basic public services. Furthermore, there is a need to maintain a “surge capacity” within social protection functions to rapidly scale-up efforts to address humanitarian crises that are likely to occur due to a combination of natural hazards, acute economic decline and governance gaps.

The Embassy of Sweden is justifiably proud of their contributions to enhancing governance during the strategy period, particularly in relation to the Constitutional process and electoral reform. Basic social service provision has been strengthened. The strategy has provided a degree of structure and sufficient flexibility for the process that led to these achievements. The Embassy has identified key actors, primarily within the UN and civil society (including regional organisations) that have been able to interact with the government systems and processes in a constructive manner. The Embassy has also taken a leading and effective role in donor coordination.

Effectiveness and impact

The first objective of the strategy is “Development of transparent and democratic institutions, free and independent media and institutions working to promote increased respect for human rights.” Outcomes can be summarised as:

- Sweden contributed to the Government of National Unity’s ability to maintain a democratic momentum
- The Constitutional process was fairly participatory and the resulting Constitution was “good enough” (but the process is incomplete and uncertain)
- Electoral institutions are significantly stronger although still facing major political obstacles
- Media is stronger, more plural, visible and actors have a strategic and realistic vision of the road ahead

The second objective of the strategy is “A growing democratic, vibrant and pluralistic civil society in which people organise themselves freely in political or other activities, and promote increased respect for human rights.” Outcomes can be summarised as:

- The women's movement is more vibrant with stronger institutional structures, monitoring of local government performance is enhanced
- Some CSO partners are moving towards a more strategic and appropriate role, which is more collaborative and less confrontational
- The Culture Fund has contributed to vibrancy of civil society and provision of arenas for cultural expression, but freedom of expression and human rights outcomes of the Culture Fund are difficult to define
- A fragmented approach and lack of strategic vision on role of civil society have limited the Embassy's effectiveness (CSOs have mainly been used as means to reach objective one and objective three)

The third objective of the strategy is: "Greater access to basic social services for vulnerable groups and individuals." Outcomes can be summarised as:

- Highly effective support has been provided through Unicef (and to some extent UNFPA) to meeting both acute needs and strengthening capacities
- This has resulted in considerably greater access to basic social services
- Capacity of service providers has been retained and enhanced
- Services through Zimfund show promise but this was hardly the emergency programme it was intended to be
- Economic empowerment (of youth and women) has focused on empowering individuals through savings and lending and training schemes, which have enabled them to engage in small scale self-employment, but without addressing the overall systemic obstacles in governance and markets

The evaluation has found that objectives one and three have been addressed strategically, but objective two less so. Overall, the portfolio has been well structured to promote "good enough governance" in the prevailing and changing context. Success in achieving outcomes has been most apparent where the Embassy has engaged with appropriate partners who have been capable of convening a pluralistic set of actors to promote institutional reform and to re-establish services. Furthermore, the Embassy has taken an effective stance by using a relatively soft but principled approach, recognising the room for manoeuvre of partners and focusing on institutional reforms rather than political agendas. In fact, the relatively vague nature of the strategy has in many respects been a success factor in that it has provided the Embassy with the needed space for iteratively assessing the changing situation and identifying appropriate entry points.

Failures can be associated with inability to identify points of leverage to move from outputs to outcomes and uncertainty in the international community on the way forward after the elections in 2013. Also, it has been difficult to discern outcomes leading to a "transition beyond the transition". This is not a failure of the Embassy itself, but in terms of readiness for the future strategy it is clear that effective programming will require greater realism regarding the prospects for a linear path towards "normal" development processes in the near to mid-term future.

Relevance

At the start of the strategy the portfolio was largely relevant (despite some lack of coherence). The portfolio was appropriately adapted to the changing context over time until the elections. During the last year the portfolio has not been adapted sufficiently (reflecting a broader atmosphere of uncertainty among both national and international actors on the way forward). In the view of the evaluation team, the portfolio has found an appropriate combination of provision of services to address acute needs, and the development of Zimbabwean capacities to provide these services in the future, while largely avoiding undue endorsement of the legitimacy of actors responsible for human rights abuses.

The Embassy's proactive but "soft" efforts to influence partners to work towards gender equality standards have been relevant to the Swedish development goals and principles. However, the analysing, understanding and addressing underlying causes of inequality is yet to be developed among most partners. Service provision investments have maintained a contextually relevant balance between humanitarian needs and steps towards enhancing the accountability of duty bearers. Approaches taken to strengthen civil society lacked direction and were therefore less relevant. The approach to addressing poverty alleviation has been largely supply driven (not in line with the perspectives of the poor) but this is recognised and is perhaps a carry-over from the humanitarian origins of the strategy. Human rights based approaches are reflected in the implementation of the portfolio, but are less apparent in planning and reporting. The principles of accountability, transparency, non-discrimination and participation are not yet systematically translated into proactive and practical measures in programmes.

Efficiency

The modalities used during the strategy period have been largely appropriate in terms of addressing governance without directly engaging with the government. This is a significant achievement, and suggests careful choice of modalities. Some even relatively problematic UN channels have proven possible to manage, albeit requiring significant effort from the Embassy. Where partners have been strong, the Embassy has been able to channel a significant support without undue demands for close steering efforts.

By contrast, efficiency has been weaker in some aspects of the CSO portfolio where there has not been a clear vision or structure for engagement. This has created significant and unnecessary transaction costs for both the Embassy and the CSO partners.

Sustainability

It is too early to judge the extent to which the capacities enhanced with Swedish support will prove sustainable, either organisationally or financially. In terms of the sustainability of the organisational and institutional reforms, there is cause for cautious optimism, though the slow progress in aligning legislation with the new Constitution gives cause for concern.

Regarding financial sustainability of the institutions and services developed (e.g. to pay maintenance, medicines and the salaries needed to retain human resources), the prospects are somewhat bleaker. Limited success can be noted in increasing government capacities to maintain staff and continue reforms. Government commitments to continuing the reform process and taking over recurrent costs have been mixed.

CSOs have seen a dramatic drop of funding in the past year and many are crumbling. Sustainability of investments in CSO capacity development is weak, except in the women's movement and some of the larger, expert CSOs.

Gender equality

Efforts to mainstream gender equality across the portfolio have had limited success. Although many partners have committed themselves to certain targets in terms of number of women participants, the underlying structural obstacles to gender equality are not in focus. With some notable exceptions of programmes that have gender equality as a main focus, little attention has been given to changing the systems, structures and norms that stand in the way of gender equality. There is however an awareness and a felt pressure among many partners to improve and do more.

Risk and Anti-corruption

Sweden's CSO and media partners are very conscious of the risks they face. They are currently re-strategizing as a new relationship with the government is recognised as necessary. To reduce risk and stay relevant, both media and CSOs are moving away from confrontation and focus on political rights (especially the regime change agenda) towards engagement with government and focus economic and social rights. It is also seen as rather "safe" to focus on implementation of the provisions of the new Constitution.

This review judges that there is a significant risk of a deterioration in the economic and political situation in the near future, but does not view it as appropriate for Sweden to pull back from developmental commitments, as this could aggravate the current situation and undermine the progress that has been made.

The Embassy has taken an appropriate stance on working to prevent corruption. Embassy dialogue with partners is seen to support (rather than replace) their existing systems and efforts. However, in a broader perspective there are significant risks that corruption and patronage relations are becoming more prevalent in Zimbabwean society.

Recommended objectives for the next strategy period

The next country strategy should reflect a more explicit and clear-cut focus on political/civil and economic and social rights respectively. The evaluation recommends a four point strategy structured on the following objectives:

1. The Constitutional alignment is progressing in an inclusive and participatory manner (i.e., commissions, legislation, policy and practice)

2. Duty bearers capacitated to more effectively deliver basic social services (with focus on educational rights and health rights, especially sexual, reproductive health and rights)
3. Improved access to employment, livelihoods and food security, especially for young men and women and marginalised groups
4. Civil society and the media, representing the voice of rights holders, have stronger capacity to contribute to and monitor the above three objectives

Other summary recommendations

- More deliberate and explicit efforts are needed to work in a rights based manner and from the perspectives of the poor (particularly as attention shifts to economic development).
- Part of this should be conscious effort to move away from a “supply driven” agenda pushing services to address acute needs, to instead refocus on the perspectives of the poor in what will hopefully be a post-crisis environment.
- Programming should be based on explicit analyses of the underlying causes of inequality.
- Readiness is needed to deal with an uncertain and volatile context through scenario planning, close monitoring of political, economic and environmental risks, and partnerships with agencies that have a “surge capacity” to deal with emerging crises.
- There should be a focus on local governments and local governance, particularly (but not exclusively) for enhancing service delivery capacities. The uncertainties at central level and the needs at local level indicate the importance of maintaining momentum where services reach the population and where there has been significant success in finding ways to pragmatically bridge the government-civil society polarisation.
- In order to reach marginal communities it is advisable to reassess the rural-urban mix in the portfolio and reconsider engagement with actors that can reach those populations that are poorest and most at risk.
- The Embassy should make a comprehensive assessment of opportunities to support economic rights of different marginalised groups within the perspectives of the poor before proceeding.
- In looking for ways to support capacity development the Embassy should explore how to support local institutional structures and CSOs representing the voice of rights holders.
- Capacity development efforts need to focus more on youth (particularly girls), including (a) their economic opportunities, (b) their voice in societal change and peace-building, and c) their right to protection, health and education.

1 Introduction

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this review is to:

- a) “Evaluate the effectiveness, cost efficiency and aspects of relevance and sustainability of the Swedish programme
- b) Provide input to the Embassy for its preparation of results proposals¹ within the framework of a new strategy on Sweden’s reengagement with Zimbabwe. It is expected that the Swedish government will decide on a new strategy later this year”

1.2 BACKGROUND AND STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The Strategy for Aid Initiatives in Zimbabwe is not a normal Swedish country development strategy. It was developed at a time of uncertainty to provide a somewhat structured basis for choosing priorities in lieu of normal bilateral relations with the Zimbabwean government. It was developed in the aftermath of the violent elections 2008/2009, with limited dialogue. Nonetheless, the Embassy staff have found it to be sufficiently broad and flexible, although somewhat weak in terms of providing guidance for decision making. The portfolio was largely built on pre-existing initiatives which until recently have been steadily adapted to lessons that have been learnt and to the changing context.

During the strategy period, the objectives of Swedish aid initiatives have been as follows:

1. Development of transparent and democratic institutions, free and independent media and institutions working to promote increased respect for human rights.
2. A growing democratic, vibrant and pluralistic civil society in which people organize themselves freely in political or other activities, and promote increased respect for human rights.
3. Greater access to basic social services for vulnerable groups and individuals.

¹ Proposals to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs regarding the future strategy

Contributions towards the first objective have focussed on the functioning of the Government of National Unity (GNU), the Constitution making process, the election process, local government capacity development and gender equality awareness and independent media. The support has been provided via UNDP and through well-reputed regional and national organisations. The media programme has been supported via the Swedish institution, FOJO. The second objective has not been interpreted as an objective in itself, but rather primarily as a means to reach the first objective (and sometimes the third). However, the support to the Culture Fund, the Women Coalition and Diakonia has a somewhat broader ambition. The third objective was addressed via UN agencies (overwhelmingly Unicef) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) and started with interventions of a humanitarian character that were gradually combined with more developmental programmes.

The strategy was extended from 2012 to end of 2014 and is currently acknowledged by the Embassy as no longer being fully relevant to the emerging context. The emphasis of this review is on the period until the end of 2013, though it has not been possible to restrict analysis so as to not include the continued processes that have been underway in 2014. It should be noted that Sweden has supported Zimbabwe through other Sida appropriations, such as the regional programmes, the Sida civil society appropriation via CIVSAM programmes (e.g., Olof Palme International Centre, Diakonia, We Effect), the Special Fund for Democracy and Freedom of Expression and the Humanitarian appropriation. These initiatives are not part of the review.

1.3 METHODS

The aim of the methodology has been to assess the overall portfolio in relation to the strategy and the context. The review has not attempted to undertake a large number of superficial evaluations of individual interventions. The methodology has relied on existing documented assessments (independent wherever possible) of programming and above all on the subjective perceptions of stakeholders and individuals judged to have broad expertise. The review process has drawn on five areas of analysis.

1.3.1 Desk review and initial discussions

In order to frame the relevance of the strategy in relation to prevailing development trends and an understanding of the factors influencing poverty in Zimbabwe the team undertook a small “poverty and development assessment” (PDA), presented in the following chapter. The structure of the PDA was based on Sida guidelines for these assessments,² but was far more modest in scope than the task outlined in the guide-

² Sida (no date)

lines. The PDA was largely based in desk review of relevant reports and research into development processes in Zimbabwe (see annex three).

The review team began by mapping the interventions to gain an overview of their assumed contributions towards the three strategy objectives and to understand how the interventions are classified. At the outset the review team recognised that this classification was difficult, with several interventions being relevant for more than one objective. The strategy was not guided by an explicit results framework. Therefore desk review of available documentation was used to establish an initial set of de facto outcome, efficiency, relevance and sustainability indicators. These were presented in the inception report as tentative indicators. In this report the outcome indicators are included as matrices in chapter three.

1.3.2 Case studies

Cases of interventions were selected for analysis in relation to the three objectives, with a primary focus on outcomes. Criteria for selection were developed and the Embassy proposed potential cases. High priority was given to initiatives that have been evaluated, which were primarily implemented during the strategy period and which represent a range of sectors, scales and channels/modalities. The selected cases were:

Objective 1: UNDP/COPAC Support to participatory constitution making process, ZEC (through both UNDP and EISA) and Swedish Media Development Programme

Objective 2: Diakonia Strategic Peace building programme in Zimbabwe and The Culture fund of Zimbabwe Trust

Objective 3: UNICEF core support and Gender Links: Gender Justice and Local Government Support (also relevant for objectives 1 and 2)

In addition, the team looked at Zimfund and UN Coherence, not as case studies per se, but rather regarding the insights that these programmes can provide regarding IFI and UN modalities.

Individual interviews during and after the field mission emphasised (but were not restricted to) these case study interventions. The intention was to confirm findings gleaned from the documentation and gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of these interventions, their relevance in relation to the three objectives and the changing context, and their potential for sustainability.

1.3.3 Stakeholder led analysis of strategy objectives

The full team conducted the majority of interviews during a mission of Ian Christoplos and Annika Nilsson to Harare May 31-June 7. Building on initial findings, the team convened focal group discussions and individual interviews with stakeholders engaged in interventions within the three strategic objectives.

For the first two strategy objectives focal group discussions were organised with stakeholders to assess how they perceive the effectiveness, relevance and potential sustainability achieved in the strategy period. These interviews were complemented with a range of individual interviews and attendance at relevant meetings of stake-

holders engaged in different programmes. Given the higher level of diversity in the third strategy objective portfolio, individual interviews were conducted.

A major aspect of the stakeholder discussions and interviews was to ascertain how their engagements with the Embassy, and within their Swedish financed programmes has enabled them to focus on normative commitments to gender equality, human rights based approaches and the perspectives of the poor given the risks, uncertainties and volatility of the Zimbabwean context. Stakeholders were also queried regarding their views on the relevance and applicability of anti-corruption efforts in their organisations and within the modus operandi of the programmes they are implementing.

1.3.4 Modality analysis

Special attention was paid to the influence of the given modalities on performance. This was done with cognisance of the challenges in attributing performance to factors inherent in a given modality. Also, as noted above, there is a need for caution in generalising about a given modality based on the limited sample available. Considerable attention was paid to how these modalities are perceived by the partner organisations to have affected both ability to expand services and achieve reforms, and also the relevance of the modalities for fostering capacity development. The issues of capacity development have been framed within the particular challenges that exist in Zimbabwe with the state, line ministry agencies, local government and civil society.

Interviews were conducted with all Embassy programme officers. The primary focus of these interviews was to gain an overview of how they see the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the different modalities for achieving the strategy objectives and for maintaining attention to gender equality, the perspectives of the poor and the human rights principles of participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination. These interviews covered both programming and Sweden's dialogue with other agencies and the government. These interviews also sought to bring out how the different forms of engagements have been used to promote anti-corruption efforts and mitigate external risks. A major aspect of these interviews was to bring out an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of different modalities for programme officers given their capacities, workload and the transaction costs involved in attaining an appropriate "fit" with Swedish development cooperation goals and results based management procedures.

1.3.5 Reflections from external experts

A limited number of interviews were undertaken with experts who have not been directly involved in Swedish development cooperation, but who are aware of different aspects of the portfolio. These interviews also informed the PDA and highlighted Sweden's position within the broader inter-agency dialogue and engagement with the government.

1.4 LIMITATIONS

In any review of a country strategy there are great challenges in ensuring that the interventions analysed are representative of the overall portfolio, as it is impossible to assess the entire portfolio. It is recognised that some important aspects of the strategy have not been fully assessed given the selective focus of the review.

In a highly unpredictable, volatile and politicised environment as Zimbabwe, there are inevitable challenges in assessing the contribution of the inputs of a small donor such as Sweden in the broader perspective. For this reason the review pays particular attention throughout to the contextual factors that have framed where and how Sweden has had opportunities to exert influence. Interviewees were surprisingly explicit in their explanations of Sweden's role and niche in the international community. The review team judges that evidence based on the subjective impressions of these stakeholders is strong, while also acknowledging that broader triangulation of these finding would be desirable but has not been possible.

Finally, as will be described in the report, the review has been undertaken at a time when the future direction of the Zimbabwean government is uncertain and contested, the Constitutional reform process has stalled and there is rapid and unexpected economic deterioration. Also, the donor community has found itself in somewhat of a malaise about what to do next in the wake of the outcomes of the last election. The Swedish and other embassies are waiting for instructions from their home ministries before making decisions on the new strategy. For this reason there have been two choices in framing recommendations from this review. One option would be to present different scenarios. The other is to suggest ways to prepare for the unexpected. The review team has chosen the latter as it is judged that the coming years are likely to include a variety of opportunities and challenges that may not reflect simple "best case" or "worst case" scenarios.

2 Poverty and Development Assessment

2.1 OVERALL CHANGES IN POVERTY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Since 2000 Zimbabwe has experienced a political crisis, a drastic economic decline, severe human rights abuses and repeated food security crises, a convergence of factors that has led some to refer to a “lost decade” in Zimbabwean development. The causal linkages between these processes are widely debated, but the multidimensional nature of the crisis is not in doubt.

In more recent years, since the introduction of the multi-currency policy in January 2009 and the establishment of the Global Political Agreement in September 2008, the economy grew. However, this growth did not lead to an increase in employment opportunities and with that a reduction in poverty³. This has been described as “dead growth”.⁴ Since 2013 the economy is again in decline, with falling investments, widespread industrial closures and instability in public finances leading to failures to pay public salaries. As this report is being drafted Zimbabwe is facing an acute liquidity crisis.⁵ There are fears that Zimbabwe may again be heading into a downward economic and social spiral.

The current strategy period started as a transition from humanitarian to development efforts through the Short-term Economic Recovery Programme (STERP) and is ending with a set of policies where economic development is in focus with the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET), but questions remain regarding the extent to which this transition has been effective. A new Constitution is now in place, but there is uncertainty regarding the government’s commitment to establish effective commissions that can align legislation to the provisions of the new Constitution and even whether the current government is prepared to follow the Constitution more generally.⁶

³ UNDP 2012

⁴ Chitiyo and Kibble 2014

⁵ Chitiyo and Kibble 2014

⁶ Matyszak 2014

2.2 WHO ARE THE POOR?

Poverty and identification of who is poor are contested political concepts given the diversity of approaches and indices used to describe and identify them. Poverty is not just determined by a lack of income or basic necessities (food, health, shelter and clothing). It also consists of a state of deprivation and powerlessness, where the poor are exploited and denied participation in decision-making in matters that affect them.⁷

2.2.1 Spatial factors

Poverty in Zimbabwe is higher in rural than urban areas, but estimates sharply diverge regarding the size of these gaps. One major report assesses the differences as modest (63% versus 53% in 2011).⁸ Others report a far greater gap (76% versus 38.2%).⁹ Though not strictly comparable, earlier studies showed a larger rural – urban gap in poverty rates,¹⁰ which may be indicative of the decline in the urban economy.

Overall poverty rates are highest in Matabeleland North, Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland West. Severe poverty rates follow a similar pattern, but with even more concentration in Matabeleland North.¹¹ By contrast, rural food insecurity is highest in Southern Matabeleland, Midlands and Masvingo, which is at least partially related to climate variability and seasonal factors.¹²

Those farming in communal areas have higher poverty rates than those in resettlement areas,¹³ but the casual factors for this are unclear and caution is due in assuming that different land tenure systems generate poverty. In communal and resettlement areas, households that depend on communal or resettlement farming are more likely to be poor or extremely poor compared to those with salaried employment or who depend on casual labour. The highest prevalence of poverty (83%) is therefore found in households headed by communal farmers.¹⁴

2.2.2 Exclusionary factors in rural and urban areas

Poverty in Zimbabwe is largely related to the agricultural economy, with 70% of the population directly or indirectly reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods.¹⁵ Much of the controversy surrounding Zimbabwe's chosen path to development relates to trans-

⁷ Mpofu 2011

⁸ World Bank 2011

⁹ UNDP 2012

¹⁰ ZimStat 2013

¹¹ ZimStat 2013

¹² ZimVac 2012

¹³ ZimStat 2013

¹⁴ UNDP_ZW-PR_Zimbabwe Poverty Report 2011

¹⁵ Anseeuw, et al 2012

formations in the agricultural economy through land redistribution. The extent to which poor farmers have actually gained access to this land and have been able to use it effectively for both subsistence and commercial purposes is disputed. Recent research indicates that the criticisms of the land redistribution programme's negative impact on rural poverty were inaccurate since significant benefits have been realised.¹⁶ Although the redistribution contributed to a radical decline in overall production, this can also be attributed to poor access to inputs, financing, recurrent drought and insecurity. The polemic debate on the land redistribution has distracted attention from the ways that other micro level political economy factors have had a greater impact on continuing entrenched rural poverty. The redistribution increased the number of moderately large farms, which has meant that poverty is still heavily influenced by rural labour markets rather than just factors related to smallholder and subsistence production since mid-sized farms are dependent on hired labour.¹⁷

The government tends to attribute declining production to lack of inputs due to the economic crisis and sanctions¹⁸, but the causes are more complex and are related to both climate and other stress factors.¹⁹ When asked to describe their major development challenges and priorities, rural households overwhelmingly emphasise the need for water -for crops, livestock, household use and sanitation.²⁰

Compared with rural poverty, there has been less analysis of chronic poverty and food insecurity in urban Zimbabwe. It is obvious that the economic crisis has led to food insecurity even in urban areas,²¹ and the large number of personnel leaving the public sector, often migrating abroad, indicates that public sector employment is not seen as a guarantee of livelihood security. Access to remittances is important in both rural and urban areas but is particularly important for the urban poor.²² Remittances between urban and rural areas and "circular migration" back and forth between rural and urban areas are important ways people struggle to maintain food security in Zimbabwe's volatile urban labour market, variable climate conditions and uncertain access to agricultural inputs and farm labour opportunities.²³ Local variations in acute malnutrition rates suggest that migration is an important and relatively effective way to avoid hunger due to environmental or

¹⁶ Scoones et al. 2010

¹⁷ Moyo 2011; Chambati 2013

¹⁸ ZimStat 2013; ZIMASSET

¹⁹ Mubaya et al. 2012

²⁰ ZimVac 2012

²¹ Tawodzera 2011

²² Bracking and Sachikonye 2006

²³ Crush 2013

other factors.²⁴ The scale of what is often called an “exodus” of Zimbabweans to South Africa and other countries is disputed,²⁵ but has certainly been on a massive scale.

2.2.3 Chronic and transitional poverty, vulnerability and food insecurity

Zimbabwe has highly variable rates of food insecurity, related primarily to recurrent drought, but also to location specific natural hazards such as floods. Poverty and food insecurity are also related to volatility in the broader economy. Widespread industrial retrenchment and recurrent crises public sector finances also have knock-on effects in relation to poverty rates. Three quarters of those with jobs in Zimbabwe are considered to have “vulnerable employment”²⁶ and overall unemployment rates are over 50%.²⁷ The rural population dependent on rain fed agriculture is highly vulnerable to drought, as was seen in 2012.²⁸ Floods in 2014 showed that this is not the only hazard, and displacement caused by flooding has led to human rights abuses.²⁹ Risk thus has clear territorial dimensions.³⁰

In contrast to the past, market availability of basic staples is now reliable due to multi-currency policy, but access is highly variable due to variability in income flows. Food aid is important and the government recognises that both food distribution and other social protection measures will be of continued importance in the future.³¹

Maize is the main staple and the area used for commercial production has fallen dramatically since 1980 (from 160,000 hectares to 55,000 hectares in 2010), which has been accompanied by reduced productivity (from 4.2 tonnes per hectare to 1.5 tonnes per hectare) as production has become concentrated in less productive small farms. Smallholder communal production has remained relatively stable at very low levels.³² In recent years freeing of prices on inputs and donor support have led to a major increase in the area under smallholder production. Production of maize (and small grains such as finger millet, which are important alternatives to maize when inputs are not available) remains important for food security, but a return to the levels of production achieved on commercial farms appears unlikely.

²⁴ Foresight: Migration and Global Environmental Change 2011

²⁵ Crush and Tevera 2010

²⁶ Zimbabwe MDG Report 2012

²⁷ World Bank 2012

²⁸ UNDP 2012

²⁹ <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/05/14/zimbabwe-20000-relocated-ruling-party-farm>

³⁰ Anseeuw et al 2012

³¹ ZIMASSET

³² Anseeuw et al 2012

2.2.4 Gender inequality and gender based violence as a core dimension of poverty

Poverty rates are surprisingly similar for male and female-headed households.³³ Most Zimbabwean women have power to make household decisions. Nearly 9 out of 10 have sole or joint decision-making power about visiting family or friends, and participate in decisions about major household purchases. Eighty-four percent of women participate in decisions about their own health care.³⁴

The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children Zimbabwe (1998) are the foundation of the gender equality discourse in the region and Zimbabwe. Specifically, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development was adopted 2008 to enhance political will and commitment by member states towards the achievement of gender equality. It provides a roadmap and framework for assessing targets agreed by member states in different sectors. The Protocol also brings together regional and international commitments to gender equality, setting out 28 targets to be achieved by 2015 which is consistent with the deadline for achievement of MDG 3 on gender equality and the rest of the MDGs. The SADC Gender Protocol has two specific targets – halving gender violence and attaining gender parity in decision-making by 2015.

Zimbabwe has one of the highest levels of gender-based violence in the region, despite having progressive laws to fight this scourge such as the Domestic Violence Act (DVA) of 2007. It has also taken reasonable measures to ensure enforcement of this law, e.g. by setting up the Anti-Domestic Violence Council with a mandate to oversee enforcement of the DVA; the National Violence Against Women Strategy; measures implementation of the 28 targets in the SADC Gender Protocol through the SADC Gender Barometer that is produced annually for each country since 2012.

Violence against women in Zimbabwe is fuelled by factors that include patriarchal norms, male dominance and control, sexual entitlements in marriage, wife ownership, experience of child sexual abuse by boys and alcohol intake.³⁵ The Violence against Women Baseline Study reports that 26% of women experienced some form of violence – psychological, emotional, economic, physical or sexual from an intimate partner. Most women suffer from emotional violence followed by economic and sexual violence. Women with no education are more than twice as likely to have experienced physical violence compared to women with more than secondary education;³⁶ 27% have experienced sexual violence; whilst women who are divorced, separated, or

³³ ZimStat 2013

³⁴ ZHDS 2010-2011

³⁵ Peace Begins @ Home: Violence Against Women [VAW] Baseline Study, Zimbabwe (2013) Ministry of Women Affairs and Gender Links

³⁶ ZHDS 2010-2011

widowed are three times more likely to have experienced sexual violence as never-married women. Among women who have ever had sex, over 1 in 5 of them (22%) had their first sexual intercourse forced against their will. Experience of child sexual violence is associated with perpetration of rape by men. Gender equality is accepted more in the public realm than in the home as both females and males tend to have conservative attitudes towards gender. Men comply more to gender stereotypes whilst women reinstate repressive attitudes towards their rights and freedom in the home.

The new Constitution emphasises gender equality, recognising the rights of women, the elderly, youth and children among others, as the principles of good governance. It also makes gender parity mandatory at all levels of governance. The State is expected to promote “full gender balance in Zimbabwean society” ensuring men and women are equally represented in all agencies and institutions of government including in “all Commissions and other elective and appointed governmental bodies”.³⁷

While the representation of women in the National Parliament increased from 19% in 2008 to 34% in 2013, this was only due to the quota system introduced in the new Constitution (the current Seventh Parliament has 34 women out of 210 parliamentarians in the House of Assembly and 23 out of 93 in the Senate).³⁸ Representation of women in local government (where there are no quotas) declined from 19% in 2008 to 16%.³⁹ These results reflect gender dynamics in politics that create barriers or “inhibiting factors that include patriarchy and the violent nature of the political terrain”⁴⁰ which naturally dissuade women from effective participation through key decision-making positions. Political parties only have a 20% representation of women.

2.2.5 Disability as a core dimension of poverty

Eleven percent of working-age individuals in Zimbabwe have a disability.⁴¹ Rates are higher in rural (12.9%) than urban (7.5%) areas. Disability prevalence for women is higher than that of men (12.9% versus 9%). Households and individuals with disabilities have lower levels of economic wellbeing and lower Per Capita Consumption Expenditure. Individuals with disabilities have lower rates of primary school completion and fewer mean years of education completed. Households with disabilities have lower asset ownership scores and less access to high quality living conditions. Persons with disabilities in Zimbabwe are more likely to experience poverty and discrimination due to social and cultural norms, as well as problems with accessing health, education and employment. Women with disabilities are more at risk of gender-based

³⁷ Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013

³⁸ Dube R. 2013

³⁹ Evaluation report of Gender Links Gender Justice Programme, 2013 and Zvaraya et al 2013

⁴⁰ *ibid*

⁴¹ Mitra et al 2011

violence than non-disabled women.⁴² Professionals in health and education, employers and disabled people themselves remain largely unaware of the rights of persons with disabilities. The focus of donor and government funding of other urgent matters combined with Zimbabwe's fast declining national economy has meant that disabled people and their organisations have been left with little support.⁴³

Zimbabwe has a Disability Act from 1992, but it is out-dated and most of the provisions have not been implemented. The GNU did not maintain earlier commitments in state support (monthly allowances) for persons with disabilities,⁴⁴ and there is no disability policy. There are however, provisions in the new Constitution that address the rights of persons with disabilities.⁴⁵ In September 2013, Zimbabwe ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These recent policy level developments could provide a basis for increased attention to the discrimination, abuses and poverty that affect women and men with disabilities.⁴⁶

2.2.6 Health education and HIV/AIDS

School enrolment in Zimbabwe is generally high compared to other countries in the region and the school system has largely recovered since the crisis in 2008. Enrolment rates in 2012 were 96% in primary and 53% in secondary school. Half of primary school students passed their exams (an improvement from 40% in 2011).⁴⁷ Literacy rates are said to be 92%.⁴⁸ Zimbabwe has achieved gender parity in primary education, but dropout rates in secondary school are much higher for girls in their final years.⁴⁹ Children with disabilities and children in poor families receive cash transfers and child protection initiatives, but they remain disadvantaged and are often among those that drop out or fail to pass exams. Many extremely poor heads of households still hesitate to keep their children enrolled in free primary education, as they cannot meet attendant costs of uniforms and levies⁵⁰. Children from non-poor households have 18% higher primary school enrolment rates than those from extremely poor households. Education is a major cost for rural households, at 25% of total expenditure.⁵¹

⁴² Thematic study on the issue of violence against women and girls and disability, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (March 2012)

⁴³ The Forgotten Tribe, People with Disabilities in Zimbabwe, Tsitsi Choruma, 2006

⁴⁴ Articles published in Voice of America Zimbabwe (2012) and News Day (2013)

⁴⁵ COPAC Final Draft Constitution for referendum, February 2013

⁴⁶ The Chronicle Zimbabwe web-page, 12 April 2014, article by Esau Mandipa

⁴⁷ UNICEF Annual Report 2014

⁴⁸ ZIMASSET

⁴⁹ UNDP Thematic Report 2012

⁵⁰ UNDP_ZW-PR_Zimbabwe Poverty Report 2011

⁵¹ ZimVac 2012

Infant mortality and malnutrition rates have remained relatively stable during the period of crisis and decline in public services. Ten percent of children are moderately or severely underweight, compared to 18% in Southern and Eastern Africa.⁵² Malnutrition rates slowly declined in recent years, but maternal mortality rates are rapidly increasing.⁵³ HIV infection rates are reported to be declining, from 23.7% in 2001 to 13.7% in 2009.⁵⁴

2.3 OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

2.3.1 Drivers and obstacles in economic development

At the start of the strategy period in 2011 the Zimbabwean economy appeared to be recovering. The economy grew by 9.3% in 2011, with the strongest sectors being mining (25.8%) finance (24%), tourism (10.3%) and agriculture (7.4%). This upswing proved to be short-lived. A drought in 2012 reduced production again. Debt in relation to GDP continues to increase.⁵⁵ Sectors of the economy reliant on capital and investment continue to decline. Utilisation of manufacturing capacity fell rapidly during the strategy period.⁵⁶ Due to all of these factors the tax base of the government is shrinking, which has contributed to a severe current fiscal liquidity crisis.⁵⁷

Most observers attribute the weakening aspects of the economy to uncertainties about the government's position on encouraging or discouraging foreign direct investment, with mixed signals regarding the indigenisation law being the primary concern. Different ministries have made conflicting statements regarding how the law will be interpreted and implemented. Instability, alleged corruption and lack of transparency surrounding existing investments (especially from China) have created additional concerns about the playing field for market competition.

Zimbabwe is close to the bottom of the World Bank's Doing Business rankings (170 out of 183 countries in 2013) and the conditions for business development are not improving.⁵⁸ This low ranking is largely due to factors such as extremely high costs for obtaining permits, difficulties in trading across borders, and accessing electricity and credit.

⁵² Unicef 2014

⁵³ UNDP 2012

⁵⁴ Zimbabwe 2012

⁵⁵ UNDP 2012

⁵⁶ ZIMASSET

⁵⁷ Chitiyo and Kibble 2014

⁵⁸ World Bank 2013

Mining is the strongest economic sector in Zimbabwe, with over 15% growth in 2012. The revenues from mining could, if they contributed to government revenues, help to address the current fiscal crisis. Unfortunately mining revenues are not managed transparently. This has both direct impact in terms of lost revenues, and indirect impact in the form of distrust in government commitments to reform.

2.3.2 Infrastructure and IT

In the past infrastructure was one of Zimbabwe's strengths (particularly important due to the landlocked status), but has become increasingly dilapidated due to lack of investment. The reconstruction of this infrastructure is a priority in ZIMASSET. Demand (actual and latent) for electrical power far exceeds supply and enhanced electricity production and access is a precondition for improvements in access to potable water in urban areas and for fully exploiting Zimbabwe's mineral wealth.

Access to mobile phones and internet has been steadily increasing and is higher than average for the region.⁵⁹ Over 90% of the population has access to a mobile phone and, most importantly, over 50% use their phone for accessing news on the internet.⁶⁰ The internet is primarily used to access social media and has become a major tool in holding together civil society across rural-urban and gender divides.⁶¹

2.3.3 Poor people's access to jobs and resources for investment

Unemployment is over 50%⁶² and youth are most affected.⁶³ Casual labour is the most important form of employment for rural households (24%) followed by agricultural production and remittances; most households combine a range of income sources.⁶⁴ Businesses are closing at the highest rate since the acute economic melt-down of 2008, and migration is again on the rise.⁶⁵ Foreign direct investment declined by 75% in 2013.⁶⁶

In agriculture, considerable emphasis is being made to address low production with increased access to (subsidised) inputs. Non-traditional donors such as China and Brazil are investing in mechanisation.⁶⁷ The efficacy and sustainability of these approaches can be questioned. Zimbabwe's greatest success in recent years has been in increasing tobacco production (the largest export crop) and profitability, to a signifi-

⁵⁹ UNDP 2012

⁶⁰ Masunungure et al 2013

⁶¹ Masunungure et al 2013

⁶² ZIMASSET

⁶³ ZimStat 2013

⁶⁴ ZimVac 2012

⁶⁵ Chitiyo and Kibble 2014

⁶⁶ Chitiyo and Kibble 2014

⁶⁷ Mukwereza 2013

cant extent in conjunction with the spread of contract farming arrangements. This is an example of how new commercial relations can have a major impact. Sustainability is a major concern though, due to demands on fuel wood for curing.⁶⁸ Zimbabwe has lost almost 30% of its forests since 1990.⁶⁹ Overall the resilience of commercial farming is clear, amid a trend towards greater diversification of export crops and mechanisms such as contract farming that allow smaller (but probably not small) producers to benefit. The opportunities to translate these areas of dynamism into positive impacts on the rural poor will be determined by complex factors related to rural markets for inputs, (quality) outputs, land and labour.⁷⁰ In sum, such dynamism is a condition, but definitely not a guarantee, for rural poverty alleviation. Smallholder and subsistence farming are likely to continue to play an important role in providing rural livelihoods and food security for the foreseeable future.

2.3.4 The changing role of civil society

Until recently civil society in Zimbabwe was overwhelmingly focused on protection against human rights abuses and promotion of political and civic rights. A shift is underway to a greater focus on working with (rather than against) the government to roll out the provisions of the new Constitution and to engage more in economic development and empowerment, especially of women and girls. Simultaneously, donor support to civil society is shrinking. This is creating pressures for a rethink among civil society actors regarding their role in society, spurred by the new constitutional provisions.

Even governmental actors recognise that Zimbabwean civil society possesses a wealth of skills and service provision capacities and needs to continue to be mobilised to achieve development goals. There is a degree of readiness from both government and civil society to collaborate with former opponents to achieve common aims. It is too early to assess the extent to which this collaboration will prove viable, but its importance is clearly recognised.⁷¹

2.3.5 Narratives about Zimbabwe's "wealth"

The discourse on economic development in Zimbabwe rests heavily on assumptions about the country's (potential) wealth in natural and human resources. Indeed, the high level of education is well known, climatic conditions are relatively favourable, and new mineral resources are being discovered. For these reasons a narrative

⁶⁸ Njaya and Mazuru 2014

⁶⁹ <http://rainforests.mongabay.com/deforestation/2000/Zimbabwe.htm>

⁷⁰ Moyo 2012; Chambati 2013

⁷¹ Chitiyo and Kibble 2014

about Zimbabwe's wealth prevails despite the erratic stop-start process of economic recovery and decline in recent years, and the volatility in rural livelihoods due to drought. There are widespread assumptions and faith that recovery will be rapid if Zimbabwe can adopt the "right" policies, improve the atmosphere for business and investment, and achieve political stability based on respect for international human rights and governance norms. The unexpected return of an acute economic crisis over the past year has caught many observers off-guard, and the recent literature on Zimbabwe displays ambivalence about how to reconcile the earlier African renaissance narrative with the prevailing realities.

2.4 GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS AND ACTIONS

2.4.1 Government commitments to human rights and democracy

Despite relative stability and ostensibly good prospects for continued progress, the reform process has slowed and there is a lack of coherent direction. This is due to three factors: (a) internal ZANU-PF factional manoeuvring in relation to the succession process, (b) the extreme weakness of the opposition that provides no pressure to rally around a single approach and/or agenda, and (c) uncertainties about how to stem the economic decline.

To become an impetus for change the new Constitution will need to be matched with strong commissions, appropriate legislation, relevant policies and realistic programmes. It has the potential to provide a framework for more effective collaboration among government, private sector and civil society. The most pressing issue is the need to realign more than 400 legislative acts to the new Constitution, a mammoth task given the current limited capacity, and perhaps commitment, in government to ensure that the process remains inclusive, participatory and transparent.

2.4.2 Government commitments to public sector reform

Zimbabwe is characterised as being at a "critical juncture" regarding public sector reform.⁷² Pressures exist for redirecting a larger share of public finances to social services and ensuring that resources are available for maintaining infrastructure and equipment while keeping overall wage levels within a manageable level. Overall wage costs as a proportion of total finances are at 70% and rising due to increasing pension costs and other factors, which is widely recognised as unsustainable.

ZIMASSET is described as the government road map for the future, but it fails to clarify government commitments to public sector reform. There are two reasons for

⁷² World Bank 2012

this. First, interviewees stress that the drive to implement ZIMASSET is led by the president's office and not the Ministry of Finance. Therefore the structures for aligning investments with overall reform of public finance are very weak. Second, ZIMASSET calls for what would inevitably amount to relatively massive increases in public expenditure, but does not include clear signals for how the required revenue increases will be achieved. ZIMASSET and other government initiatives indicate a growing commitment to performance and results based management within internal public service structures, but commitments to addressing broader structural issues that inevitably define incentives for better performance are still absent.

2.4.3 Government commitments to basic social service provision

Public financing of social services was halved as a proportion of expenditure and drastically reduced in absolute terms between 2005 and 2009, but has rebounded to 2005 levels since then. Migration of skilled personnel has taken a particularly massive toll on health services,⁷³ while poor remuneration for teachers led many to search for alternative employment. During the strategy period the situation has improved, due largely to donor support. Many of the structural problems that created the crisis have not been addressed and as this report is being prepared the government has been unable to meet basic salary obligations due to acute liquidity constraints. Reliance on donor funding for recurrent expenditure is likely to continue, including payment of essential salary top-ups for specific health professionals. This, together with the severe brain-drain in schools and health services, and even in the ministries responsible for these services, indicate that recovery in terms of sustainable service provision will be slow at best.⁷⁴ Current plans in ZIMASSET do not present a clear solution for this, but primarily commit to greater expenditure. The structure for making difficult prioritisations in social services and the potential sources of additional expected resources are unclear. The IMF has urged a reduction of the proportion of public expenditure used for wages in order to free up resources to be invested in public services (and infrastructure), but the government has declined to do so.⁷⁵

2.4.4 Government commitments to private sector development

ZIMASSET includes a surprising mix of a return to past approaches to private sector development (import substitution), with strong attention to public-private-partnerships and intentions to “look east” for investment.⁷⁶ However, interviewees working to establish public-private-partnerships note that structures are not yet in

⁷³ World Bank 2012

⁷⁴ World Bank 2011

⁷⁵ <http://www.trust.org/item/20140326121127-40c61/?source=search>

⁷⁶ ZIMASSET; see also <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12825/the-active-pariah-zimbabwes-look-east-policy>

place to encourage this and general distrust of the private sector within government structures makes prospects for more pluralistic service provision unlikely at present.⁷⁷ The intentions to work towards public-private-partnerships suggest that this is an area with potential for the future, but realisation of these aims would require significant statutory reform and attitudinal change among key actors in the government.

2.4.5 Government commitments to fighting corruption

Corruption is rampant in Zimbabwe, which creates severe disincentives for private sector investment and public sector reform. The parliamentary Anti-Corruption Commission has been described as being “moribund”,⁷⁸ and is seen by many of those interviewed as being corrupt itself. Over the past year a series of exposures of parastatal executives awarding themselves massive benefits (referred to in the media as “salarygate”) has exposed both corruption and underlying tensions within ZANU-PF over the spoils of power. Furthermore, the desire of the elite to retain control of mineral resources has been cited as a factor that has stood in the way of efforts to devolve power from the centre and to enact measures that reflect commitments to transparency in the new Constitution.⁷⁹

Observers interviewed express concern that these examples indicate that patronage systems are on the rise, which can create fundamental obstacles to public sector reform and public service integrity in the future. These are relatively recent changes and can be partially attributed to ZANU-PF’s struggle to regain its power base. This growth of corruption and patronage constitutes a departure from Zimbabwe’s past structures of civil service integrity that were uniquely strong in the African context.⁸⁰

2.5 CONCLUSIONS ON POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

2.5.1 Is Zimbabwe ready for a shift ‘normal’ development processes?

Zimbabwe today is engaged in a peculiar mix of processes that do not support the narrative of the country as being on the verge of rapid recovery. Nonetheless, few predict a rapid fall-back to the crisis conditions that prevailed in 2008. Opportunities exist for effective support to change processes, but the ways that these changes will play out are highly uncertain and likely to be erratic. In this context a commitment to

⁷⁷ World Bank 2012

⁷⁸ Chitiyo and Kibble 2014

⁷⁹ Chirisa, et al. 2013

⁸⁰ Alexander, J. & McGregor, J. 2013

addressing poverty, livelihood stress and food security requires a readiness to combine “normal” development modalities with continued efforts to prop up basic public services and also maintaining a “surge capacity” within social protection functions to address humanitarian crises that are likely to occur in the foreseeable future due to a combination of natural hazards, acute economic decline and governance gaps.

2.5.2 What is the role of development cooperation?

Sanctions and related measures by EU countries are expected to be removed in the coming months. There are thus new prospects for addressing this mix of needs by building on existing strengths in social service systems, through readiness to respond to recurrent drought, and by working with those parts of the government with genuine commitments to freedom of expression, public sector reform and private sector investment. Interviewees in this review stressed that there are (at least for the time being) key individuals within the government with significant levels of discretion. Support to these individuals is a high-risk strategy, as they can be removed at any time, but such risks may be worth taking in order to encourage the forces committed to reform within ZANU-PF.

With some notable exceptions, a large proportion of the donor community is shifting from a primarily political agenda to one that can be characterised as pragmatic and developmental. The agenda is moving towards a more pragmatic approach to dealing with the constitutional reform process and the potential change of relations among state, civil society and private sector actors, while at the same time preserving a readiness to deal with political, economic and climatic uncertainties and volatility.

At the same time, some donors that are dissatisfied with the political developments and prospects for continued reform are likely to reduce their aid or continue with short-term project modalities until such time as prospects for genuine re-engagement with the government through more normal structures have improved. This can create a difficult situation for those donors that remain critical of the government but who see opportunities for promoting reform through more active engagement.

Sweden’s strength in development cooperation is that of capacity development, and during the strategy period efforts have focused effectively at individual, organisational and institutional levels. The severe atrophy of the public services suggests that this broad approach remains valid. Nonetheless, it cannot be stressed too highly that the nature of the challenges ahead suggests that a narrow, technical approach to capacity development would be entirely inappropriate. Instead, policy, rights-based and value-driven commitments to a range of processes of institutional reform, public, private and civil society organisational development and finding ways to retain and build upon Zimbabwe’s human resource wealth are obvious priorities. A selective approach for engaging with the government in the future is important, but also fraught with risks. The lessons learnt and recommendations at the end of this report suggest some ways forward in this regard, but an iterative process will continue to be essential.

3 Findings: Outcomes and Effectiveness

3.1 OUTCOMES IN RELATION TO OBJECTIVE ONE

Development of transparent and democratic institutions, free and independent media and institutions working to promote increased respect for human rights

Stakeholders are unanimous in judging that Sweden, despite being a relatively small donor, contributed significantly to the GNU's ability to maintain a democratic momentum that led to the 2013 elections. Sweden is recognised as maintaining a position that was focused on gradual development of democratic institutions (rather than regime change), which was important in the polarised atmosphere that has prevailed.

Sweden contributed to a Constitutional process that was widely participatory and resulted in a Constitution that was “good enough” from the perspective of virtually all observers. “Good enough” implies that it is largely appropriate, but with some weak aspects (notably guarantees for the human rights of the LGBTI community). Civil society voices were solicited in the Constitution making process and they had clear discernable influence on the text, as did the media and culture sectors. In terms of gender and women's rights, there is significant contentment with the results of process (one informed observer described this as “75% satisfaction”).

In some respects the Constitution can, however, be seen to be more of an output than an outcome, as the subsequent process of establishing appropriate commissions and aligning legislation and institutional practices is incomplete and the process ahead is uncertain. Pre-existing laws that contradict the Constitution are still applied (e.g. arrest of journalists) and are perceived by some members of the government as superseding the Constitution pending legislative changes. Also, with the qualified majority in the parliament, ZANU-PF has the power to change the Constitution, which makes civil society wary. Over the past year Sweden's influence, and indeed that of the donor community in general, in achieving Constitutional reform “outcomes” has weakened. Efforts are however slowly starting to emerge in terms of support to selected commissions.⁸¹ The strategies taken by CSOs are “engagement with the government and cautious optimism – moving away from confrontation and regime change agen-

⁸¹ E.g. Gender commission, Judicial Service Commission and Human Rights Commission (Danida interview and report)

da”.⁸² This approach is also being driven by the EU. The Embassy of Sweden is recognised as a strong supporter of the efforts to restart the reform process.

Electoral institutions are significantly stronger than they were at the start of the strategy period, and Sweden’s support to the Zimbabwean Election Commission (ZEC), first through UNDP and later through EISA, is perceived to have contributed to a more transparent and peaceful electoral process than would have been possible otherwise. Even interviewees who are highly sceptical of the last elections express satisfaction that ZEC’s legitimacy has grown. The ways the elections were managed demonstrate the limits to this relatively technical institutional reform process in the context of heavy political pressures and power imbalances. The Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) described the process as “compromised” and reported that, despite the thorough preparations by ZEC, obstructions and undue pressure that benefited ZANU-PF were widespread. One ZEC commissioner resigned stating that “While throughout the whole process I retained some measure of hope that the integrity of the whole process could be salvaged along the way, this was not to be.” The outcome of the election was however endorsed by the African Union observers as “free, honest and credible” and despite strong concerns from many CSOs and some donor countries, protests were futile.

This demonstrates how external political actors, largely African regional institutions and neighbouring countries, were the primary outside political influences on the broader process. Some observers also claim that the strength of civil society in Zimbabwe made election violence “very expensive” for ZANU-PF and therefore contributed to the peaceful process. The value of the relatively technical institutional reforms supported by Sweden will in the long term only emerge if the broader political processes in Zimbabwe, among neighbouring countries and within regional institutions also lead in an appropriate direction.

Parallel to the support provided at national level, the portfolio has included contributions to more accountable and gender aware local governance structures. In the most direct effort, Gender Links has worked with 30 out of 92 local councils (and national structures supporting them) to promote gender sensitive representation, budgeting and service provision. Local action plans are assessed in a participatory manner, through citizen scorecards, which appears to contribute to more accountable local governance and better services.⁸³ The targeted councils have a higher female representation after the 2013 election (21% instead of average 16%) than non-targeted councils. Unicef

⁸² Echoed by all CSO respondents

⁸³ Gender Links annual report 2013

support to capacity enhancement of health and education service providers has also led to more accountable governance in these sectors.⁸⁴

During the strategy period the media is broadly perceived by interviewees to have become more plural and visible - and actors have a strategic and realistic vision of the road ahead. As there are other donors contributing to many of the same media institutions and processes (via International Media Support) it is difficult to verify what Sweden's specific contributions have been to these outcomes.

However, in many respects the conditions for a strong and free media are still restricted⁸⁵ and the Freedom House rating during the period 2011-2013 has not changed much. Sustainable outcomes will rely on the alignment of legislation to the new Constitution (for which there has been no progress) and changes in, for example, licensing of community radio stations. The review team was impressed by the ingenuity of the media organisations in finding ways to operate and reach at least part of the intended audiences despite the prevailing obstacles. But it was also recognised that significant outcomes from Swedish support in reaching the intended broader audience is reliant on further reforms.

Indicators	Findings
1. Constitution in place with international human rights principles and standards	Yes, but establishment of commissions and alignment of legislation is stalled. Claims of violations of the provisions of the Constitution relate to the legal grey area between the Constitution and a broad range of existing legislation.
2. Influence of CSO submissions on the final Constitution text (CSOs feel that they were listened to and that the consultations therefore were meaningful – especially those representing women and marginalised groups)	Yes, especially gender, media and culture sectors also had influence (but not satisfied due to uncertainties of the final legal interpretations). LGBTI rights not recognised (silence on question from all actors). Commitment to disability rights visible. Overall perception that the Constitution is “good enough”.
3. Indications of emerging implementation of the new Constitutional provisions in national legislation, especially independence of judiciary, laws restricting media freedom, freedom of association, right to information, access to justice, women's rights	No, commissions are being established but process is slow and politicised. Delays of certain areas seem deliberate. NGO legislation is being considered to increase government control. Freedom of expression is still limited as laws are not changed and journalists are being arrested.
4. Establishment of functional, independent NHRIs, capacity development initiated, and funding secured	Some initial steps in Judicial Service commission, Human Rights commission and Gender commission.
5. Willingness of the government to report to UN on HR Conventions application (more timely reporting) and to accept recommendations from UPRs and treaty bodies (CEDAW)	Yes, the acceptance of recommendations has increased. In the reporting and responding to CEDAW, the government and Women's Coalition worked together for the first time. Sweden indirect-

⁸⁴ Unicef thematic reports 2013 and interviews

⁸⁵ <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2013/zimbabwe#.U7FKutpvkic>

2012)	ly contributed to this by supporting the capacity enhancement of the Women's Coalition.
6. Acceptable quality of administration and monitoring of the election 2013 as judged by independent observers - fair and free elections (women and marginalised groups are participating proportionally)	ZEC is stronger and more democratic and transparent and with broader collaboration with CSOs. However, impact on the ultimate outcome of the transparency and organisation of the election was limited.
7. Increase in number of accessible newspaper/radio/TV and Internet channels that inform men, women and children of their rights and monitors performance of people of power (government agencies, donors and businesses)	Yes, there are a few more channels (mainly internet and urban based), but still limitations to access to information for the general public, poor and marginalised groups. Limitations in legislation, infrastructure, Constitutional alignment and radio licensing.
8. Improvement in HR ratings of Zimbabwe in international indices during the period	No, Zimbabwe is still among the countries listed low on transparency and freedom of expression and the rating.

3.2 OUTCOMES IN RELATION TO OBJECTIVE TWO

A growing democratic, vibrant and pluralistic civil society in which people organize themselves freely in political or other activities, and promote increased respect for human rights

Civil society has played an important role during the strategy period in contributing to broader democratic reform and to service delivery. As most donor countries did not want to engage directly with the Zimbabwe government, UN bodies and CSOs became the main channels for donors who wanted to support democratic development, human rights and improved service provision. This led to development of a large CSO sector, with a range of actors, services and activities. Some are primarily implementers of donor programmes, others are driven by commitment towards a social or political change agenda, some are expert-based and others are membership-based. Some seek to represent or defend poor and marginalised groups and others focus on delivery of services. The rather vague strategy objectives have been hard for the Embassy to report on as indicators and base lines were not clearly defined. The Embassy has looked for guidance on these issues from Sida Stockholm.

There are recent signs that the strengthening of civil society organisations and their voice has been somewhat of a bubble. As donor support to CSOs has waned after the elections, many CSOs have crumbled. It is evident that a restructuring of the CSO sector will take place as donors engage more directly with government or reduce their investments due to disappointment with political developments. Many CSOs fear that this restructuring will not benefit local organisations and voices. There are already

signs that donors prefer funding organisations that are already strong service providers (often international), while local membership based advocacy organisations may lose out. The disability movement, which used to be among the strongest in Africa, has already lost much support and is presently very weak.⁸⁶

The review team did not find an explicit and deliberate strategy from the Embassy related to objective 2.⁸⁷ With exceptions of the Culture Fund support, CSOs were mainly used as means to achieve objective 1 and 3. However, as a side effect outcomes related to objective 2 were also achieved, such as the enhanced technical capacities of partners to engage in political processes aiming at “promoting respect for human rights” (e.g. Constitution making, peaceful elections, monitoring of local government performance, combating gender based violence, etc.).⁸⁸ Some examples of outcomes of the Swedish support include:

- The grant making and festivals supported by the Culture Fund provided hundreds of individuals and organisations with the opportunity and space to express themselves. This contributed to the “vibrancy” of civil society. However, visible outcomes in the area of human rights and freedom of expression are limited.⁸⁹ The Culture Fund has acted cautiously in these areas.
- The involvement of communities in monitoring local government performance (using scorecards) provided women with “voice” in the 30 communities targeted by Gender Links.
- Some of the grantees of Diakonia strengthened their capacities to engage in the Constitution making and peace processes and to better plan and strategize.
- The support to the ZESN helped to enhance the “voice” of civil society in the political processes during the period.
- The women’s movement today is more vibrant and has stronger institutional structures compared with at the start of the strategy period. Evidence of these outcomes includes restructuring of the Women’s Coalition through setting up regional chapters to enhance access to resources and involvement of grassroots women in the activities of the Coalition; as well as recognition in regional fora where Zimbabwean women organisations have received attention.⁹⁰
- There is increased monitoring of government transparency and corruption via Transparency International.⁹¹

⁸⁶ NANGO interview

⁸⁷ Confirmed in interviews with Embassy staff

⁸⁸ Reports from and interviews with Zimbabwe Election Support Network, Women’s Coalition, Gender Links, Culture Fund, Legal Resource Foundation, Diakonia, UNFPA etc.

⁸⁹ Evaluation of the Culture Fund 2010, annual reports 2012 and 2013, interviews

⁹⁰ <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/article/zimbabwe-tops-the-list-of-winners-at-gender-summit-2014-06-15>

⁹¹ Annual reports and web-site

There are some negative outcomes in relation to objective 2 as well. The support to the Youth Empowerment and Training Trust (YETT) has not been structured so as to help the organisation to develop as a vibrant, democratic network and youth empowerment organisation. The organisation's own vision and recommendations from an evaluation in 2010⁹² were disregarded. When YETT did not manage to deliver what the Embassy and the youth groups prioritised (which were jobs and income generation), CARE International was support to focus on this. Instead of getting support to develop its role and methods as a "party-neutral" youth network, organisational capacity builder and grant maker, YETT was offered funding for advocacy activities (now via Diakonia). It is presently competing with its former grantees in undertaking advocacy, rather than supporting them. While the Embassy was looking for an effective implementer of economic empowerment programmes, YETT had a different vision for its role. This illustrates the importance of local ownership in design of projects. Donor "suggestions" are hard for CSOs to reject (although they should).

The overarching recent trend is that CSOs are moving from striving for preferred political outcomes towards more focus on institutional change and upholding of economic and social rights. There is widespread recognition that this will require more constructive collaboration with the government, and less confrontational tactics. One observer stated that "a lot of us are learning how to knock on doors, rather than kick on doors". The extent to which this soul searching can be attributed to Swedish support is uncertain, but it is apparent among the Swedish partner organisations.

One perhaps counterintuitive finding is that the government pressures on civil society and the media have been somewhat reduced after the 2013 election. Some organisations attribute government willingness to accept criticism from media and civil society to the fact that the opposition is too weak to constitute a threat. This is of course not an intended outcome of Swedish support, but it may suggest that the modicum of ZANU-PF legitimacy resulting from the 2013 election has made some contribution to a less repressive environment for civil society.

Indicators	Findings
1. Improvements in the legal and policy environment for CSOs (less restrictions and control), and for cultural institutions and business organisations	No, although political pressure seems to have been reduced, there are no efforts to improve the legal environment for CSOs, media and culture institutions. Instead there are threats of increased government control of CSOs.
2. Declining party political affiliation among CSOs (that are not political parties)	Yes, deliberate efforts by CSO community to re-strategize and change approaches. Focus is on engagement with government, socioeconomic rights, and implementation of Constitutional

⁹² Evaluation, November 2010, Mbiri Shiripinda

	provisions.
3. Increased visibility and influence of member based CSOs giving voice to (and addressing the rights of) poor and marginalised groups – e.g. women, persons with disabilities, HIV positive persons, LGBTI persons, children, etc.	During Constitutional process influence was strong, especially organisations representing women and persons with disabilities. Since then a decline in activity and influence by CSOs. Women's movement has experienced progress, but for other member based and advocacy CSOs there is less vibrancy and pluralism. Youth organisations are still rather politicised and gender segregated. No visible focus from Sweden on LGBTI and disability (or other marginalised groups).
4. Increased engagement of CSOs in monitoring commitments and services provided by local government agencies, donors and businesses	Yes, Gender Links has increased engagement of women in local communities to monitor local government budgeting and services. Transparency International has increased its monitoring of government transparency and accountability. Some of the supported CSO initiatives have a focus on economic empowerment for some women and youth, which indirectly enhances their individual voice at family level.

3.3 OUTCOMES IN RELATION TO OBJECTIVE THREE

Greater access to basic social services for vulnerable groups and individuals

Sweden has made a major contribution to maintaining and enhancing access to basic health, education and (to some extent) social protection services in the wake of a de facto humanitarian crisis at the start of the strategy period. This humanitarian crisis was largely the result of a collapse of what had once been one of Africa's most developed social service structures. As such, the support to these services was as much about a response to a governance crisis as it was about responding to conflict and drought. Support through Unicef in particular has been widely recognised by interviewees as being highly effective.⁹³ The services thus provided have been a mix of services directed at addressing acute humanitarian needs (e.g., responding to the cholera epidemic that affected Zimbabwe during the period 2008 to 2010); filling gaps in what the government could provide (e.g., provision of essential medicines); capacity development efforts (e.g., training and retaining medical personnel); and pilot efforts to provide models for what could provide the basis for a future social protection system (e.g., cash payments). Unicef has constituted a bridge for donors to reach vulnerable populations through both government and civil society service providers. The broad and flexible Swedish support through Unicef can almost be described as a qua-

⁹³ Unicef reporting is largely output focused, and there have been no evaluations undertaken of this very large country programme, so verifiable evidence of outcomes is not available.

si-humanitarian sector-wide approach. Other donor financing is entirely earmarked and project oriented, Sweden's unearmarked financing stands out as a unique way to maintain aid effectiveness principles in an extremely difficult context.⁹⁴

This support has ensured that the capacity of service providers has been retained and in some cases enhanced after a period of severe drain on human resources when educated staff left schools, clinics, hospitals and administrative positions due to poor salaries and poor working conditions. One thousand midwives are being trained annually, and 2500 are now practicing. The number of districts with a doctor has increased from 17 to 117. As will be discussed below, the sustainability of these efforts may be questioned, but Sweden's support has at least created temporary stability in what was a rapidly deteriorating situation.

In response to the cholera epidemic and threats of other epidemics of water borne diseases starting in 2008, Sweden invested in what was intended to be an "emergency" rehabilitation programme for water and related electrical power infrastructure through the African Development Bank (AfDB). Rehabilitation of these services was needed and shows promise of achieving intended outputs, but due to major delays (and unrealistic expectations) this was hardly the emergency rehabilitation programme it was intended to be.

Both Unicef and AfDB state that government ownership of service provision efforts has increased strikingly since the elections as these services are no longer feared to potentially legitimise the opposition. The legitimisation of the current government was perhaps not an intended outcome of the Swedish strategy, but it has positive implications for future sustainability, as it appears to be driving enhanced ownership.

The SRHR programmes supported via UNFPA (25% financed by Sweden) have been less visible than the Unicef programmes. In the first phase Sweden focussed on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. An evaluation in 2011 assessed that relevance and effectiveness of the programme was good, that many HIV infections had been prevented in the 26 targeted districts and access to essential drugs had increased. At the same time it pointed out limited local ownership and lack of synergies with other ongoing programmes.⁹⁵ The second phase of the UNFPA programme (started in 2012) is wider and has many SRHR components in addition to HIV/AIDS. The programme is linking CSO and government efforts at the local level and fills the gaps of the bigger SRHR programmes (such as the EU funded regional Integrated SRH and HIV programme and the Health Transition Fund). The focus on youth and the use of

⁹⁴ It should be stressed that adherence to the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is extremely low in Zimbabwe. This is not only due to the impact of sanctions on alignment efforts, but also due to the high media visibility of donor country positions, which has encouraged "grandstanding" at the expense of harmonisation. Some interviewees praised Sweden's quiet and constructive approach, contrasting this with the stance of other donors.

⁹⁵ Impact Assessment April 2011, Health Partners International

new technology such as smartphones and tablets to spread messages is innovative. So far there are only reports on outputs and the programme initially struggled to engage all relevant stakeholders across all sectors (e.g., health, police, traditional and legal institutions) and the community. The programme also lacks linkages with Swedish regional initiatives in the same field, which was mentioned as an area needing improvement by the respondents.

In addition to the programmes supported via UN agencies, the Embassy has supported some services that focus on economic empowerment of individuals via CARE International (savings and lending schemes for women and youth) and via We Effect (housing cooperative). The housing cooperative initially had some success, but has lost members in the past year as very few can manage to commit to loans for housing.⁹⁶ The savings and lending scheme for women (2002-2011) was successful in improving livelihoods and access to education for children in some 60 000 poor households in 10 districts. These have been able to sustain their livelihoods after the programme ended.⁹⁷ The new programme focuses on economic empowerment of 18 000 youth. Unlike the previous programme for women, it has a revolving fund (USD 500 000) that will add to the savings of the participants. The youth empowerment programme was designed on initiative of Embassy staff after the failure with YETT, which was not delivering the expected outcomes. The savings and credit modality encourages groups to mobilise their own resources and lend to each other for projects.⁹⁸ It is still too early to assess outcomes of the youth empowerment programme, which is operating in a difficult context of economic decline.

On the whole, support provided under objective three has constituted a strong transition out of humanitarian approaches through the recovery of a significant proportion of the institutional health and education structures and capacities that existed in the past. Livelihoods have been improved and sustained in some households due to the Swedish support, but systemic and governance obstacles to economic development have not been addressed. Outcomes have not yet been achieved in “transitioning beyond the transition” in terms of broader state capacities for financing, maintaining and leading social services and creating conditions for better accesses to markets and decent job opportunities for the poor in the future.

Indicators	Findings
1. Increased capacities of duty bearers to deliver services to vulnerable populations (rural, women, persons with disabilities, HIVposi-	Yes, human resources, equipment and financial capacity have helped duty bearers to retain and re-establish services. Women have been in focus

⁹⁶ Interview with We Effect

⁹⁷ Final Evaluation, 2011 Rosemary Tindwa and Alfred Hamadziripi

⁹⁸ Assessment memo and project proposal 2013

tive persons, LGBTI persons, children, those experiencing climate stress)	of savings and lending schemes. LGBTI population are still neglected.
2. Services (educational, health, legal and social) are of appropriate quality and increasingly available/accessible to youth, poor, rural and marginalised groups	Yes, improvements in maternal health, nutrition, livelihoods, etc. Youth are still not sufficiently reached, although efforts are underway.
3. Vulnerable people know where and how to access services.	No, limited evidence due to virtually no attention in plans and reporting to demand for services. Lack of evidence probably due to supply driven nature of support and weak capacity for results based documentation.

3.4 QUALITY OF THE STRATEGIC FOCUS

The review team judges that the Embassy has maintained a strategic approach to working towards intended outcomes in relation to objectives one and three, but less so in relation to objective two. Particularly with regard to objective one, there are many examples of Sweden taking a highly strategic leadership role in relation to other donor initiatives. Interviewees portray this strength as having been achieved by taking a somewhat soft but principled stance. Sweden has not been confrontational or polemic in its relations with any political actors and has consistently emphasised the importance of institutional reform, whereas other donors may have weakened their clout by pushing a more overt political agenda and regime change.

Virtually all CSOs describe their interactions with the Embassy as being fragmented and unclear (except the Culture Fund). While it is appreciated that Sweden does not use calls for proposals, the short term, project focussed type of support has not encouraged civil society actors to develop their own strategies and visions, as they are instead seen as “implementing agencies” for services or watchdog/advocacy tasks, and other forms of support chosen by the Embassy (or its intermediary). A lack of strategic vision on the role of civil society has been observed.

It can be noted that many of the challenges and opportunities facing the media are similar to those facing civil society. The review team has found that the effectiveness of a strong, Swedish peer partner in the media programme has in many respects helped the Embassy to maintain greater strategic direction in that sector. As such, lessons could be learnt from the media support that could be applied to developing a more strategic approach to civil society development.

Sweden has been effective in positioning itself strategically in the social sectors by being the only donor to provide core support to Unicef and UN Coordination, thereby demonstrating a strong commitment to broader systemic outcomes for rights holders rather than just trying to reach a set group of “beneficiaries” (as has been the norm in the donor community). Furthermore, by taking this stance Sweden may have maintained greater trust and respect than most donors among government institutions, which may lead to more effective programming and more open dialogue in the future.

Indeed, overall it can be concluded that the design of the portfolio has supported Sweden’s dialogue role. This dialogue has been undertaken within the limits of the Zimbabwean context, and as such is very different from how a Swedish Embassy normally engages with national actors. The review team judges that even though there

has been very little direct contact with the government, the foundation for a future return to more normal relations has been preserved.

The engagement with the government has been undertaken without compromising commitments to addressing the severe dysfunctions and misdirected policies of the government. The combination of careful engagement, soft authority and steadfast commitment to institutional reform (rather than regime change) has meant that, overall, the portfolio has been well structured to promote “good enough governance”⁹⁹ in the prevailing and changing context.

Indicators	Findings
Deliberate measures taken to ensure non-discrimination, participation, accountability and transparency in programmes and processes. Existence of analyses of these aspects	Yes, programmes could explain how this was done, but it is not visible in planning and reporting (with some notable exceptions). Due to the supply driven nature of many programmes, the voices and priorities of rights holders have not been visible.
Reference to contextual factors (especially risks) in assessing and judging initiatives and overall portfolio design and reporting	Yes, the Embassy has assessed and adapted to risk.
Quality of overall balance of engagement and caution as perceived by stakeholders and external experts and as reflected in how the Swedish portfolio is situated in relation to the overall donor community.	Yes, the Embassy has taken leadership in donor coordination. Greater influence than the small envelope would imply.

3.5 SUMMARY REGARDING OUTCOMES

Objective one: Democratisation and governance

- Sweden contributed to the GNU’s ability to maintain a democratic momentum
- The Constitutional process was fairly participatory and the resulting Constitution was “good enough” (but the process is incomplete and uncertain)
- Electoral institutions are significantly stronger, although still facing major political obstacles
- Media is stronger, more plural, visible and actors have a strategic and realistic vision of the road ahead

Objective two: Civil society

- The women’s movement is more influential and has increasing local presence, participation and monitoring of local government performance

⁹⁹ Grindle 2007

- Some CSO partners are moving towards a more strategic and appropriate role, more collaborative and less confrontational
- The Culture Fund has contributed to vibrancy of civil society and provision of arenas for cultural expression, but freedom of expression and human rights outcomes of the Culture Fund are difficult to assess
- Fragmented approach and lack of strategic vision on role of civil society has limited the Embassy's effectiveness

Objective three: Basic service provision

- Highly effective support has been provided through Unicef (and to some extent UNFPA) to meeting both acute needs and strengthening capacities
- This has resulted in considerably greater access to basic social services
- Capacity of service providers has been retained and enhanced
- Services through Zimfund show promise but this was hardly the emergency programme it was intended to be
- Economic empowerment (of youth and women) is addressed from an empowerment and rights holder perspective, compensating for system limitations but without addressing the overall systemic obstacles in governance and markets

Quality of the strategic focus

- Objectives one and three have been addressed strategically, but objective two less so (CSOs have mainly been used as means to reach objective one and objective three)
- There are many examples of Sweden undertaking a highly strategic and leadership role in relation to other donor initiatives
- The portfolio has supported Sweden's dialogue role (within the limits of the Zimbabwean context)
- Overall, the portfolio has been well structured to promote "good enough governance" in the prevailing and changing context

4 Findings: Relevance

4.1 CONTEXT RELEVANCE AND ADAPTATION OVER TIME

At the start of the period the strategy was largely relevant in relation to the challenges facing Zimbabwe. The portfolio, despite some lack of coherence due to programming being “inherited” from the past, was generally well aligned with both contextual needs and the strategy.

Over time the portfolio was adapted to shifting challenges and opportunities. With regard to objective one, the selection of initiatives was relevant to strategically important areas, most notably electoral institutions and the Constitutional process. Specific foci were appropriately adapted over time until the elections. Since then, there has been somewhat of a malaise with regard to further development of the portfolio due to uncertainty about the way to engage with the new government, partly as it has not shown signs of readiness to continue the Constitutional reform process. This malaise appears to have affected much of the donor community. As a result, during the last year the portfolio for objectives one and two has not been adapted sufficiently.

Regarding objective three, the portfolio started with a quasi-humanitarian focus, relevant to the acute needs that then existed. It has since gradually shifted to developing systems for social protection and exploring ways to rebuild social service provision institutions and human resource capacities. The continuing acute crisis in public finances has meant that it has not been possible to phase out forms of financial support for salaries, etc. that would normally only be associated with a crisis situation. As such, relevance in relation to a situation that is neither a humanitarian crisis nor a “normal” development context is difficult to confirm, but the Embassy has managed the portfolio well amid this ambiguous and rapidly changing context.

There is broad recognition among virtually all interviewees that the former focus on political and civil rights was relevant in the past but needs to be better balanced with attention to social and (especially) economic rights. There have been some modest efforts to develop experience in this arena, with small projects focused on economic empowerment, but the relevance of these entry points will only be possible to judge if and when they are scaled up or lessons are applied in wider programming. To remain relevant in the future and in a broader perspective, the focus on economic empower-

ment of individuals would need to be accompanied by efforts to address obstacles facing the poor in markets for their products and labour, while also supporting changes in how these markets are governed.

The review team judges that the strong focus on Constitutional and institutional reforms and the relatively strong trust that exists with the government¹⁰⁰ imply that a niche may have been established to continue with development of institutional norms and structures (rather than narrow technical fixes) for economic development. This could include a continued focus on the provisions of the Constitution that are needed to encourage and regulate investments so as to reflect the political and economic structures that have created entrenched poverty in Zimbabwe. This may perhaps also include a shift to local/rural governmental roles to encourage these processes.

4.2 RELEVANCE IN RELATION TO THE STRATEGY AND SWEDISH POLICIES

Appropriate efforts have been made in enhancing the accountability and transparency of duty bearers through supporting institutional human rights and democracy systems and practices and creating pressures from watchdogs. Evidence of the relevance of the approaches applied can be seen in how the government is showing greater acknowledgement of their responsibilities. Many interviewees describe how, since the elections, the government is showing some genuine concern for living up to promises that have been made about rebuilding social services and infrastructure. There is however, less commitment from the government in the realm of political and civil rights (e.g. freedom of expression and freedom of association) and the process of establishing functional commissions to oversee the implementation of the human rights provisions of the new Constitution is still slow. As such, the ultimate relevance of selected approaches in relation to Swedish policies cannot be confirmed.

The Embassy has not made consistent and strategic efforts to empower rights holders, and the CSOs representing their interests. There are disturbing signs that civil society is losing its vibrancy and strength since the adoption of the Constitution and the elections – while in the wake of the turmoil in the political opposition the CSOs have a crucial role to play in holding the government accountable. The CSO initiatives supported directly by the Embassy and through Diakonia and Culture Fund have only been partly relevant to the Swedish strategy and policies. Diakonia's portfolio has not been strategically and effectively designed to contribute to civil society capacity

¹⁰⁰ The evaluation team cannot verify the strength of this trust, but comments from some interviewees suggest that the support to public sector services through objectives three and one, and consistent commitments to institutional reform (rather than regime change) have led to relatively good trust between Sweden and the government.

strengthening and social change,¹⁰¹ although substantial improvements have been noted since the evaluation 2011.¹⁰² A complete review of the Diakonia portfolio is now underway. The Culture Fund contributed to “vibrancy” and creation of “arenas for cultural expression”. In that sense it is relevant to objective 2. However, it does not play a watchdog role or challenge existing discriminatory norms and practices. On the contrary it seeks to be as neutral as possible and has a vision of promoting “Zimbabwean values”, tradition and heritage. While the intention is to counteract political division in the country and promote peace, this may not contribute to pluralism, tolerance of diversity and the broader human rights agenda. The Culture Fund is closely linked to the government and even uses the offices of the National Arts Council in districts. This gives it influence and sustainability, but also certain limitations.

The approaches applied to alleviating poverty in objective three have been largely “supply driven”, which is not in line with Swedish policies emphasising the perspectives of the poor. This can be attributed to the humanitarian origins of the strategy, which reflected a needs rather than a rights based perspective. However, this deficiency is currently recognised at the Embassy, which bodes well for a shift to a somewhat different perspective in the future.

Despite such deficiencies, the review team noted a number of examples of how a rights-based approach can be observed in the implementation of the portfolio. A number of partners could demonstrate how the principles of accountability, transparency, participation and non-discrimination were addressed in implementation processes. For example, in COPAC processes, deliberate measures were taken to include women, minorities and persons with disabilities when consultation mechanisms were designed. The Culture Fund has demonstrated transparency in grant making by openly advertising selection criteria and justifications for selections. Unicef consistently works to engage the government to remove fees that prevent the poor from accessing services.

It should be noted however, that these examples were largely revealed in interviews during the course of the review and are difficult to verify in plans and reports of most partners. A rights-based approach is not systematically addressed in the portfolio and is clearly weak in the planning and reporting by both the partners and the Embassy (the Diakonia and CARE applications are exceptions). Some observers note that an

¹⁰¹ Gouzou 2011 “Diakonia’s programme is potentially relevant, but it endures several serious weaknesses. Partly because the conflict analysis was too general, Diakonia failed to develop a strategy that clearly shows how the different components of the programme strengthen each other and how these components, together, contribute to the realization of the objective of the programme”

¹⁰² Gouzou 2013 “Diakonia has, moreover, been able to develop a capacity development strategy of remarkable quality. Finally, Diakonia has succeeded, in a short amount of time, in going from being totally unknown among international actors in Zimbabwe to being considered as a reliable partner that brings a true added value to the democratisation process in the country”.

emphasis on associating human rights perspectives solely with the past widespread violent abuse of human rights has made it difficult to bring a broader perspective on human rights into the public discourse.

There is broad awareness of Sweden's commitments to LGBTI rights, but all interviewees report either insignificant outcomes or fears and inability to pursue these objectives. Responses indicate a stronger commitment to disability rights, though this is also an area where limited outcomes have been achieved. Interviewees mentioned a need for better skills in how to approach these issues and also recognise that this would require a significant and long-term investment.

An overall challenge in the portfolio is that of reaching marginalised rural populations. Zimfund has been developed on claims of reaching populations that were most severely affected by shortages of potable water, but the extent to which this prioritisation was maintained has not been possible to assess and was questioned by one interviewee. Support to community radio is partly justified by an effort to reach marginal communities, but the problems with licensing have meant that this outreach remains limited despite innovative efforts to overcome a range of obstacles. The economic empowerment programmes for women and youth supported through CARE and Gender Links have focused to a large extent on rural populations. In general, the focus on political and civic rights may carry with it an inevitably skewed focus towards urban, educated populations and away from those who are primarily concerned with basic economic survival and food security. This has been acknowledged by some civil society and media interviewees.

Support through Unicef has however emphasised enhanced access to services by marginalised populations through increasing the service coverage in terms of scale (quantity of services provided) and scope (reaching areas where shortage of human and financial resources had led to services being withdrawn), while reducing the cost of services (making financial assistance conditional on fee waivers for maternal and child health).

4.3 SUMMARY REGARDING RELEVANCE

Contextual relevance and adaptation over time

- At the start the portfolio was largely relevant (despite some lack of coherence)
- The portfolio was appropriately adapted over time until the elections
- During the last year the portfolio has not been adapted sufficiently (reflecting a broader atmosphere of malaise and uncertainty)

Relevance to Swedish strategy and policies (HRBA and the perspectives of the poor)

- The strategy has proven appropriate for enhancing the accountability of duty bearers, but less appropriate in terms of empowerment of rights holders
- The approach taken to strengthen civil society lacked direction and was therefore less relevant
- The government is showing greater acknowledgement of their responsibilities

- The approach to addressing poverty alleviation has been largely supply driven (not in line with the perspectives of the poor) but this is recognised and largely legitimate, and is perhaps a carry-over from the humanitarian origins of the strategy
- A human rights based approach is reflected in the implementation of the portfolio, but is not visible in the planning and reporting, perhaps due to limited understanding and internalisation of its meaning
- The principles of accountability, transparency, non-discrimination and participation are not yet systematically translated into proactive and practical measures in programmes

5 Findings: Efficiency and Modalities

5.1 SELECTION OF MODALITIES

The Embassy has worked with a range of modalities and channels during the strategy period. Choices were in some cases related largely to “making the best of” the prevailing options and circumstances, rather than a structured comparison of potential modalities. This has been partially due to the need to go through the UN and AfDB to work with the government, and the often weak commitments among the donor community to harmonised approaches in the politically charged context. With regard to CSOs, the Embassy has worked systematically to develop its relationship with Diaconia and the Culture Fund as channels to engage indirectly with smaller partners.

If the situation in Zimbabwe continues to stabilise, it is likely that opportunities for a somewhat more structured selection of modalities will grow. It is still likely that a pragmatic selection among a limited range of options will be needed in many cases.

5.2 UN MODALITIES

Forty-nine percent of Swedish funding during 2011-2013 was channelled through UN agencies. This has largely been an efficient way of working with both government and non-governmental agencies and service providers. Sweden has been able to maintain a constructive but modestly distanced relationship with the government, an arrangement that is today generally perceived (by government, CSOs and donors interviewed) to have been appropriate for the circumstances that prevailed, and for setting the stage for a gradual deepening of cooperation in the near future.

Furthermore, the Embassy of Sweden has leveraged its relations with UN agencies to contribute to donor harmonisation in an extremely difficult context. Informants described a proliferation of pressures from different donors to meet somewhat differing policy goals in a politically charged environment. In interviews mention was made of how some donors have been more concerned with domestic pressures to take a polemic stance on certain issues rather than searching for workable solutions. Sweden has been described as being able to work with the UN to gain a modicum of harmonisation around common objectives and concerns. The support to UN coordination has brought results in terms of synergies at both policy and implementation levels.

Apart from these general observations, the “UN modality” has consisted of a wide spectrum of sub-modalities. Contrasts in the relationships with UNDP and Unicef are enormous, and illustrate the importance of caution in generalising about the quality of these relations with the UN.

The Swedish relationship with UNDP in support to ZEC and COPAC has been difficult. UNDP’s role was described by one interviewee as more of a “broker” rather than

a partner, and the brokerage arrangements managed between the government and the international community and among the different donors have been recognised as having been demanding. The implementation and reporting of these two projects has been slow and in some cases weak. It has not been possible for the review team to judge the extent to which these problems stem from deficiencies within UNDP or their government counterparts. The quality of the technical assistance provided through UNDP to COPAC has been assessed by some interviewees as poor. UNDP describes their support to ZEC as a “standard institutional support package” that could be applied to any institution, which describes well the activity/output oriented approach that was applied. The review team cannot assess “who is to blame” for the problems that arose in these two programmes. It is nonetheless clear that UNDP has not had a strong commitment to outcome reporting that would ideally shed light on these difficulties and how they could be addressed in the future.¹⁰³

Nonetheless, all of those interviewed acknowledged that, in retrospect, UNDP was the only viable option for providing this support and that the challenging objectives in these programmes were largely achieved. The scale of consultations undertaken as part of COPAC is particularly impressive. With both programmes Sweden recognised the challenges and maintained a stringent but constructive relationship with UNDP in a context where other donors were described as taking a less constructive approach, placing blame rather than searching for solutions, and looking for back-door opportunities for influence rather than respecting core UN mandates. The Swedish support to the UN Coherence effort has been effective in addressing some of the weaknesses in the UN system and it is appreciated by both UN agencies and bilateral agencies¹⁰⁴ as a basis for future cooperation. One of the improvements reported was the strengthening of the joint UN-Government results monitoring (with development of a Zimbabwe UN Development Assistance Framework, and reports on indicators and progress on results). Sweden took a brave and successful step, being the only donor to support this effort.

Although UNDP has a unique position and mandate within the UN system, it is no longer the “only option” for many types of governance support, and it is likely that the organisation will need to clarify its understanding and commitments to outcome level results based management if it is to retain donor support. There are likely to be other alternative channels for specific activities within the continued Constitutional reform process (e.g., Danish support through the Danish Institute for Human Rights, various CSO sector networks, etc.). UNDP appears to be searching for a new role in

¹⁰³ The two evaluations that were commissioned by UNDP of support to ZEC and COPAC were largely focused on inputs and outputs, and the conclusions that were drawn regarding outcomes were not evidence based.

¹⁰⁴ Assessment Report, 2014 Richard Chiwara

the current context, perhaps related to leading the UN agencies work around “resilience” through a basket fund modality. It is too early to assess whether they will be able to infuse this label of “resilience” with clear and sufficient content that will resonate with both the government and the international community. Even if the need for a resilience perspective is appropriate given the uncertain and potentially volatile context in Zimbabwe, it seems unlikely that a basket fund will prove attractive given the organisation’s track record of recent years.

In contrast to the mixed feedback received regarding UNDP, Unicef has not in any way been perceived to be a problematic modality. Core support to Unicef has been a way for Sweden to work with an organisation with impressive field level capacities to combine different types of assistance and adapt approaches to the changing circumstances. Indeed, the information the review team received about the core support provided to Unicef could be interpreted as indicating a good example of how core support can enable an organisation to address “resilience” in practice. Unicef has proven to be capable to respond to the “contiguuum”¹⁰⁵ of needs for both direct financial and technical support to ensure that humanitarian services have been provided while at the same time responding to needs and opportunities to retain and enhance institutional and human resource capacities. This reflects the increasingly recognised importance of finding ways to combine provision of services with careful support to capacity development (or at least capacity retention) in states where there is a near vacuum of capacities to provide basic services.¹⁰⁶

Perhaps due to the acute needs that existed (and to some extent still exist), together with the requirement to keep a distance from government agencies, the modality of core support to Unicef has focused on addressing needs, more than responding to the perspectives of the poor and addressing the relations between rights holders and duty bearers. There are exceptions however. Core support has enabled Unicef to make a significant contribution to accountability and transparency through financing collection of statistics, something that would not be possible with the entirely needs driven project financing of other donors. Support to cash transfers through the Child Protection Fund can also be seen as a step towards strengthening the accountability of duty bearers responsible for social protection,¹⁰⁷ and has relied on existing systems within the Ministry of Public Service. But lack of government commitments to take over the financing of this scheme has meant that institutional outcomes remain elusive. In

¹⁰⁵ The term “contiguuum” refers to the fact that assumptions about linear emergency to development “continuums” often hide the need to maintain a combination of approaches “contiguously” to respond to acute and chronic human suffering while taking advantage of opportunities for effective development even where circumstances appear dire.

¹⁰⁶ See Christoplos, et al, 2014

¹⁰⁷ As opposed to channelling such support through humanitarian agencies

sum, core values related to human rights and the perspectives of the poor have not been in focus during the strategy period for reasons beyond the control of either the Embassy or Unicef. The trust that apparently exists among the Embassy, Unicef, the Ministries of Health and Education and other stakeholders suggests that potential exists for pursuing these perspectives more in the future.

Compared to UNDP and Unicef, UNFPA has taken on a different function, acting more as a bridge between civil society and the government. UNFPA works with the Ministries of Social Welfare and Health and with a range of CSOs, and with the Youth Council (linked to the government).

5.3 CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT MODALITIES

Forty-one percent of the Swedish funding 2011-13 has been channelled through CSOs (including the media support and regional organisations). Overall, it is hard to discern an overall logic in the choice of modalities for support to or via civil society. With the notable exceptions of Culture Fund and the developing relationship with Diakonia, approaches appear to have been ad hoc, determined more by efforts to deal with narrow goals rather than the creation of a strong relationship for overall strengthening of civil society as would seem essential to achieve the second objective in the country strategy. Some CSO partners, such as Gender Links and ZESN, are already well-funded organisations, presenting safe and reliable implementation channels for the Embassy for objective one. Other CSO partners, including We Effect and CARE, were approached as they were considered reliable channels for objective three. For objective two, there was never a clear agenda and modalities were diverse and cumbersome for both the Embassy and for the partners receiving funds.

In an effort to address these deficiencies and reduce transaction costs, reliance on Diakonia has grown. Diakonia has taken over responsibilities for direct engagement with some of the CSO partners from the Embassy and has thus taken on a role (in some respects similar to FOJO, see below) in channelling Embassy resources to smaller civil society organisations and supporting the development of their capacities. The engagement of Diakonia as a modality is seen as a way of approaching civil society support within an understanding and commitment to Swedish policies and from a “party-neutral” point of view. Diakonia is trying to judge the intentions of the future Swedish bilateral engagement and is preparing for a completely new portfolio with more focus on youth, gender equality and socio-economic rights. Diakonia receives three-year support from the Embassy, and provides grants ranging from 6 to 12 months to its partners, which the partners view as far too short to encourage long-term and strategic planning.

The Culture Fund has provided an arena for Sweden to indirectly build relationships with the government via the National Arts Council and support to renovations of national libraries. The modality has benefits in terms of good will creation for both Sweden and the government, but also limitations in terms of human rights outcomes.

A multi-donor civil society support fund is being established, led by DFID, based on a Zambian model. Other donors are eager for Sweden to join. This fund appears to be structured largely as an administrative function, perhaps in order to accommodate the different stances of the contributing donors.

EU has a CSO “road map” process, which is undertaken in all partner countries, including Zimbabwe. The process was highly participatory and is seen as promising by the Zimbabwean CSOs.¹⁰⁸ It will be published in July and should inform eventual assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of different modalities for CSO support in the future.

It is generally accepted that CSO capacity development will benefit from greater use of basket and core funding¹⁰⁹ as it will increase local ownership and decrease transaction costs. However, using calls for proposals to select grantees and programmes may present an increased risk of donor driven agendas (although at the same time may be more transparent). Competitive calls may also increase biases towards stronger organisations, which may not be the most appropriate for all tasks and for encouraging a more vital civil society. Also, some donors may still have vested political interests and be less interested in promoting local ownership and processes driven by poor and marginalised groups. Given the relatively clear normative foundation for Sweden’s work through Diakonia and its improving capacity, a joint donor fund would probably not provide the same advantages as the prevailing arrangements with Diakonia.¹¹⁰ Still, the use of Swedish intermediaries also has its limitations in terms of sustainability and local ownership.

Among CSOs there are also widespread fears that their independence will be curtailed if donors begin channelling CSO support via the government. This is envisaged in the next European Development Fund. Thus far this is a hypothetical threat, as there are no significant donor funded modalities that are structured in this way that are currently operational. It is however clear that a restructuring of the CSO sector is underway, the implications of which cannot currently be predicted.

As in other countries, the Embassy in Zimbabwe struggles to coordinate its efforts with other Swedish actors funded by various Sida appropriations. CSOs in Zimbabwe are also supported via the CIVSAM appropriation, notably We Effect, PMU, Africa Groups, Olof Palme International Centre and Diakonia. Many have the same partners

¹⁰⁸ Interview with NANGO

¹⁰⁹ OECD DAC on good practices for civil society support, “*How DAC members work with CSOs*” (2011) and “*Partnering with CSOs - 12 lessons from DAC peer reviews*” (2012) and the Busan commitments on harmonisation in support to CSOs <http://cso-effectiveness.org/post-busan-interim-group,202?lang=en>

¹¹⁰ Report on added value of Swedish CSOs as intermediaries, Swedish Mission Council 2014, Rebecca Andersen, Ola Segnestam Larsson, Pelle Åberg

as the ones supported via Embassy funded programmes.¹¹¹ There are opportunities for synergies, and regular meetings and joint funding arrangements could be a way to explore these opportunities and avoid duplications. Other CSOs are supported via the appropriation for Special Initiatives Democracy and Freedom of Expression. These are often in the cultural or media spheres where synergies could also be further enhanced.

5.4 THE MEDIA SUPPORT MODALITY

The Embassy has taken a clear and well thought through approach to support the media during the strategy period. In the past, media stakeholders had been funded in an unstructured manner, described by one interviewee as “haphazard”. The selection of the modality of engaging a Swedish institution was made in a clearly evidence-based manner, and both the modality and the institution contracted have been uniformly praised by interviewees. Engaging FOJO has proven efficient, has provided added value, and has worked well in the context. FOJO’s reporting stands out as particularly strong with regard to astute political analysis and focus on outcomes. As an organisation of peers, FOJO is reported to have been able to understand the problems faced by their colleagues and has been able to take up difficult issues, such as ethics and “brown envelopes”¹¹² with relative ease. Also, the relatively long-term funding structures (two years) combined with close and constructive dialogue has provided a basis for a strategic partnership. This is in contrast to the short funding timeframes and project support so provided by Diakonia to its partners.

Interviewees expressed mixed perspectives about the modality of FOJO engaging with local actors without an in-country office and with relatively brief visits. All felt that FOJO should spend more time in Zimbabwe, despite being extremely attentive and supportive when receiving email requests. Some felt a permanent presence would be important, while others felt that this was not essential.

5.5 INTERNATIONAL FINANCE INSTITUTIONS

Ten percent of the Swedish funding 2011-13 has been channelled via international financial institutions. Support channelled through the AfDB for the Zimfund appears to have been a relevant modality under the circumstances for managing large-scale infrastructural rehabilitation. There were considerable delays in implementing this ambitious programme, some of which were related to both AfDB and the government counterparts trying to determine how they could work together without breaching the

¹¹¹ Review of Civil Society Support Modalities at Sida HQ and Embassies, Sida 2013

¹¹² Bribes

so called “targeted measures” that restricted support to the government. The distance from government was also seen as essential in order to avoid additional delays given that this is an “emergency” programme. In some respects it could be claimed that the targeted measures gave AfDB an opportunity to side-step bureaucratic obstacles that needed to be avoided in any case due to the “emergency” nature of the programme.

Given the delays already experienced, it is too early to judge with certainty whether the objectives will be achieved. As with the UN modalities, it is unlikely that there were other alternatives for the needed engagement with the government while maintaining an appropriate distance. It should be stressed, however, that given the delays this was not an appropriate “emergency” modality as was envisaged at the outset. AfDB has made efforts to respond to Swedish policy concerns related to accountability, participation, transparency and non-discrimination, but the challenges of managing large contracts in a fragile market have clearly been their overriding concerns.

In the future the World Bank may be an alternative to the AfDB for either further rehabilitation or even normal investments. A multi-donor trust fund, the Zimbabwe Reconstruction Fund (Zimref), has recently been established and will include both technical assistance and investments in projects/programmes. Due to the fact that Zimbabwe is in arrears in its debt repayments, special procedures are being established. It is a wide-ranging fund with windows that could potentially provide a modality for a range of engagements with the government. Given the potentially vast scope of this modality it is difficult to judge its qualities at this time.

5.6 REGIONAL SUPPORT MODALITIES

A substantial proportion of Swedish support is implemented with the engagement of regional (South Africa based) institutions, such as the Media Institute of Southern Africa, EISA and Gender Links. Evaluations of their work suggest that adapting existing systems of these organisations to the needs and structures required in Zimbabwe has involved significant transaction costs for these organisations, and perhaps for the Embassy itself. This investment appears to have paid off, with stronger and more appropriately balanced structures having been developed, with greater decentralisation to national offices.¹¹³ Gender Links reports that this process has been difficult, but has resulted in their Zimbabwe office becoming a “model” for other countries.

EISA and Gender Links have both been effective structures for working with local government and local level line ministry agencies. It is unlikely that this would be

¹¹³ Though it is a Swedish organisation, the collaboration with Diakonia has also involved a gradual devolution from the regional to the national office.

possible with either national or Swedish civil society organisations. EISA has also taken advantage of its relatively “neutral” status as a regional organisation to work actively to draw attention to the interdependencies between ZEC and civil society, which is said to have greatly reduced pre-existing antagonism.

Examples such as these suggest that Sweden has made an investment in these regional organisations that can increase efficiency in the future. Furthermore, these regional African organisations can be seen as a relatively lower risk cooperation option compared to national organisations (that can be closed or harassed) or non-African organisations (that can be accused of neo-colonial intentions). Regional organisations might also prove to be an efficient and effective modality for sensitive areas, such as SRHR and LGBTI rights. The Sida regional office in Zambia is already supporting such efforts and a closer linkage with these efforts would be beneficial – in particular linkages with the UNFPA programme.

5.7 SUMMARY REGARDING EFFICIENCY

The following matrix summarises the review team’s conclusions regarding different aspects of efficiency. It is acknowledged that these are fairly rough generalisations, but it is hoped that this matrix can provide a tool for comparing the different modalities. For further guidance a related matrix from an evaluation of CIVSAM modalities can be found in annex five.

	UN govern- ance sup- port	UN service provision	Internation- al/regional/Swedi sh CSOs and institutes as implement- ers/advisors	Swedish CSOs as intermedi- aries	IFI led program- ming (AfDB)	Direct support to national CSOs
Leveraging policy and institutional reform an- chored in national own- ership	Good, but with mixed performance regarding sustained and outcome oriented policy re- form	Very good	Regional institu- tions strong; international and Swedish weaker	Good within the limitations of national CSO part- ners	Despite strong ownership, ques- tionable influence on policy and institutional reform	Good potential but influence limited due to short-term project financing
Mobilising service provid- ers and local partners	Good at achieving intended activity and output targets	Excellent	Very good	Very good	Slow, but ulti- mately effective in a difficult con- tracting environ- ment	N/A
Reflecting the value base and policies of Swedish devel- opment coop- eration	Difficult to ascertain due to weak outcome focus	Weak in relation to perspectives of the poor due to quasi- humanitarian modalities in the strategy period	Good to very good	Excellent	Weak	Difficult to gener- alise but largely good

5 FINDINGS: EFFICIENCY AND MODALITIES

	UN govern- ance sup- port	UN service provision	Internation- al/regional/Swedi sh CSOs and institutes as implement- ers/advisors	Swedish CSOs as intermedi- aries	IFI led program- ming (AfDB)	Direct support to national CSOs
“Surge capaci- ty” and flexibil- ity to address rapidly emerg- ing (e.g., hu- manitarian) needs	Good	Excellent	Apparent flexibil- ity; uncertain surge capacity	Good	Weak	Good during strategy period but capacities may be declining due to funding reduc- tions affecting core capacities
Achievement of results and results report- ing	Weak	Fair	Difficult to gener- alise but generally good	Good	Weak	Good regarding achievement but weak reporting
Transaction costs	High (UNDP)/ low (Unicef)	Low in rela- tion to scale of support	Medium to high	Medium	Low	Low
Contextual understanding	High (though application of knowledge weak)	High	International medium/ Regional and Swedish high	High	Medium	Excellent

6 Findings: Sustainability

6.1 SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES AMID ECONOMIC DECLINE

The prospects for sustainability of capacities developed/retained with Swedish support are related to the national economy. The prospects for stability and growth in the national economy are dependent on appropriate political decisions. As described in the Poverty and Development Assessment above, at the end of the strategy period the Zimbabwean economy is in rapid decline. There are mixed signals from leading politicians about readiness to take measures to stem this decline.

As a result, public financial capacity (and perhaps commitment) to cover existing basic salaries of the civil service is under great strain. There are no signs of a readiness or capacity to take over the costs of donor financed programmes. This is at a time when, according to Unicef, the recurrent costs for service provision have skyrocketed, partly due to increased costs associated with dollarisation, and partly due to rapidly increasing costs for pensions. Public sector wages constitute 70% of total public expenditure,¹¹⁴ far from the 40% level recommended by the IMF.

Economic stability is also a precondition for sustainable civil society, culture and media development. Without a vibrant economy media cannot generate required revenues and expectations of a shift from donor funding to mobilisation of local resources for civil society will not materialise. Although the Culture Fund has explicit objectives related to access to markets and economic empowerment of artists, the outcomes are limited to achievements of a few individuals who have been able to publish or produce art, books or music. Markets for culture also rely on the purchasing powers of the potential audiences. Culture and civil society (and even public service media) are generally dependent on public and private subsidies and contributions in most countries. The challenge is to build a diverse and stable funding base.

In sum, the convergence of economic decline and unbalanced public expenditure has meant that there is currently no clear path for Zimbabwe to “transition beyond the transition” and towards sustainability. Even if Zimbabwe is not facing an immediate humanitarian crisis or state collapse today, there are no signs that the government or

¹¹⁴ <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2014/06/18/government-urged-cut-wage-bill/>

the market will be able to generate revenues to sustain the gains described in this report.

6.2 PUBLIC SECTOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Given the prevailing context, the “goalposts” of sustainable capacity development in Zimbabwe during the strategy period have been far from normal. Even if Zimbabwe is not a fragile state, the ambivalence that has characterised development cooperation in Zimbabwe is similar to that applied in many fragile states. This includes efforts to strengthen capacities to provide services, while at the same time being cautious about strengthening and legitimising public institutions that do not display commitments to democracy and human rights. Given the uncertainties facing Zimbabwe in the near future, it is impossible to assess with certainty how appropriate Sweden’s choices have been in this balance between engagement and distance. The instability in public finances, uncertainties about the succession process and the semi-stalled Constitutional reform process all raise concerns regarding whether the “right” institutions have been supported and make it difficult to judge the extent to which this support has contributed to institutional reforms and organisational and human resource development processes that will prove to be sustainable.

On the positive side, social sector ministries are starting to regain some capacity to provide services. Swedish support has made a significant contribution to ensuring that parts of Zimbabwe’s once proud, overwhelmingly nationally-financed social service systems remain in place –after being on the brink of total collapse at the start of the strategy period. Electoral institutions are stronger, and have the potential of supporting future steps towards more democratic processes if the political powers accept this. Working through existing capacity development institutions for, e.g., training midwives at existing schools and retraining doctors at medical schools, has been important to send a message that Zimbabwe needs to take a lead in retaining and enhancing its own human resources. Incentives for staff retention in schools and health facilities may remain reliant on Swedish (and other donor) funding, but the channeling of this support through government structures has fostered ownership and commitment. Enrolment statistics indicate that Zimbabweans are prepared to make great sacrifices to send their children to school and therefore are likely to hold their government to account for providing reasonable standards of education.

There is a strong culture of paying for water and sanitation services, and systems are in place for revenue collection, which bodes well for future sustainability in this sector. However, it is unclear whether these revenues are being ring-fenced in local councils. Unicef is assessing this area, which will be essential for long-term sustainability. This is an example of an area where the search for sustainability will require a focus on local political and institutional processes in the future. Humanitarian oriented programming of the international NGOs and the engineering and infrastructural rehabilitation focus of AfDB have been effective during the strategy period in increasing the supply of water, but sustainable management of these supplies will require a different focus.

There are some positive signs regarding willingness to cover costs of some Swedish financed initiatives, as exemplified by some local councils that are allocating their own resources for implementation of gender action plans. In a possible indication of ownership, the government has created a budget line for child protection support (even though no funds have been allocated yet). The Unicef supported child pre-trial diversion programme is receiving 25% of its funding from the government. Also, as noted above, ownership of service provision has increased dramatically since the elections due to government recognition that these services can contribute to their legitimacy (and as there is no longer a risk that they will contribute to the legitimacy of the opposition).

Another area that is promising is the growing acceptance by government of the need to draw on the resources of civil society and find synergies. Swedish support has been well placed in this regard. Examples include Government-CSO collaboration in implementing the Child Protection Programme facilitated by Unicef, ZEC engagement with ZESN for voter education, parliamentary commissions requesting technical support for drafting legislation to align with the Constitution, and UNFPA linking CSO awareness-raising and social/health services.

On the negative side, public financial capacity to sustain advances in staff retention is currently shrinking. Intentions to reduce Unicef direct financing of the Ministry of Health by 25% per year have not been realised. The government remains reliant on medicines purchased by Unicef and others. Rhetorical references are being made to the need for public-private-partnerships, but policies such as parts of ZIMASSET are in many cases oriented towards a return to reliance on a large state bureaucracy and there are no clear policies in place for public-private-partnerships.

Public commitments to continuing reforms are also uncertain. There are mixed signals from ZANU-PF regarding commitments to move forward in the Constitutional reform process, which casts doubt on the extent to which the participatory process will be maintained. One interviewee referred to the constitutional reform process as being perceived by the public as “something that came and something that went”.

Culture Fund investments in the public libraries constitute a potentially sustainable contribution to public sector capacities to promote active citizenship and support national pride, but even here the sustainability will depend on government capacity to retain skilled staff and allocate resources to cover recurrent costs.

6.3 CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Overall, the review team judges that short-term and project specific CSO support has led to piecemeal initiatives with weak sustainability. CSOs feel that they have been used as means for project implementation tasks that are not always aligned with their own plans, priorities and preferred strategies.

Despite these problems, ownership and commitment to Zimbabwean development are strong among most of the CSOs interviewed. They recognise that their relationship to donors in general (including Sweden) has been less than ideal, and they acknowledge that the necessary ownership and sustainability mechanisms have not been built, but

pragmatism is strong. A lack of ownership is more obvious in some of the CSOs that are sub-grantees to for example CARE, UNFPA, YETT, and Diakonia. They are concerned about having to choose whether to adapt their identity and focus to prevailing donor agendas in order to ensure their organisational survival.

The media sector is currently at the centre of political struggles and uncertainties, with apparent conflicts between the Minister of Information and hardliners in the ZANU-PF. Sustainability of the processes supported by Sweden is therefore uncertain. Media partners have demonstrated impressive resilience in dealing with political set-backs over the years, but the prevailing tensions when this review is being drafted do not provide cause for optimism.

6.4 SUMMARY REGARDING SUSTAINABILITY

Indicator	Findings
Extent to which partners/projects are vision driven or donor driven; <i>signs of intrinsic commitment; voluntarism; initiatives and engagement beyond the agreed plans; readiness to reject support if donor agendas do not fit the vision; extent to which organisations have developed their own plans and results frameworks</i>	Serious problem with donor driven agenda in CSOs. The problems are due both to CSO approaches –not rejecting donor funding even when it is not helpful – and the way the Embassy has handled the CSO relationships using CSOs as means for implementation and not supporting them in their own right. Many partners are showing less energy and commitment in the wake of the election results, the stalled Constitutional process and the reduced funding from donors. However, there is still engagement and voluntarism, despite economic decline. Ownership is strong in media area where there is clear vision and commitment. Paradoxically the election led to the government taking more ownership, wanting to show capability.
Extent of government commitments (perhaps newly emerging) to covering recurrent costs of services diversified funding and resource mobilisation skills	Financial sustainability is weak despite some modest steps by government.
Legislative reforms undertaken to capitalise on the Constitutional reforms and improved capacities of institutions	Very slow. Some progress on strengthening capacities of a few institutions. No progress on legislation.

7 Findings: Gender

7.1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING

There have been systematic efforts by the Embassy in the past two years to encourage partners to mainstream gender equality in their programmes. This has led to the adoption of gender equality strategies in some partner organisations and to various measures to reach and include women. Interviews with partners revealed that these efforts were often interpreted as “having to add women specific activities”. Examples were handicrafts, child care, social services, study circles on agriculture, savings and lending for women, nutrition, family issues and SRHR. By adding such activities to the programme, the quota of women “beneficiaries” could increase. Very few programmes addressed obstacles in systems and structures, gender stereotypes or encouraged women participation in “male-dominated” activities.

Gender equality has thus not been comprehensively mainstreamed into the overall Swedish portfolio, but there are some good examples and evidence of attitudes changing. UNFPA, Gender Links and Women Coalition are the partners that have analysed and focused most on underlying causes of gender inequalities and also addressed them in a more systematic manner. This has not been part of a mainstreaming agenda, but rather the main focus of the initiatives. UNFPA has engaged CSOs that also address male norms and practices.

Due to weak reporting, it is difficult to gain an overview of the extent of gender mainstreaming. Some partners are almost unaware that this is a Swedish concern and report token or symbolic efforts at best. Gender reporting remains largely stuck in a focus on numbers of participants and beneficiaries without attention to the outcomes that are expected in terms of changes in norms, systems, attitudes and practices. Some partners recognise this weakness themselves and state that they would benefit from technical support to find new ways to analyse and report on gender outcomes.

7.2 INCLUSION OF MARGINALISED WOMEN AND ADDRESSING STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES

Unicef appears to have targeted marginalised women (and other marginalised populations) but efforts are hard to assess elsewhere in the portfolio as explicit targeting of marginalised women and the poorest sectors of the population has been weak.

Some initiatives have addressed underlying causes, structures and norms underpinning gender inequality (UNFPA, Gender Links and Women’s Coalition), but the focus is generally more on inclusion and empowerment of women within traditional gender roles. Girls and young women have been targeted in economic empowerment programming (mainly savings and lending), which is appropriate but the scale of the challenge suggests that a more comprehensive effort would be needed to achieve sig-

nificant outcomes. The UNFPA impact evaluation¹¹⁵ states that only 30% of the targeted women have been able to increase influence in the family.

Despite relative successes in engaging women in political processes at local level through Gender Links (reaching 21% women representation in targeted districts compared to 16% in non-targeted districts), general developments are discouraging. The increase of women in Parliament (to 34%) was only because of the quota system prescribed by the new Constitution. Few women “won” their seats. At local level (which was not mentioned in the Constitution) there was a decrease from 18% to 16 % women. A major obstacle exists in that partisan politics are reported to overshadow efforts to stress common gender concerns. The main obstacles are however the male dominated parties (less than 20 % women in most parties), where women have had difficulty competing for nominations and also struggling to combine politics with responsibilities at the family level.

7.3 SUMMARY REGARDING GENDER

Gender equality is increasingly being recognised as a fundamental issue by organisations that want to partner with Sweden. They struggle with its practical implementation. With some exceptions, focus is on empowerment of women within existing norms and structures rather than challenging the underlying causes of inequality. Reporting is mainly of numbers and percentages of women reached. Gender equality is still seen as a “women’s issue”, which has little to do with men.

Indicators	Findings
Visible gender inequality assessments in the problem/background analysis of programmes; special measures taken to address imbalances in form of e.g., deliberate changes in structures and systems, affirmative action, specific empowerment measures, etc.; extent to which the outcomes of these measures are reported on	Interviews show that there is increasing recognition of the importance of gender equality (at least in terms of Swedish funding requirements). There is evidence of deliberate efforts to include women in processes and programmes for example the quota system in the national political bodies, but these are mostly not challenging the underlying norms. Reporting from programmes still focuses on numbers only. There are extremely few analyses of the underlying cases of inequality in the project proposals. There is general recognition in descriptions that women are disadvantaged (but not why) and the response is often to set a quota (as there is no deeper analysis). For this reason many women activists are beginning to oppose quotas, and affirmative actions. Lasting changes will require changes in legislation and in the atti-

¹¹⁵ Impact Assessment of the Expanded Support Programme Zimbabwe, Health Partners International 2011

	tudes and practices of men and boys.
Aspects of programming that challenge existing structures, norms and practices favouring men; measures explicitly designed to empower/include the most marginalised women	Constitutionally yes, otherwise very little. Initiatives mainly focus on empowerment and inclusion of women – not addressing underlying causes. However, UNFPA, Gender Links and Women's Coalition are making progress.

8 Findings: Risk mitigation and anti-corruption efforts

8.1 RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

Looking at the portfolio as a whole the Embassy of Sweden has clearly taken major and high profile risks in supporting ZEC, COPAC, JOMIC, Zimfund, and the media programme. The staff have judged these risks well, and engaged at appropriate time to manage these risks. For the Embassy, working with regional organisations has been a way of mitigating risks in sensitive areas as they do not face the same level of risks as national partners and are somewhat safe from accusations of serving the interests of western countries. Given the continued contextual volatility, acceptance of the need to invest in high-risk programmes remains very relevant. The evaluation team judges that the amount of acceptable risk for Swedish development cooperation is a political rather than a technical decision. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not informed the Embassy of future intentions in this regard.

Awareness of risks in the political environment is strong among partners. The interviewees articulate clearly how they are actively strategizing to mitigate these risks. In particular, civil society and media organisations are focused on rethinking their approaches to and relations with government so as to avoid being seen as part of the political opposition. Instead they want to be seen as constructive but critical watchdogs and pluralistic service providers. There is a high degree of self-critical reflection on mistakes that were made in past partisan opposition, which generated their risks and reduced their legitimacy as independent and value-driven defenders of human rights principles.

Nonetheless, the prevailing political risks and uncertainties are enormous. CSOs and media organisations report a variety of practices to reduce or spread risks. Examples include storing digital files in the Cloud rather than on servers in offices that might be raided, hotlines to legal offices to arrange legal protection on short notice and external bank accounts.

In a broader perspective, beyond the risks faced by specific organisations and individuals, overarching risks relate to the prospects for maintaining the momentum of the Constitutional process, and broader impact if this process does not proceed. For example, it has become clear already that if the guarantees of press freedom in the new Constitution do not lead to legislative alignment, these reforms will have little

impact and media harassment will continue.¹¹⁶ Thus far there are few if any signs that such alignment is high on the political agenda.

Interviewees express awareness of risks that an economic recovery may not materialise, but in future plans there is sometimes uneven recognition of the extent to which economic deterioration may derail plans. There are apparent difficulties in reconciling the prevailing narratives about Zimbabwe’s “wealth”, with measures to deal with the current severe economic downturn and the uncertainty about how long it may continue. Several interviewees mentioned that they were eager to refocus their work more on social and economic rights (rather than civil and political rights) as they perceive that the majority of the population is more concerned with services that support their livelihoods than political issues. However, the risks inherent in promoting economic rights through measures such as credit provision during a severe economic downturn are rarely raised.¹¹⁷

Few of those interviewed noted readiness to focus on measures to deal with climate change, recurrent droughts (e.g., the El Niño predicted for the coming year) and other natural hazards. This may be related to the current sectors and partners supported by the Embassy. The evaluation team interviewed only one agency involved with agricultural development (We Effect), for example. As noted above, there are discussions within the UN system regarding an enhanced focus on “resilience”, but the implications of this concept have not been fully explored. The World Bank makes explicit reference to natural hazards and the risks associated with climate change in the plans for Zimref, and one of the three windows for programming is devoted to resilience. However, the measures by which investments will be assessed to ensure that these risks are mitigated remain unclear and overwhelmingly stress technical solutions (primarily irrigation) that do not appear to be anchored in analyses of the institutional constraints or measures that could reach populations that are most vulnerable to drought (e.g., those for which irrigation is not a viable option).

8.2 PERCEPTIONS OF ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES

It was beyond the scope of this evaluation to assess the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures, but interviews explored the perceptions of partners regarding whether they felt that their systems were sufficient and if Swedish support in these areas was appropriate. It is clear that most partners have thought through how to fight

¹¹⁶ This is exemplified by continuing arrests of journalists justified by existing legal frameworks that have yet to be aligned with the provisions of the new Constitution.

¹¹⁷ One informant noted weak uptake of Danida credit offerings, which may suggest lessons in this regard.

potential corruption in their organisations. Some partners expressed eagerness for more capacity development in this area. There is a general appreciation that the Embassy of Sweden accepts that its partners need to build on their own systems adapted to their own organisations, rather than adopting standardised measures to meet donor demands.

The one programme where anti-corruption efforts have been a major focus has been in the media support. Without pressure from the Embassy, the partners have themselves recognised that “brown envelopes” constitute a major obstacle to enhancing the quality and credibility of the media. Self-regulation and open discussions of ethics have been important and apparently relevant entry-points to address an issue that is widespread across the African continent (and elsewhere).

In addition to the issues related to internal corruption, some interviewees drew attention to concerns about how Zimbabwe’s natural resource wealth and economic potential more generally may attract “sharks” looking for quick profits through short-term and shady investments. There is widespread distrust about whether these investments (together with reported corruption associated with some Chinese investments) will make a genuine and sustainable contribution to Zimbabwean development.

8.3 SUMMARY REGARDING RISK MITIGATION AND ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS

Risk mitigation

- Even if formal risk management matrices are not in place it is clear that partners are highly risk aware and are proactive in risk management
- The most important approach to risk management for CSOs and the media is that of assuming a more pragmatic relationship with the government and moving away from partisan politics
- Within the Swedish portfolio there is little evidence of a focus on responding to climatic risks
- The overarching hazards of radical economic decline and political upheaval are recognised by partners, but there is little that can be done to manage these risks

Anti-corruption

- Partners are conscious of the importance of anti-corruption measures and are positive to support from the Embassy to strengthen systems
- Partners appreciate Sweden’s commitments to building on existing systems and not imposing additional donor requirements
- Corruption within the exploitation of Zimbabwe’s natural resources constitutes a meta-corruption risk

9 Conclusions

9.1 OVERARCHING CONCLUSIONS

The Embassy of Sweden is justifiably proud of their contribution to the work of the GNU and the Constitutional process in particular, as well as in making major contributions to basic service provision. The strategy has provided a degree of structure and sufficient flexibility for the process that led to these achievements. The Embassy has identified key actors within the UN and civil society (including regional organisations) that have been able to interact with the government systems and processes in a constructive manner, avoiding political obstacles. The Embassy has also taken a leading and effective role in donor coordination.

The one major caveat has been the approach to objective two, which has been consistently described as being problematic in Embassy reporting. The lack of guidance and practical indicators has made it difficult for staff to interpret the Swedish policy and strategic objectives regarding civil society. This has led to a somewhat fragmented and unclear relationship with CSOs. The Embassy's (partially justifiable) distrust of the representativeness and political impartiality of civil society organisations has led to a focus on using these organisations primarily as implementing organisations for Swedish aid. The Embassy has primarily enhanced the capacity of a few strong organisations, rather than supporting "pluralism" and "vibrancy". In sum, engagement with civil society has not reflected the overall vision suggested in the strategy.

The Embassy of Sweden has managed a rather vague strategy in a dynamically changing context. Lessons have emerged that can inform a future strategy. Hopefully this evaluation can inform the process ahead. Sweden and its partners have a strong position to make a significant and relevant contribution to Zimbabwean development in the future if political and economic conditions improve. If they deteriorate, there are good capacities in place to fall back on an effective and efficient quasi-humanitarian role.

Sweden is not alone in terms of uncertainty about how (and if it will be possible) to build on the positive developments of recent years given the prevailing political and economic risks and the slowing of the Constitutional reform process. It is important that this uncertainty does not lead to complacency. Sweden could use its dialogue role to engage with the EU or likeminded donors to revive joint donor strategizing.

Finally, the current portfolio includes relatively limited experience in economic development and empowerment, but it is obvious that the Embassy, the government, CSOs and other partners all see this as a priority for the future. Based on admittedly limited evidence, the evaluation team concludes that there are some entry points that can be built on from this initial experience, notably support for a more predictable and well regulated business environment, clarity on land use and ownership, accessi-

bility to water, markets and jobs for the poor (especially youth and women), potential of building on the roles of local authorities (perhaps within public-private-partnerships) and the need for addressing uncertainties about how to work with the economic rights of marginalised and vulnerable populations.

9.2 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO THE OECD/DAC CRITERIA

This section presents conclusions based on the revised evaluation questions agreed upon in the inception report (annex two).

9.2.1 Effectiveness and impact

Even if outcome reporting is very weak among many partners, the evaluation encountered a clear understanding among most interviewees of the changes they were working towards in attitudes, practices and norms. Success in achieving outcomes has been most apparent where the Embassy has engaged with appropriate interlocutors who have been capable of convening a pluralistic set of actors to promote institutional reform and to re-establish services. Strong entry points have been found to retain and enhance local-level service provision despite political turmoil in Harare. In general, the engagement and mobilisation of local institutions for training and Embassy collaboration with regional capacity development organisations have been effective. Swedish actors with strong local understanding have also been invaluable partners.

Furthermore, the Embassy has taken an effective stance by using a relatively soft but principled approach to promoting governance reforms, recognising the room for manoeuvre of partners and focusing on institutional reforms rather than political agendas. In fact, the relatively vague nature of the strategy has in many respects been a success factor in that it has provided the Embassy with the needed space for iteratively assessing the changing situation and identifying appropriate entry points.

Failures can be associated with inability to identify points of leverage to move from outputs to outcomes and broader malaise in the international community over the past year. Also, it has been difficult to discern outcomes leading to a “transition beyond the transition”. This is not a failure of the Embassy itself, but in terms of readiness for the future strategy it is clear that effective programming will require greater realism regarding the mixed prospects for “normal” development processes in the near to mid-term future.

9.2.2 Efficiency

The modalities used during the strategy period have been largely appropriate in terms of addressing governance without directly engaging with the government. This is a significant achievement, and reflects the careful choice of modalities. Some even relatively problematic channels have achieved impressive results, albeit requiring significant effort from the Embassy. Where partners have been strong, the Embassy

has been able to channel a significant scale of support in appropriate ways without undue demands for close steering efforts.

By contrast, efficiency has been weaker in some aspects of the CSO portfolio where there has not been a clear structure for engagement or vision regarding roles and outcomes. This has been particularly problematic in the very important youth sector. This lack a coherent structure for CSO support has created significant and unnecessary transaction costs for both the Embassy and the CSO partners.

The evaluation team attributes much of the success of the media programme to the extensive experience of FOJO in Zimbabwe and in politically difficult contexts. Caution is needed in extrapolating this finding to other Swedish public agencies. Past reviews have found that Swedish public agencies are often strong in narrower technical assistance, but are may be weaker in dealing with politically complex and uncertain developing country contexts.¹¹⁸

9.2.3 Relevance

Proactive but “soft” efforts to influence partners have been relevant for working towards Swedish policies related to human rights and gender equality. However, the process of understanding and addressing underlying causes of inequality is yet to be developed among most partners.

Service provision investments have maintained a contextually relevant balance between humanitarian needs and steps towards enhancing the accountability of duty bearers. A degree of “supply driven” programming was relevant during a period when a humanitarian crisis prevailed, but greater attention to the perspectives of the poor is needed to retain relevance in the current context.

Experience has shown that culture can be a relevant vehicle for achieving human rights outcomes, but the Culture Fund does not include sufficiently explicit commitments to human rights norms and freedom of expression. There are other culture actors that have more focus on these issues.

In the view of the evaluation team, the portfolio has found an appropriate combination of provision of services and the development of Zimbabwean capacities to provide these services in the future, while largely avoiding undue endorsement of the legitimacy of actors responsible for human rights abuses.

9.2.4 Sustainability

It is too early to judge the extent to which the capacities enhanced with Swedish support will prove sustainable, either organisationally or financially. In terms of the sus-

¹¹⁸ Christoplos et al 2013; Christoplos et al 2014

tainability of the organisational and institutional reforms, there is cause for cautious optimism. Regarding financial sustainability of the institutions and services developed (e.g. to pay maintenance, medicines and the salaries needed to retain human resources), the prospects are somewhat bleaker. Limited success can be noted in increasing government capacities to retain staff and continue reforms. Government commitments to continuing the reform process and taking over recurrent costs have been mixed.

9.3 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO OTHER STRATEGIC CRITERIA

9.3.1 Gender equality

There are few signs that the efforts to mainstream gender equality across the portfolio have been successful (apart from organisations that have this as their main objective). Although many partners have committed themselves to certain targets in terms of number of women participants, the underlying causes of inequality and structural obstacles are not in focus. Very little is reported regarding measures taken to engage with LGBTI issues in Zimbabwe. With the notable exception of some aspects of the Constitution-making process, the Gender Links efforts at local level and the Women's Coalition advocacy, insufficient attention has been given to analyse and address underlying causes of inequality and to changing the systems, structures and norms that stand in the way of gender equality. There is however an awareness and a felt pressure among many partners to improve and do more.

9.3.2 Risk and Anti-corruption

Sweden's CSO and media partners are very conscious of the risks they face. A new relationship with the government is recognised as necessary to encourage reforms that will reduce risk, and also for these organisations to avoid becoming irrelevant (and unfunded) in the new political landscape.

There is CSO unease about emerging risks related to the changing perspectives and priorities of the donors. Some CSOs fear that donors are shifting their priorities to support strong service providers (often international), while human rights defenders and local membership based advocacy organisations may lose out.

The World Bank judges the risk of a deterioration of the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe to be low.¹¹⁹ This review is less optimistic about the future, but does not view it as appropriate for Sweden to pull back from developmental commit-

¹¹⁹ World Bank 2014

ments, as this could aggravate the current situation and undermine the progress that has been made.

The current portfolio does not include initiatives that are specifically directed at responding to climate risks, but if future efforts include a focus on economic development, this will become an important aspect to consider. Given the extent to which environmental factors are entwined in the political economy of rural development in Zimbabwe, caution is needed regarding possible technical or infrastructural investments in these areas.

The Embassy has taken an appropriate stance on working to prevent corruption. Embassy dialogue with partners is seen to support (rather than replace) their existing systems and efforts. However, in a broader perspective corruption and patronage relations are becoming more prevalent in Zimbabwean society.

10 Lessons learnt

The major lessons learnt during the strategy period are:

- Investing in building relationships with strategic UN and regional actors is important in risky environments. An acceptable relationship with government can be maintained via such intermediaries. Indirect Swedish support keeps doors open for the future.
- Using the UN as an intermediary and joint donor mechanism can be effective in conflict situations, even when these agencies are weak.
- Using CSOs as a means to implement projects, rather than engaging with these organisations' own visions and strategies, disempowers CSOs and generates unsustainable outcomes. Short-term project funding can aggravate these problems.
- The experience of the media support programme shows the benefits of long-term support channelled through a politically astute peer partner; lessons that could be applied to developing a more strategic approach to civil society development.
- Core support to Unicef and UN Coordination has demonstrated how a strong commitment to broader systemic outcomes for rights holders rather than just trying to reach a set group of “beneficiaries” (as has been the norm in the donor community) is possible even in a crisis situation. Furthermore, this stance may have been a way to maintain greater trust and respect than most donors among government institutions, qualities that may lead to more effective programming and more open dialogue in the future.
- Social/economic and political/civil rights are interdependent. Overwhelmingly focusing on political/civil rights (as was done during the strategy period) can alienate the poor and marginalised population from the human rights agenda.
- There are major challenges in rethinking strategic objectives and direction in a country with huge potential and but where there are also major risks of reforms stalling and even regressing.
- Calls for a “resilience” focus are attractive in a volatile context, but it can be difficult to discern the content behind these rhetorical labels.

11 Recommendations

The following recommendations for a future strategy are based on a working assumption of modest to good improvement in the political context. Given the uncertainties of the succession process, and the current serious liquidity crisis and deterioration in the economic situation, such assumptions cannot be taken for granted. If there is a radical deterioration in the political and/or economic situation, this may require a very different strategy, the nature of which the evaluation team is not in a position to propose. Nonetheless, the Embassy should consider undertaking an assessment of these risks and the relevant “surge capacities” of existing partners so as to be ready to take a different approach if such deterioration should occur.

11.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The next country strategy should reflect a more explicit and clear-cut focus on political/civil and economic and social rights respectively. The evaluation recommends a four-point strategy structured on the following objectives:

1. The Constitutional alignment is progressing in an inclusive and participatory manner (i.e., commissions, legislation, policy and practice)
2. Duty bearers capacitated to more effectively deliver basic social services in the area of educational rights and health rights, especially SRHR
3. Improved access to employment, livelihoods and food security, especially for young men and women and marginalised groups
4. Civil society and the media, representing the voice of rights holders, have stronger capacity to contribute to and monitor the above three objectives

11.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRIORITIES, PROCESSES AND MODALITIES

It should be noted that the proposed objectives, except for the third, are well anchored in the partnerships and processes in the current strategy. A separate set of recommendations related to objective three is presented in section 11.3 below. The evaluation recommends that the Embassy of Sweden builds on the current portfolio as follows:

- More deliberate and explicit efforts are needed to work in a rights based manner and from the perspectives of the poor. Part of this should be conscious effort to move away from a “supply driven” agenda, funding provision of basic

services, to instead refocus on the perspectives of the poor in what will hopefully be a post-crisis environment.

- Sweden's investment in dialogue on gender equality has started to pay off with some partners. A continued and consistent effort should be made to ensure that programming is based on explicit analyses of the underlying causes of inequality. Women and girls should not only be included to balance beneficiary/participant lists. Deliberate measures should be taken to ensure meaningful participation and influence of women in programmes.
- Zimbabwean women's and LGBTI movements should be supported strategically to challenge discriminating gender norms and intolerance of LGBTI persons, especially at local levels.
- Future support to cultural rights and cultural expression should be designed so as to more explicitly reflect the strategic objectives.
- Readiness is needed to deal with an uncertain and volatile context through scenario planning, close monitoring of political, economic and environmental risks, and partnerships with agencies that have a "surge capacity" to deal with emerging crises.
- In the present uncertain situation, it would be wise to continue to engage with the government processes via UN agencies, international finance institutions and joint EU efforts. Sweden, perhaps together with the EU delegation, could take on a leading role in promoting coordination and human rights based approaches in these fora (especially in safeguarding the rights of women, poor and marginalised groups in private and public sector development, along with accountability and transparency of processes).
- There should be a continued and even more explicit focus on services anchored in local governments and local governance. The uncertainties at central level and the needs at local level indicate the importance of maintaining momentum where services reach the population and where there has been significant success in finding ways to pragmatically overcome government-civil society polarisation.
- The EU is developing "road-maps" for civil society engagement. It is important that Sweden actively takes part in these processes to promote the role of civil society as voice and self-help means for poor and marginalised groups – not only as implementers of services. Support to CSOs should be based on a shared vision for their mission and future role in Zimbabwean society.
- There is a need for more deliberate and strategic choice of modalities when engaging with CSOs. The choice must be based on an analysis of available options and the pros and cons with each modality.¹²⁰ The choice should also

¹²⁰ see annex five

reflect synergies with the regional programme, the CIVSAM programme and the Special Fund for Democracy. The Embassy should aim at having a mix of modalities that provide different benefits and risk levels. We suggest that the Embassy develops a CSO portfolio that divides the funding in four types of modalities:

- Channelling funds through thematic umbrellas or intermediaries (with thematic expertise, ability to manage grants and develop capacity of CSO partners – both thematically and programmatically). This modality has potential to reach smaller, local interest organisations and still keep a rather close partnership with the Embassy. Other likeminded donors could be invited to join.
- Providing strategic, direct support to selected partners, where the Embassy may benefit and learn from the direct relationship. These partners could be, for example, national level watchdog organisations, think tanks or partners with innovative methods.
- Joint donor CSO funding arrangements to enable CSOs to access long term, basket funding for core and programme costs. To avoid risks that such a fund could become too donor driven, the Embassy should engage in steering mechanisms to promote local ownership of ToR formulation as well as transparent and accessible processes (also to local interest groups that need to build capacity - and not only to the already strong).
- Channelling funds through regional organisations in sensitive areas (such as LGBTI and civil and political rights), when these organisations can prove relevance for and strong networks in Zimbabwe.
- Working through umbrellas and joint funding mechanisms are obviously attractive for reducing the Embassy workload and have proven effective when managed by a strong partner (e.g., Diakonia, FOJO), but should be used with caution to ensure that intermediary organisations add value to capacity development and coordinated efforts, and are not only structures to reduce risks and transaction costs in management of contracts and funds. Using Swedish organisations as intermediaries can provide benefits for the Embassy in terms of shared values and objectives, but may have negative implications for local ownership and sustainability.
- In looking for ways to support capacity development the Embassy should explore structures for capacity development that build on past success (e.g., training of midwives with Unicef support) and new opportunities (e.g., rehabilitation of vocational training institutions). It is increasingly inappropriate to fund ad hoc training provided through CSO projects.
- It is widely recognised that the capacity development efforts need to focus more on youth (particularly girls), including (a) their economic opportunities, (b) their voice in societal change and peace-building, and c) their right to protection, health and education.
- The strategy period includes only two major experiences of support channelled through Swedish organisations. Greater engagement of the Swedish re-

source base is possible, but the evidence from this review is not sufficient for proposing wide-ranging approaches for the future. Nonetheless, the experience of poorly coordinated funding mechanisms involving the Embassy and CIVSAM suggests that a first priority should be to address existing coordination problems between Stockholm and Harare.

- The Embassy should continue to work actively with partners to instil an understanding of the importance of outcome focused reporting. Specific efforts should be made to ensure that UN agencies take action to improve the quality of their monitoring and evaluation systems.

11.3 RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RIGHTS

This evaluation has not included significant data collection on economic development and related issues, as this has been a small aspect of the current strategy. Given that this is a clear priority for the future, some tentative recommendations are presented here which suggest areas to build on the current portfolio to work towards economic development. Pursuance of the third objective proposed in 11.1 above would require a concerted effort (perhaps in collaboration with the World Bank or relevant think tanks) to analyse private sector and agricultural development trends and priorities for inclusive economic development. Links between livelihoods/food security and nutrition may also emerge as an important issue.

- The Embassy should comprehensively assess opportunities to support economic rights of different marginalised groups (e.g., communal farmers, persons with disabilities, etc.) within the perspectives of the poor. The unique political economy of Zimbabwe suggests caution regarding standard economic development models or technical solutions (e.g., credit, irrigation), especially to avoid naivety vis-à-vis political factors and dangers of exclusion.
- Though as yet little explored, an emphasis on the role of local authorities in economic development (e.g., through monitoring and promoting pro-poor investments, providing business development and agricultural advisory services or considering the implications of public-private-partnerships) would seem highly relevant and could build on the lessons about local engagement from the current strategy.
- In order to reach marginal communities it is advisable to reassess the rural-urban mix in the portfolio and reconsider engagement in sectors that can reach those populations that are poorest and most at risk. The political focus of the current strategy and the existing partners has led to a degree of urban bias. Explicit steps would be needed if efforts were to focus on economic rights for the most marginal populations in the future, one aspect of which should be resilience in the face of climatic risk. Support to Zimref in this regard should only be considered after a thorough analysis of the extent to which intended

investments priorities (i.e., irrigation) are likely to benefit marginal population given institutional constraints and environmental conditions.

- Efforts to improve the business and investment environment should include support to predictable regulatory systems that are informed by human rights principles.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference (final) – Review of ”Strategy for Swedish aid initiatives in Zimbabwe January 2011 – December 2013”.

Background:

Swedish international cooperation with Zimbabwe is governed by a cooperation strategy which was adopted in July 2011. Initially it was valid from January 2011 up to December 2012 but was later extended up to December 2014.

In the aftermath of the violent elections 2008/2009 a political compromise, the Global Political Agreement, was signed in February 2009. Up to the elections 31 July 2013 Zimbabwe was ruled by a coalition government, GNU, Government of National Unity. It is within this context the Embassy of Sweden wants to review the results during a three year period (2011-2013).

The overarching objective of Sweden's aid effort in Zimbabwe is a democratic development characterized by respect for human rights. Support to democratic development, measureable impact and results, cooperation with other donors and focused contributions are supposed to be the guiding principles for Sweden's assistance.

The objectives of Swedish aid initiatives are as follows:

4. The development of transparent and democratic institutions, free and independent media and institutions working to promote increased respect for human rights.
5. A growing democratic, vibrant and pluralistic civil society in which people organize themselves freely in political or other activities, and promote increased respect for human rights.
6. Greater access to basic social services for vulnerable groups and individuals

Purpose of the assignment:

A) evaluate the effectiveness, cost efficiency and aspects of relevance and sustainability of the programme.

B) provide input to the Embassy for its preparation of results proposals within the framework of a new strategy on Sweden's reengagement with Zimbabwe. It is expected that the Swedish government will decide on a new strategy later this year.

Scope of the assignment:

Assessment shall be made primarily for programmes with activities during the period January 2011-December 2013 regardless of the formal agreement periods.

This review will take stock of evaluations and reviews which have been carried out of programmes as well as results described in regular reports from partners and the Embassy during 2011-2013.

Methodology:

The assignment needs to have different phases:

- 1) desk study of the strategy, relevant project documents, reports, evaluations, reviews as well as other documents deemed pertinent for the assignment. Of special relevance is the regular results reporting from the Embassy to Sida/Hq (nowadays called U1, U2, U3).
- A.
- 2) In-depth evaluation of some programmes, (See issues to be covered below) representing the three pillars of the strategy but otherwise independently and randomly selected.
- B.
- 3) Interviews with Embassy staff, cooperation partners, donor colleagues and multilateral organisations. If possible the interviews could be complemented with field visits.

Issues to be covered:

A) Effectiveness. The analysis should primarily focus on the outcome level and the questions listed below.

1. Assess whether the interventions selected above have reached their objectives. Which interventions were successful in terms of development results, which failed, general factors for success or failures?
2. To what extent have the interventions *contributed* to attaining the objectives of the strategy?

B) Efficiency. Assess the efficiency of the different aid modalities in Zimbabwe managed by the Embassy

C) Relevance. Assess the relevance of the interventions in relation to needs and priorities for Zimbabwe during the reviewed period.

D) Sustainability. To what extent are the results of the interventions assessed sustainable -not only financially but also institutionally?

Cross cutting issues:

The review is expected to follow up generically on the following strategic issues:

- To what extent has “gender” been mainstreamed in the programmes?
- Have identified risks been sufficient mitigated?
- How have anti-corruption measures been taken?

Time frame and reporting:

The assignment is expected to be implemented during the period 1 April – 30 June 2014.

A draft report should be presented to the Embassy of Sweden no later than 31 May 2014. Inputs from the Embassy to the draft report should be made by 10 June and the final report submitted to the Embassy no later than 1 July 2014.

Except for an executive summary, the report shall contain a section on conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations.

It is expected that the consultants share the preliminary findings in a debriefing seminar with the staff at the Embassy of Sweden before leaving Zimbabwe.

Budget:

The budget shall include fees and reimbursable costs. The levels of the fees shall be in accordance with those stated in the framework agreement. The proportion between fees and reimbursable costs should be realistic and cost-efficient.

Annex 2: Inception Report

Inception Report

Review of the Strategy for Swedish aid initiatives in Zimbabwe January 2011 – December 2013

1. Executive Summary

The evaluation will review the current Strategy for Swedish aid initiatives in Zimbabwe (2011-2013). The strategy, now extended to the end of 2014, was adopted in the aftermath of the violent elections 2008/2009 when a political compromise, the Global Political Agreement, was signed in February 2009. During the strategy period, the objectives of Swedish aid initiatives have been as follows:

7. Development of transparent and democratic institutions, free and independent media and institutions working to promote increased respect for human rights.
8. A growing democratic, vibrant and pluralistic civil society in which people organize themselves freely in political or other activities, and promote increased respect for human rights.
9. Greater access to basic social services for vulnerable groups and individuals.

The aim of the evaluation is to:

- c) “Evaluate the effectiveness, cost efficiency and aspects of relevance and sustainability of the Swedish programme
- d) Provide input to the Embassy for its preparation of results proposals¹²¹ within the framework of a new strategy on Sweden’s reengagement with Zimbabwe. It is expected that the Swedish government will decide on a new strategy later this year”

¹²¹ Proposals to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs regarding the future strategy

The period under review has seen great contextual changes and the evaluation is being undertaken at a time when the future “goal posts” for development cooperation and the rules for (re)engagement with the state are being reconsidered, but remain unclear. As such, it is important to see the evaluation as contributing to learning about options for the future, rather than judging alignment with a clear-cut path during the period of the strategy. The evaluation will mainly be a tool for reflection on overall strategic performance, coherence and relevance of the Swedish interventions and for taking a fresh look at outcomes in relation to the two perspectives and cross-cutting issues. The evaluation should not be seen as a « shortcut » for collecting empirical and rigorously verifiable data on results across the portfolio.

This inception report outlines the proposed methods for data generation, analysis and learning. Between May 10 and June 7, the following will be done:

- *Desk review and initial discussions with the Embassy.* The team will seek up-to date information on poverty and development parameters to underpin the relevance analysis and provide an appropriate basis for discussions on future options. Previous evaluations and annual reports will also be analysed. A set of preliminary indicators (presented in annex 1) will be used to discuss outcomes under each objective. These indicators will also provide a basis for assessing the application of a human rights based approach, gender equality measures, anti-corruption efforts and risk analyses.
- *Case studies, representing the three objectives and the main modalities used* (UN agencies, international financial institutions, international CSOs, Zimbabwean CSOs). These will provide more in-depth information on results and processes supported by Sweden as well as strengths and weaknesses of these channels and modalities. The case studies will also be used to refine and reflect upon the preliminary indicators.
- *Stakeholder led analysis of sectoral objectives.* Building on the findings of the case studies the team will convene focal group and individual interviews with stakeholders engaged in interventions within the three strategic objectives to further discuss the role, outcomes and processes of the Swedish aid. The team will also engage with government actors who can be deemed as indirect stakeholders given their collaboration with the direct partners to Swedish development cooperation.
- *Modality analysis.* In all the cases special attention will be paid to the influence of the given modalities on performance. Two additional cases will look particularly at modality issues. Interviews with programme officers will be used to reveal their experience and perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of the modalities. Considerable attention will be paid to how these modalities are perceived by the partner organisations to have affected both ability to expand services and achieve reforms, and also the relevance of the modalities for fostering capacity development.
- *Reflections from external experts.* Here we will seek the opinion on the role, outcomes and processes of the Swedish interventions from other donors and international organisations, CSO networks, and researchers.

- *End of mission workshop with the Embassy.* Preliminary findings will be discussed and questions arising from the various meetings and interviews during the mission will be brought forward. Proposals from staff on options for the future will be captured.

In the second phase from June 7 to July 4, the team will analyse data, make supplementary interviews (if needed), and draft the evaluation report. The Embassy will then be given a two week period to reflect on the draft and engage in dialogue with the evaluation team. Between July 18 and July 31 the team will finalise the report.

2. Assessment of Scope of the Evaluation

Our understanding of the Purpose and Scope of the Assignment

The evaluation will review the current Strategy for Swedish aid initiatives in Zimbabwe (2011-2013). The strategy, now extended to the end of 2014, was adopted in the aftermath of the violent elections 2008/2009 when a political compromise, the Global Political Agreement, was signed in February 2009. Up to the elections in 31 July 2013, Zimbabwe was ruled by a coalition Government of National Unity (GNU). Since the elections the government has been again led by ZANU-PF. It is within the context of the aspirations and challenges for this political transitional period that the evaluation will be framed. At the start of the strategy period, Zimbabwe was in many respects seen to be at risk of becoming a “fragile state”. Since then the political situation has stabilised and gross and large-scale human rights abuses have diminished significantly. However, the expected transition towards more stable and effective democratic institutions is slow and the overall poverty has worsened. Some of the conditions for conventional development cooperation have not been achieved and some ambivalence remains regarding engagement with the government. The evaluation is being undertaken at a time when the future direction for development cooperation and the rules for (re)engagement with the state are being reconsidered, but remain unclear. As such, it is important to see the evaluation as contributing to learning about options for the future, rather than judging alignment with a clear-cut path during the period of the strategy.

During the strategy period, the objectives of Swedish aid initiatives have been as follows:

1. Development of transparent and democratic institutions, free and independent media and institutions working to promote increased respect for human rights.
2. A growing democratic, vibrant and pluralistic civil society in which people organize themselves freely in political or other activities, and promote increased respect for human rights.
3. Greater access to basic social services for vulnerable groups and individuals.

We judge that it is important that the evaluation approaches these objectives with an acknowledgement that the context has not improved as hoped for. In this situation it will be important to assess the flexibility of approaches and the partner organisations themselves, including their ability to address emerging challenges and mitigate risks.

According to the ToRs, the aims of the evaluation are to:

- e) “Evaluate the effectiveness, cost efficiency and aspects of relevance and sustainability of the Swedish programme
- f) Provide input to the Embassy for its preparation of results proposals within the framework of a new strategy on Sweden’s reengagement with Zimbabwe. It is expected that the Swedish government will decide on a new strategy later this year”

In a review of an overall country strategy in a turbulent context such as this, it is important to recognise that outcomes (i.e. changes in attitudes, norms and practices) need to be judged with a focus on the relevance and realism in relation to the context. The review will also consider the extent to which the portfolio has reflected the strategic priorities of the GNU, its commitments to international human rights treaties, and the new strategies and constitutional reform processes under the current government.

3. Relevance and Evaluability of Evaluation Questions

3.1 Evaluability of the evaluation questions

3.1.1 Effectiveness

At the start of the strategy period the focus was mainly on strengthening of democratic institutions, enhancing respect for human rights, developing capacities in civil society and ensuring some basic service provision. At the end of the strategy period it appears that emphasis is shifting to a broader capacity development effort with greater emphasis on creating conditions for economic recovery and development.

Review of the documentation made available thus far suggests that a systematic review of outcomes will be difficult for three reasons: (a) data is scarce as relatively few initiatives have been evaluated and some of the evaluations have not looked at outcomes; (b) the varied nature of the initiatives in the portfolio make meaningful synthesis problematic; and (c) some of the programmes have not been operational for long and/or have been slow in starting, making it difficult to assess outcomes at this stage.

As will be described below, the evaluation process will be focused more on generating a discussion among programme officers at the Embassy and partners regarding the de facto outcomes with a strong emphasis on plausible contribution to the strategy objectives.

Assessment of factors related to success and failure in achieving outcomes will be taken up in the conclusion of the evaluation. It appears likely that these will be related to the changing context, the efficiency of the modalities, and possible shifts in the focus of the portfolio. . The effectiveness of capacity development efforts will be assessed in light of current knowledge about the importance and challenges of capacity development in fragile states.¹²²

3.1.2 Efficiency

The analysis of efficiency will emphasise analyses of strength, weaknesses and fit for purpose of the different funding modalities used by the Embassy. For the purposes of this evaluation we define modalities as *the various institutional structures, organisational channels and procedures used in the engagement with the final operational partners*. The modalities in the portfolio emphasise different multilateral channels and civil society organisations (Swedish, International and Zimbabwean). The evaluation team recognises that this is an important feature of a review in a context where, due to sanctions and overall concerns about how to engage with the state, the nature of these modalities is central. It is suggested that the evaluation looks at: (a) modalities for capacity development of key institutions and CSOs; (b) modalities for voice and participation of citizens, especially marginalised populations (empowerment of rights holders, right to objective information); (c) alternative service providers and modalities to reach local service providers; and (d) modalities for managing an appropriate engagement with line ministry actors and local government.

The evaluation team will seek to understand what constitutes an appropriate engagement with the government (level and form) in light of the sanctions and the need to engage with government to respond to maintain basic services while moving away from humanitarian modalities. The ability of key partners to balance and combine conflict sensitivity and a clear stance on democracy and human rights will also be discussed.¹²³ The evaluation will also look at the extent to which the demands of managing these modalities are congruent with the capacities at the Embassy and the policies underpinning Swedish development cooperation.

Another factor that the review will consider is the potential of these modalities to engage in different ways in the future to address issues that are not given priority in the current portfolio. The review will highlight evidence of where the current portfolio is

¹²² Christoplos, I, et al. 2014 (forthcoming), Capacity development literature review. UTV Working Papers.

¹²³ HRBA and Peace building, Sida 2012

already (perhaps indirectly) making contributions towards local economic development and private sector development or climate change adaptation. An example of this is in the support to community radio where demands for agricultural and business-related information appear to be prominent.

As noted in our proposal, the small size of the sample and the diversity of the modalities suggest that there will be need for caution in drawing firm, generalisable conclusions regarding the a given modality. It is expected, however, that the team will be able to draw strong lessons that can inform the future strategy.

3.1.3 Relevance

The evaluation team is currently in the process of collecting relevant documentation for a brief poverty and development assessment, referred to here as the “mini-PDA” (see annex 4). This will follow the general structure in the Sida guidelines for these reports, but will have more modest ambitions. The analysis of relevance will be made in relation to the findings of this “mini-PDA”. This aspect of the evaluation will pay particular attention to the dynamically changing context during the strategy period and the efforts of the Embassy to maintain relevance in relation to shifting challenges and opportunities.

The relevance analysis will also focus on the deliberate measures taken to apply human rights principles in programmes and processes. Being the fundamental value base of Swedish development cooperation, the following will be assessed:

- Measures to ensure non-discrimination/inclusion and participation of marginalised groups e.g. ethnic or political minorities, persons with disabilities, LGBTI persons, children and women.
- Measures taken to ensure, accountability and transparency in the country programme processes and partnerships.

The approaches taken to promote gender equality and address corruption (see below) will form a central part of this analysis.

Furthermore, within the analysis of relevance, the review will look at the extent to which programming has been conflict sensitive (particular in relation to potential discrimination and principles of “do no harm”). The extent to which initiatives have (or could) enhanced the capacity of the rural population to deal with the effects of climate change will also be considered. This may include the proven or potential capacities to scale-up service provision in response to extreme climate events.

3.1.4 Sustainability

Primary emphasis will be given to assessing institutional sustainability, i.e., the sustainability of the outcomes achieved in relation to changing attitudes, norms and practices. Special attention will be given to the ways that the strategy has been managed in order to enhance government capacities while avoiding strengthening the capacities of actors that are working to undermine human rights. The implications of the structures and spirit of the Global Political Agreement will be an important aspect of judg-

ing sustainability. This analysis will be informed by Indevelop's recently completed literature review on capacity development, which gives significant attention to very similar challenges faced in many fragile states.

3.1.5 Gender

The evaluation will look at gender equality in the following aspects (a) are gender inequality aspects visible in the problem/background analysis of programmes; (b) are special measures taken to address imbalances in form of e.g., deliberate changes in structures and systems, affirmative action, specific empowerment measures, etc.; and (c) how are the outcomes of these measures reported on. Programmes specifically designed to address gender inequality and/or empower women will be analysed for relevance in relation to (a) challenging of existing norms and practices favouring men; and (b) empowering/including the most marginalised women.

3.1.6 Risk mitigation.

It is suggested that this aspect be mainstreamed into the analysis as a whole (given the fundamental risks described above) and that the evaluation includes a summary analysis of risk mitigation efforts in the conclusion.

3.1.7 Anti-corruption efforts

As stated in our proposal, the evaluation will focus on partner perspectives regarding if and how the measures taken have been seen as constructive, transparent and applicable by the different partners. Analysis of anti-corruption efforts will be undertaken with attention paid to how the overall weak governance context generates particular challenges to address these risks in a sustainable and comprehensive manner. The evaluation will not be able to provide a complete analysis of the links between modalities and effective anti-corruption efforts, but will collect views on this where possible.

3.2 Recommendations Regarding Evaluation Questions

The following suggestions are made regarding reformulation of the evaluation issues in the ToRs to reflect the observations above and to be reformulated as questions:

A) Effectiveness. The analysis should primarily focus on the outcome level and the questions listed below.

1. Assess whether the interventions selected above have reached their objectives. Which interventions were successful in terms of development results, which failed, general factors for success or failures?

Proposal: What have been the outcomes of the portfolio in relation to the three strategic objectives (as noted above, success factors will be analysed in a broader perspective in the conclusions and lessons learnt)?

2. To what extent have the interventions *contributed* to attaining the objectives of the strategy?

Proposal: Has the Swedish aid portfolio been strategically structured so as to optimally contribute to the strategy objectives given the prevailing and changing context? In what way has the Embassy taken the lead or added value to other donor initiatives?

B) Efficiency. Assess the efficiency of the different aid modalities in Zimbabwe managed by the Embassy.

Proposal: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the different modalities/channels used in Zimbabwe from the perspective of efficiency, effectiveness for different purposes, relevance and manageability by the Embassy?

C) Relevance. Assess the relevance of the interventions in relation to needs and priorities for Zimbabwe during the reviewed period.

Proposal: How was the portfolio designed to reflect the contextual challenges, risks and opportunities at the start of the strategy and how has it been adapted to the changing context over time? How was the portfolio designed to reflect the human rights (and gender equality) values and the political intentions of the Swedish government? How has the Embassy managed potential goal conflicts between efforts to maintain basic services and the intentions of the Global Political Agreement to avoid lending legitimacy to human rights abusers?

D) Sustainability. To what extent are the results of the interventions assessed sustainable -not only financially but also institutionally?

Proposal: To what extent are the outcomes of the interventions anchored in sustainable capacity development processes among the partners, in terms of both ownership and capacity to move towards eventual capacities to manage recurrent costs?

The review is expected to follow up generically on the following strategic issues:

- To what extent has “gender” been mainstreamed in the programmes?

Proposal: Has a comprehensive approach to gender been applied across the portfolio? Have gender initiatives included the most marginalised women and attention to the systems, structures and norms hindering gender equality?

- Have identified risks been sufficiently mitigated?

Proposal: Have risks been sufficiently assessed, monitored and mitigated? Has Swedish support contributed to partners’ commitments and abilities to effectively balance conflict sensitivity and a firm stance on democracy and human rights while making a significant contribution to alleviating acute human suffering?

- How have anti-corruption measures been taken?

Proposal: How have anti-corruption measures been perceived and are they considered relevant and useful?

3.3 Limitations

The evaluation will rely heavily on previous evaluations and reports and not on first-hand information. The quality of these evaluations will affect the team's ability to draw conclusions.

Although the cases have been selected to represent the key aspects of the programme, they do not cover the entire scope of the portfolio. The evaluation team will seek to complement the case study review with broader analyses, but it is acknowledged that some actors and sectors may inevitably be missed.

The team will rely on information and judgements from key informants at the Embassy and among partners (intermediaries). If there has been recent turn-over of staff, there may be obstacles to accurately reconstruct the decision-making processes over the full strategy period or to capture the essence of discussions and assessments apart from what is available in written appraisals and reports.

4. Proposed Approach and Methodology

4.1 Overall approach

The aim of the methodology is to obtain an understanding and to assess the overall portfolio in relation to the strategy. The evaluation will not attempt to undertake a large number of «quick and dirty» evaluations of individual interventions. The methodology will rely on existing documented assessments (independent wherever possible) of programming and the subjective perceptions of stakeholders and individuals judged to have broad expertise.

Indevelop's earlier experience with reviews of country strategies has shown that it is important that there is consensus regarding what such a review can and cannot achieve and the evaluation team therefore sees feedback regarding this inception report as an essential part of the evaluation process. These reviews have been found to be useful for reflection on overall strategic performance, coherence and relevance; and the methods used will focus on bringing this out. They are also useful for taking a fresh look at outcomes in relation to the two perspectives and cross-cutting issues but they are less useful for cataloguing results. The evaluation should, however, not be seen as a «shortcut» for collecting empirical and rigorously verifiable data on results across the portfolio.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Desk review and initial discussions

As noted above, in order to frame the relevance of the strategy the team will undertake a “mini-PDA”. This will be largely based in desk review of relevant reports and research into development processes in Zimbabwe (see annex 4) to be undertaken during the latter half of May. The Embassy is invited to suggest additional literature for this review. It will be finalised based on interviews at the Embassy and with external experts during the field mission.

The evaluation team has begun mapping the interventions to gain an overview of the assumptions underlying the contribution of the portfolio elements for the three strategy objectives and to understand how the interventions are classified. The evaluation team has noted that this classification has apparently been difficult, with several interventions apparently being relevant for more than one objective. Desk review is being used to establish an initial set of outcome, efficiency, relevance and sustainability descriptions from the cases that will be used as de facto indicators for the continued evaluation process. These descriptions are included in the evaluation matrix in annex 1. These are very tentative and are intended to be used as hypotheses as a basis for discussion, rather than as set performance indicators.

4.2.2 Case studies

A set of cases of interventions are being selected for analysis in relation to the three objectives, with a primary focus on outcomes. Criteria for these were developed and the Embassy has proposed potential cases. These criteria were analysed in a matrix (see annex 3). High priority has been given to initiatives that have been evaluated, which were primarily implemented during the strategy period and which represent a range of sectors, scales and channels/modalities. The selected cases are:

Objective 1: UNDP/COPAC Support to participatory constitution making process, ZEC (through both UNDP and EISA) and Swedish Media Development Programme
Objective 2: Diakonia Strategic Peace building programme in Zimbabwe and The Culture fund of Zimbabwe Trust

Objective 3: UNICEF core support and Gender Links: Gender Justice and Local Government Support (also relevant for objectives 1 and 2)

In addition, the team will look at Zim-Fund and UN Coherence, not as case studies per se, but rather regarding the insights that these programmes can provide regarding IFI and UN modalities.

Individual interviews will be conducted during the latter half of May with major stakeholders from these case study interventions. The intention will be to confirm findings gleaned from the documentation and gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of these interventions, their relevance in relation to the three objectives and the changing context, and their potential for sustainability. A protocol for these semi-structured interviews is included in annex 2.

4.2.3 Stakeholder led analysis of strategy objectives

Building on the findings of the case studies the team will convene focal group and individual interviews with stakeholders engaged in interventions within the three strategic objectives. The case studies will be used to refine and reflect upon the very tentative indicators presented in the evaluation matrix in annex 1.

For the first two strategy objectives it is intended to organise focal group discussions with representatives of the stakeholders to assess how they perceive the effectiveness, relevance and potential sustainability achieved in the strategy period. Given the higher level of diversity in the third strategy objective portfolio, individual interviews will be conducted.

A major aspect of the stakeholder discussions and interviews will be to ascertain how their engagements with the Embassy and within their overall engagement with Swedish development cooperation has enabled them to focus on normative commitments to gender equality, human rights and the perspectives of the poor given the risks, uncertainties and volatility of the Zimbabwean context.

Stakeholders will also be queried regarding their views on the relevance and applicability of anti-corruption efforts within their organisations and within the modus operandi of the programmes they are implementing.

4.2.4 Modality analysis

In all the cases special attention will be paid to the influence of the given modalities on performance. This will be done with cognisance of the challenges in attributing performance to factors inherent in the modalities per se, and the difficulties noted above in generalising about a given modality based on the limited sample available. Considerable attention will be paid to how these modalities are perceived by the partner organisations to have affected both ability to expand services and achieve reforms, and also the relevance of the modalities for fostering capacity development. The issues of capacity development will be framed within the particular challenges that exist in pursuing capacity development within the types of engagements possible in Zimbabwe with the state, line ministry agencies, local government and civil society.

The two programmes selected for analysis in relation to modalities will be used to gain an overview of the role of the UN, and also what is apparently differing perspectives on how to engage with the state among the IFIs (AfDB and the World Bank). The team will also undertake interviews with the MFA and appropriate programme officers in Stockholm regarding their views on the role of multilateral institutions, particularly the special role in a state where sanctions are in place.

Interviews will be conducted with all available Embassy programme officers and former programme officers to the extent to which they are available. The primary focus of these interviews will be to gain an overview of how they see the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the modalities at hand for achieving the strategy objec-

tives and for maintaining attention to gender equality, the perspectives of the poor and the human rights principles of participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination. These interviews will cover both programming and Sweden's dialogue with other agencies and the government. These interviews will also seek to bring out how the different forms of engagements have been used to promote anti-corruption efforts and mitigate external risks. A major aspect of these interviews will be to bring out an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of different modalities for programme officers given their capacities, workload and the transaction costs involved in attaining an appropriate "fit" with Swedish development cooperation goals and results based management procedures. A protocol for these interviews is included in annex 3.

4.2.5 Reflections from external experts

Special efforts will be made to interview experts who have not been directly involved in Swedish development cooperation, but who are aware of different aspects of the portfolio. The evaluation team judges it as important to gain a more independent perspective on the Swedish strategy and its implementation. As noted above, these interviews will also inform the "mini-PDA". It is expected that these interviews will highlight Sweden's position within the broader inter-agency dialogue and engagement with the government. These external experts may be other donors, academics or individuals responsible for inter-agency or civil society coordination mechanisms (such as NANGO, Human Rights Forum, FODPZ, Women's Coalition, etc.). Past experience with country strategy reviews has shown that identification of such experts has been difficult and the evaluation team asks for support from the Embassy in identifying relevant people to interview.

4.2.6 Tentative plan for the mission to Harare

The team will ask for support from the Embassy with contact details for relevant interviewees and if necessary with a letter of invitation. Support is also requested from the Embassy in informing programme officers of the proposed meeting times. The Indvelop team will manage all other logistics.

Date	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
1 June	Team meeting	Team meeting, desk reviews	Desk reviews
2 June: Embassy in focus	Interview with Magnus Carlquist, Lars Ronnås and group meeting with Embassy staff to discuss the inception report	Parallel interviews with Embassy staff divided into focal groups based on the three strategy objectives	External observers
3 June: Objective 1 in focus	Interviews with UNDP and external observers (other donors in the thematic area)	Stakeholder meeting with COPE, ZEC, various media partners and other partners involved in initiatives under objective one (at the Embassy)	External observers
4 June: Objective 2 in focus	Interviews with external observers (NANGO, Human Rights Forum, FODPZ, Women's Coalition, etc.)	Stakeholder meeting with Diakonia, Culture Fund, YETT and other partners involved in initiatives under objective one (at the Embassy)	External observers
5 June: Objective 3 in focus	Interviews with UNICEF, World Bank, AfDB, Gender Links	Group meeting with government representatives	Team preparing end of mission workshop
6 June: Embassy in focus	End of mission workshop with Embassy	Additional interviews arising	Desk reviews writing up notes
7 June	Team meeting	Desk reviews writing up notes	Departure

4.2.7 Work plan

Work plan RE128 Zimbabwe

	Total	IC	AN	NC	JK	April				May				June				July				Aug				
						14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Inception phase																										
Initial document review	12	3	2	2	5																					
Developing inception report	5	2	1	1	1																					
Start up meeting with Embassy, Video conference	4	1	1	1	1																					
Submission of inception report	0																									
Approval of the inception report	0																									
Data collection and analysis																										
Desk review of program documention	23	5	5	4	9																					
Interviews with Swedish partners/Embassy of Sweden staff/boundary partners (full team in Zimbabwe 30 May-7 June)	18	5	5	8																						
End of mission workshop in Zimbabwe	3	1	1	1																						
Reporting	0																									
Analysis & Drafting	16	6	4	4	2																					
Submission of draft report 4/7	0																									
Written feedback on draft report 18/7	0																									
Finalisation of report	4	2	1	1																						
Submission of final report	0																									
Total days	85,0	25,0	20,0	22,0	18,0																					

Initials: IC=Ian Christoplos, AN=Annika Nilsson, TM=Tsitsi Maradze, KP=Katarina Persson

Deliverables:

Start-up meeting	25 April
Inception report	16 May
End of mission seminar before team leaves Zimbabwe	6 June
Draft report	4 July
Final report	31 July

ANNEX 1 - EVALUATION MATRIX

Questions	Indicators to be used in Evaluation	Methods	Sources	Availability and Reliability of Data /comments
Relevance: <i>How was the portfolio designed to reflect the contextual challenges, risks and opportunities at the start of the strategy and how has it been adapted to the changing context over time? How was the portfolio designed to reflect the human rights (and gender equality) values and the political intentions of the Swedish government? How has the Embassy managed potential goal conflicts between efforts to maintain basic services and the intentions of the Global Political Agreement to avoid lending legitimacy to human rights abusers?</i>				
	Deliberate measures taken to ensure non-discrimination, participation, accountability and transparency in programmes and processes. Existence of analyses of these aspects	Review of existing documentation with a focus on the case studies; interviews with stakeholders regarding their commitments and internal analyses	Evaluations, programme documents and reporting, stakeholder interviews	Reporting that does not explicitly refer to HRBA principles will be interpreted with a focus on attention to these principles; interviews will be used to assess the extent to which stakeholders are aware of and share these policy commitments
	Reference to contextual factors (especially risks) in assessing and judging initiatives and overall portfolio design and reporting	Review of assessments of interventions and overall reporting with a focus on the case studies; interviews with Embassy programme officers to assess how they have managed the portfolio to reflect contextual risks, challenges and opportunities	Evaluations, programme documents and reporting, interviews with Embassy programme officers	This review of contextual analysis is expected to reflect two overall aspects: (a) the opportunities to appropriately contribute to capacity development in relation to current understanding of the challenges inherent in fragile states; and (b) the ways that the factors to be defined in the “mini-PDA” are reflected in programming
	Quality of overall balance of engagement and caution as perceived by stakeholders and external experts and as reflected in how the Swedish	Review of how programming has been adapted to prevailing and shifting perspectives on the Global Political Agreement with emphasis on the case	Interviews with Embassy programme officers and other donors, documentation on donor coordination	Perceptions of the extent to which the Embassy has maintained this balance will be highly subjective; the evaluation will describe the

	portfolio is situated in relation to the overall donor community.	studies; collection of different perspectives on Sweden's role within the broader donor community		'state of the debate' and Sweden's role in overall donor coordination in the context of the factors that come out in the "mini-PDA" and provide guidance regarding risks, needs and opportunities rather than applying a set definition of "quality"
Effectiveness: <i>What have been the outcomes of the portfolio in relation to the three strategic objectives? Has the Swedish aid portfolio been strategically structured so as to optimally contribute to the strategy objectives given the prevailing and changing context? In what way has the Embassy taken the lead or added value to other donor initiatives?</i>				
Objective 1 Development of transparent and democratic institutions, free and independent media and institutions working to promote increased respect for human rights.	9. Constitution in place with international human rights principles and standards 10. Influence of CSO submissions on the final constitution text (CSOs feel that they were listened to them and that the consultations therefore were meaningful – especially those representing women and marginalised groups) 11. Indications of emerging implementation of the new constitutional provisions in national legislation, especially independence of judiciary, laws restricting media freedom, freedom of association, right to information, access to justice, women's rights 12. Establishment of functional, independent NHRIs, capacity development initiated, and funding secured 13. Willingness of the government to	Overall outputs to be gleaned from document review; the quality of the outcomes to be assessed based also on the perspectives of stakeholders and external experts; case studies to be used to provide a more in-depth perspective on related processes	http://www.upr-info.org/database/ http://www.ohchr.org/EN/co-un-tries/AfricaRegion/Pages/ZWIndex.aspx http://www.ohchr.org/EN/co-un-tries/AfricaRegion/Pages/ZWIndex.aspx http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/zimbabwe http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/zimbabwe http://www.freedominfo.org/regions/africa/zimbabwe/ http://www.transparency.org/country#ZWE	This aspect of the evaluation is expected to have a largely chronological character, highlighting achievements and also the aspects that remain unresolved at the end of the strategy period

	report to UN on HR Conventions application (more timely reporting) and to accept recommendations from UPRs and treaty bodies (CEDAW 2012) 14. Acceptable quality of administration and monitoring of the election 2013 as judged by independent observers - fair and free elections (women and marginalised groups are participating proportionally) 15. Increase in number of accessible newspaper/radio/TV and Internet channels that inform men, women and children of their rights and monitors performance of people of power (government agencies, donors and businesses) 16. Improvement in HR ratings of Zimbabwe in international indices during the period			
Objective 2 A growing democratic, vibrant and pluralistic civil society in which people organize themselves freely in political or other activities, and promote increased respect for human rights	1. Improvements in the legal and policy environment for CSOs (less restrictions and control), and for cultural institutions and business organisations 2. Declining party political affiliation among CSOs (that are not political parties) 3. Increased visibility and influence of member based CSOs giving voice to (and addressing the rights of) poor and marginalised	Document review will be complemented with assessment of the perspectives of stakeholders, Embassy programme officers and external experts regarding the space that exists for civil society and also the capacities within Zimbabwean civil society, cultural institutions and business organisations to take advantage of opportunities emerging through, for example the new constitution, to expand their roles	http://www.nango.org.zw/ http://www.hrforumzim.com/ http://www.kubatana.net/ http://www.zesn.org.zw/ http://www.osisa.org/openspace/zimbabwe/civil-societys-present-and-future-role-zimbabwe http://www.profile.org.zw/download_documents/CSO%20A	Embassy reporting has been consistently pessimistic regarding the prospects for achieving this ambitious goal. The evaluation will unpack these concerns and attempt to draw conclusions regarding how these prospects have changed during the strategy period

	groups – e.g. women, persons with disabilities, HIV+ persons, LGBTI persons, children, etc. 4. Increased engagement of CSOs in monitoring commitments and services provided by local government agencies, donors and businesses		bridged%20Report%202.pdf http://www.aessweb.com/pdf-files/ijass%20pp.1867-1876.pdf http://www.afcast.org.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=302:civil-society-as-a-new-paradigm-for-democratic-politics-in-zimbabwe&catid=55:civil-society&Itemid=271	
Objective 3 Greater access to basic social services for vulnerable groups and individuals.	4. Increased capacities of duty bearers to deliver services to vulnerable populations (rural, women, persons with disabilities, HIV+ persons, LGBTI persons, children, those experiencing climate stress) 5. Services (educational, health, legal and social) are of appropriate quality and increasingly available/accessible to youth, poor, rural and marginalised groups 6. Vulnerable people know where and how to access services.	Critical review of available reporting with an emphasis on drawing out disaggregated outcomes in terms of both capacities and services provided with emphasis on case studies	Partner reports; official statistics on service provision	This component of the evaluation will be heavily dependent on the extent to which disaggregated data on actual outcomes is available (initial literature review has raised concerns about weak disaggregation and tendencies to report on activities/outputs rather than actual outcomes).

Efficiency of modalities/channels: *What are the advantages and disadvantages of the different modalities/channels used in Zimbabwe from the perspective of efficiency, effectiveness for different purposes, relevance and manageability by the Embassy?*

Capacities and added value that have been	Relative capabilities and commitments to engage in human resource	Evaluations and interviews with Embassy programme officers and stake-	Programme documentation and interviews	As noted above, this aspect of the evaluation will draw on the findings
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mobilised within different modalities/channels	development, organisational development and influence on the institutional environments of line ministry actors, local government and civil society with special attention to conflict sensitivity and finding the “right” realm of action given the constraints of the context and the Global Political Agreement	holders with emphasis on case studies		of the recent literature review on capacity development undertaken by Indevelop
Relevance of different modalities/channels for maintaining adherence to Swedish policy norms and commitments	1. Extent to which agencies engaged have stated commitments to HRBA, gender equality, perspectives of the poor and preventing corruption 2. Extent to which agencies engaged show practical application of HRBA, gender equality, perspectives of the poor and preventing corruption 3. Signs of potential relevance regarding future trajectories	Proposals, evaluations and annual reports. Interviews with Embassy programme officers and interviews during case studies and with multilaterals	Programme documentation and interviews	Experience with other country strategy reviews suggests that awareness of Swedish policies varies greatly among partners and that interview may reflect awareness as much as actual performance
Transaction costs for the Embassy in engaging with different modalities/channels	TBD in discussions with programme officers at the Embassy	Interviews with Embassy programme officers	Interviews	The team will adapt this aspect of the evaluation to the factors that Embassy staff themselves recognise as having a bearing on the efficiencies of different modalities/channels in their work

Sustainability: *To what extent are the outcomes of the interventions anchored in sustainable capacity development processes among the partners, in terms of both ownership and capacity to move towards eventual capacities to manage recurrent costs?*

Ownership	Extent to which partners/projects are vision driven or donor driven; signs of intrinsic commitment; voluntarism; initiatives and engagement beyond the agreed plans; readiness to reject support if donor agendas do not fit the vision; extent to which organisations have developed their own plans and results frameworks	Primarily gleaned from interviews and documentary review in the case studies	Programme documentation and interviews	It may be difficult to verify the drivers behind different initiatives
Financial sustainability	Extent of government commitments (perhaps newly emerging) to covering recurrent costs of services diversified funding and resource mobilisation skills	Primarily gleaned from interviews and documentary review in the case studies	Programme documentation and interviews	It is recognised that the extent of actual and potential government commitments may be hard to assess in a broad sense and this aspect of the evaluation may need to rely on analysis of how interviewees perceive relevant trends
Outcomes	Legislative reforms undertaken to capitalise on the constitutional reforms and improved capacities of institutions	Primarily gleaned from interviews and documentary review in the case studies	Programme documentation and interviews	From available reporting it appears that legislative reform subsequent to the promulgation of the new constitution is just getting underway, and as such the evaluation may focus on perceptions of the prospects for continued momentum rather than actual achievements
Gender inequality: <i>Has a comprehensive approach to gender inequality been applied across the portfolio? Have gender initiatives included the most marginalised women and attention to the systems, structures and norms hindering gender equality?</i>				
Mainstreaming of gender	Visible gender inequality assessments in the problem/background analysis of programmes; special measures taken to address imbalances in form of e.g., deliberate changes in structures and systems, affirmative action, specific empowerment measures, etc.; extent to which the outcomes of these measures are reported on	Document review. Interviews with case study partners and external women organisation observers	Programme documentation and interviews	Many programme documents treat gender equality only in terms of numbers (or percentages of women) reached or affected by the programme. We will look for signs of more deliberate measures in processes and plans that show that

				obstacles to gender equality are deliberately analysed and addressed. As we have seen that such reporting is not frequent or systematic, we will bring these issues up in interviews and seek the opinion of women's organisations that have observed or participated in the programmes
Targeted initiatives (Programmes specifically designed to address gender inequality, GBV and/or empower women)	Aspects of programming that challenge existing structures, norms and practices favouring men; measures explicitly designed to empower/include the most marginalised women	Document review. Interviews with case study partners and external women organisation observers	Programme documentation and interviews	Addressing patriachic structures, gender stereotypes and traditional discriminating norms and practices is always provoking and can be seen as a negative "western" influence, unless framed within an international human rights framework. We will explore if and how Sida and partners have managed to find inroads and tools that are appropriate in this regard
Risk mitigation: <i>Have risks been sufficiently assessed, monitored and mitigated? Has Swedish support contributed to partners' commitments and abilities to effectively balance conflict sensitivity and a firm stance on democracy and human rights while making a significant contribution to alleviating acute human suffering? (to be mainstreamed in the evaluation)</i>				
	Discussions on risk and the balance between conflict sensitivity and the human rights agenda are openly and regularly discussed at the Embassy.	Interviews with Embassy staff	Embassy staff and external observers	In a country under sanctions, conflict sensitive approaches assume different dimensions. We will explore how this has worked in practice
	The level of risk taking is discussed	Interviews	Embassy staff and partners	The evaluation will explore how

	with local partners and the local partners' views are considered.		(case studies)	issues related to the protection of partners and those with whom they work are addressed
Anti-corruption: <i>How have anti-corruption measures been perceived and are they considered relevant and useful?</i>				
	Perceived relevance of anti-corruption measures in relation to organisational capacities and systems	Interviews with programme partners with a focus on the case studies	Interviews	Many partners report on system requirements that are beyond the ability of small and medium CSOs and authorities. The evaluation will consider if this inappropriately limits the range of organisations that can be reached in the portfolio
	Perceived relevance of anti-corruption measures in relation to prevailing governance structures	Interviews with programme partners with a focus on the case studies	Interviews	The evaluation will look at the extent to which efforts are cognisant of the importance of enhancing accountable governance as the most important and sustainable tool to fight corruption
	Perceived usefulness of Swedish support in reducing corruption risks	Interviews with programme partners with a focus on the case studies; document review of monitoring reports	Interviews	The balance between risk-taking and anti-corruption is likely to be a major aspect of this analysis

ANNEX 2 – INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview protocol: stakeholders

Name:

Organisation:

Date:

How has the Swedish financed programme you have been involved in been implemented and evolved since 2011 in relation to original plans?

How has the changing political/economic/societal context influenced your programme?

Do you feel that your programme has effectively contributed to more accountable governance?

Is there greater participatory engagement in the political process/service provision/work of civil society today; and has your programme contributed to this?

Has discrimination against women, political opponents or others increased, diminished or changed in character since 2011; and has your programme influenced these developments? If so, how?

Is there greater (or less) transparency in terms of open debate, freedom in the media, readiness to question authority, government transparency, etc. today as compared to 2011; and has your programme contributed to this? If so, how?

Do you feel your programme has been able to maintain an appropriate stance vis-à-vis public institutions, given the structure of the Global Political Agreement? How do you define what is appropriate in this regard?

What have been the risks of a deterioration in the conditions for change since 2011 and today; and how have you acted to mitigate these risks?

Has your programme been able to take advantage of and build upon the constitutional reform process? How do you see the prospects for further reforms in relation to legis-

lation, establishment of effective commissions, greater press freedom, free and fair elections, creation of conditions for economic reform, enhanced social protection, etc.? Does/did your programme have a role in contributing to these processes?

Despite the problems experienced in the 2013 elections, do you feel that they constitute a step forward and has your programme contributed to positive change in the electoral process?

Are basic services more available and accessible for marginalised populations (which ones) today than in 2011? Has your programme contributed to this?

Does civil society today more effectively represent the poor, women, youth, people with disabilities, the LGBTI community, other marginalised groups? Has your programme contributed to this?

How does your organisation take deliberate measures to address gender inequalities in programme design, processes, selection of indicators and in monitoring of implementation?

Does your organisation make a contribution to changing the patriarchal power structures that exist and the gender stereotypes, beliefs, cultural practices and attitudes that underpin them? Can you give examples?

Is your organisation and/or the organisations with which you work better equipped now to manage its activities than in 2011? If so how? Have the skills of staff and volunteers improved? Can you give examples?

Are the external conditions (regulations, collaborative relations, security) for your organisation to work effectively better today than in 2011?

Is your organisation better able (or taking steps to improve its ability) to access finance from government and/or more diverse sources today than in 2011? Can you give examples?

Has your organisation adopted new anti-corruption measures with Swedish support? Are these useful and practical?

How have the more macro-level governance conditions for fighting corruption changed since 2011?

Focal group interview protocol: Embassy programme officers

Names:

Sector/strategy objective:

Date:

Part one: modalities

Does the Embassy have procedures for judging the relative merits of different channels/modalities when making decisions about how to pursue strategy objectives?

How do you assess the advantages and disadvantages (abilities) of UNDP, Unicef, AfDB, international or Swedish NGOs and local NGOs in managing for results?

How do you assess the strengths and weaknesses (capabilities) of UNDP, Unicef, AfDB, international NGOs and local NGOs for

- a) maintaining a focus on the perspectives of the poor (i.e. taking proactive measures to ensure that their voices are heard, that they are actively participating in design and processes and monitoring that results are positively affecting them)?
- b) taking proactive measures to include marginalised groups and ensure that their voices are heard, that they are actively participating in design and processes and monitoring that results are positively affecting them?

How do you assess the strengths and weaknesses (capabilities) of UNDP, Unicef, AfDB, international or Swedish NGOs and local NGOs for including gender equality measures in project design and processes and actively working towards gender equality?

How do you assess the strengths and weaknesses (capabilities) of UNDP, Unicef, AfDB, international or Swedish NGOs and local NGOs for engaging the government to increase accountability and transparency?

How do you assess the strengths and weaknesses (capabilities) of UNDP, Unicef, AfDB, international or Swedish NGOs and local NGOs for preventing corruption?

How do you assess the relative transaction costs (and impact on your workload) of UNDP, Unicef, AfDB, international or Swedish NGOs and local NGOs?

How do you assess the strengths and weaknesses (capabilities) of UNDP, Unicef, AfDB, international or Swedish NGOs and local NGOs for developing different types of capacities among local partner institutions?

What were the relative risks involved in working through these specific different modalities with regard to following the Global Political Agreement?

How do you see the potentials of different modalities if the future focus in Zimbabwe shifts more to developing the capacities of local and national governmental institutions and promoting economic recovery and development?

Part two: strategy performance

How would you characterise the relevance and overall performance of the initiatives that you are responsible for in relation to the strategy objective they seek to address?

How have you worked to adapt the content of individual initiatives and the portfolio in general to the changing political, socio-economic and human rights situation? What have been the challenges and how did you address them?

How have you worked to include a rights-based perspective in your work? Have these efforts been effective?

What measures have you taken in ensuring a gender equality perspective is applied in (a) initiatives that are explicitly focused on gender issues, and (b) the portfolio in general? Have these measures been effective? What has influenced their effectiveness?

What progress has been made towards managing for results with greater attention to outcomes by partners? Do any partners perform better than others; and in what way?

What do you perceive as being the largest risks facing Swedish development cooperation and what can be done to mitigate these risks?

How effective has your work been in reducing corruption risks? Is there ownership for this agenda among partner organisations?

How do you see the prospects for sustainability within the portfolio you currently manage as the focus of development cooperation shifts from a “quasi-humanitarian” structure to more conventional, long-term approaches?

Do you perceive the strategy to have continued relevance in Zimbabwe today? What changes would you recommend for the next strategy?

What are the prospects for retaining a focus on poor and marginalised populations if Sweden shifts focus to economic recovery and growth in the future?

ANNEX 3: MATRIX FOR SELECTION OF CASE STUDIES

Crite- ria's/Name of Project	Support to partic- ipatory constitu- tion making process COPAC	Support to JOMIC in the imple- menta- tion, M & E of the GPA 2011- 2013	Electoral Support Project 2012-2014	Capacity Strengthen- ing of the Zim- babwe electoral Commis- sion (ZEC)	Swedish Media Develop- ment Pro- gramme	Strategic Peace building pro- gramme in Zimbabwe	Promot- ing Ac- cess to Justice	The Culture fund of Zimba- bwe Trust	Zimba- bwe National Associa- tion of Housing Coopera- tives	Anti- corrup- tion pro- gramme	Gender Justice and Local Govern- ment	UNICEF Core support	Youth fund Project - Bridging Program	Micro Finance project	Integrat- ed Sup- port Pro- gramme
Time of implemen- tation	2010- 2012	2011-2013	2012-2014	2011-2012	2012-2014	2012-2014	2010- 2011/201 3?	2012- 2014	2010- 2012	2011- 2014	2012- 2013	2012- 2015	2012- 2013	2007- 2011	2007- 2012
Organiza- tion	UNDP	Zimbabwe institute for Re- source Support	Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN)	UNDP	FOJO	Diakonia	Legal Resource founda- tion (LRF)	Culture fund of Zimba- bwe Trust (CFoZT)	Koopera- tion utan gränser	Trans- parency Internat- ional	Gender links Zimba- bwe	UNICEF	YETT		UNDP
Type of support	Multi Donor support		Core Fund- ing	Multi Donor support	Project Support	Project support	Core funding	Project support	Project support	Project support		Multi Donor support	Multi donor support	Project	Multi Donor support
Main objective	Support and strengthen- en the organisa- tional manage- ment and opera- tional	Enhance Jomics capacity to carry out its mandate laid down in the Global Political	Facilitate the partici- pation of Civil society in all elec- tions in order to promote democratic values,	Strengthen- ing the capacity of Zimbabwe electoral commis- sion	Coordinate Swedish aid for direct support to media organiza- tions	A strength- ened civil society contrib- uting to the change of structural conditions necessary for peace,	Promo- tion of a human rights environ- ment	Contrib- ute to the growth of the culture sector in Zimba- bwe	Assist low income home seekers in Zimba- bwe to be able to access adequate housing		strengthen- ing gender and local govern- ment in Zimba- bwe	Country Pro- gramme with 5 thematic areas	strengthen- ing the capacity of youth organiza- tions in civil society to contrib- ute to	Micro finance project - The goal of the project is to protect and improve the	Support a national response to Zimba- bwe's pandemic with the overall aim of reducing

		capacities of the constitution making bodies to enable them to function effectively	Agreement-broadening of the scope of the org. Programmes and activities.	transparent, free and fair electoral environment and processes in accordance with set international standards			gender equality and consolidated democracy in Zimbabwe.			and improved general socio-economic wellbeing through the use of housing cooperative concept				national development	livelihood security of 60,000 households in the most disadvantaged districts	transmission and impact of HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwe
Evaluated		evaluated in 2013	Currently Ongoing	Evaluated in 2006/Currently ongoing	Evaluated in 2013	Not Evaluated	Mid-term review in 2013	To be confirmed	Evaluated in 2010	Not evaluated		Evaluated in 2013	Not Evaluated	Not evaluated	Evaluated in 2011	Impact assessment produced by DFID
gender Focus		Counting nr of men/women	None	Does not have a specific gender focus	Does not have a specific gender focus	Does not have a specific gender focus	Main-streamed	Focusing on disadvantaged peoples access to legal services (women included)	Main-streamed	Partially main-streamed	None	A specific gender focus	Specific focus in certain areas, but also main-streamed through the others	Partial main-streamed in certain activities	Specific focus in certain areas, but also main-streamed through other areas	main-streamed
Engagement with line ministries?		to support the Government of Zimbabwe to prepare for and conduct a participatory, inclusive and transparent	Working directly with JOMIC	Informal cooperation with Zimbabwe electoral commission	Agreement signed with Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs - Direct cooperation with ZEC	No cooperation	No cooperation	Partial contact with Ministry of justice and legal affairs	cooperation with Ministry of education, sport and culture-specifically with National art council of Zimbabwe	Cooperation with relevant ministries that administer relevant legal instruments affecting housing delivery. Also contact	Cooperation with the department of corruption in the ministry of home affairs	Cooperation with Ministries of Gender and Local Government	Cooperation with different government bodies	No cooperation	Cooperation with the ministry of women's affairs, gender and community development	Supporting the The National AIDS Council (NAC)

		process							with local authorities										
Youth Focused	No	None	Not specifically focused on youth	Not focused on youth	Not focused on youth	Partly through cooperation organizations	no	Main-streamed	No	No	Focus on youth in certain parts of the programme	Yes	Yes	No	No				
National or decentralized intervention?	National	National	national and local	National	National and local	?	local	National and local	National and local	National and local	National and local	National and local	International/local	local	National				
Implication on political process?	Direct implication	Direct	Direct implication on political progress	Direct implication on political progress	Supporting Media-Indirect implications?	?	indirect	Not directly	Indirect	Indirect	Direct	Not directly	Raise capacity level of youth to participate in e.g. political arenas.	Not directly					
Location of organization	Harare	Harare	HQ Harare	Located in Harare	Kal-mar/Harare	Harare	HQ Dar Es Salaam	Harare	Country office Harare	Harare	Field office Harare	HQ Harare		Harare	Harare				

ANNEX 4 - INITIAL SELECTED LITERATURE FOR “MINI-PDA”

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Annex 5: CIVSAM Modality Matrix

The following explanation and matrix is from Pages 80-82, Chapter 5.1. *'Review of Civil Society Support Modalities at Sida HQ and Swedish Embassies'* (Nilsson et al, 2013).

Various modalities come with pros- and cons. When selecting a modality there are many considerations that may influence the choice. These need to be carefully discussed and balanced in each context. The following may influence the choice

- The need for CSOs as means vs a force in its own right
- The need for understanding of the Swedish agenda/policy vs aid effectiveness agenda
- The need for specific technical knowledge vs the need for facilitation of local capacity development
- The need for high capacity and international networks – vs local ownership
- The need for contextual knowledge vs the need for impartiality
- Direct contacts and dialogue vs less administration and higher transaction costs

C.

The table below list advantages and disadvantages with the various modalities expressed by Sida respondents.

Modality	Advantages	Disadvantages/Risks
Swedish domestic CSO intermediary	Considered for its possible technical or thematic expertise, professional networks and trust.	Risk of limited added value in many development contexts, based on lack of contextual knowledge and competence in results based management, organisational development, development cooperation frameworks.
Swedish international CSO intermediary (with development cooperation experience)	Considered for its possible common value base, knowledge of Swedish development policy, easy communication, trusted, relationship guided by Swedish legislation, often with good international networks. Often fits well in conflict/post conflict settings where mistrust between groups exists, and there is a need for a neutral, well respected party to control funding, ensure transparency and arrange neutral meet-	Contextual relevance is not guaranteed. May not build local capacity in partner countries. Added value needs to be specifically spelt out in each case and related to cost effectiveness. Risk of being supply driven e.g. relationship building in the Baltics and selective cooperation countries.

	ing places (e.g. Western Balkans, Middle East).	
Partner country intermediary	Often good contextual knowledge and understanding of political and power relations. Can contribute to local ownership and local CSO capacity development on a solid and long term basis. Funding goes directly to partner country. Low transaction costs.	Risk of giving power to some organisations at the expense of others. Risk of intermediary developing own agenda (e.g. OPT), Risk of politicised agenda, especially in conflict/post conflict settings. Risk of intermediary being unfamiliar with Swedish development goals and policies or unwilling to work in line with these (LGBT rights, gender equality, transparency, accountability etc.)
UN agencies as intermediaries	Many times well-reputed with good competence and capacity, but big differences between countries and agencies. The UN is less political and can come in where there are conflicts.	There are examples of UN agencies being bureaucratic and ineffective. Many staff changes affect leadership and control negatively. Swedish influence may be small. Difficulty to get reports related to the Swedish cooperation objectives.
International organisations as intermediaries	Can be chosen for its technical or thematic expertise. Can be used as consultants and for service delivery. Many have national offices with good administrative capacity and contextual knowledge. Good networks. Expertise in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Good track record, Quick and effective, Safe. (e.g. Red Cross, Save the Children)	May take the role, space and funding from national/local organisations. Limits the role and influence of national/local organisations.
Direct modalities	You are closer to the partner, can trace results of your own contributions and have more influence. Getting first-hand information from the field to bring into the dialogue. Helps keep updated on contextual developments. Lower transaction costs. Often fits well in support to human rights defenders, think tanks, research organisations and	Increases administrative burden of partners and the administrative role of donor. Risk of donor driven organisations rather than vision driven. Organisations become implementers of Swedish agenda rather than agents of change on behalf of the local CSOs or international networks.

	sector umbrellas that have a lot of information and contacts to offer to the Swedish dialogue. (e.g. Kenya, Turkey)	Needs systematic mapping before selection. Be aware of changes in context and new actors on the arena. Compare and share with other donors.
Indirect modalities	There are possibilities of reaching a large number of organisations, all over the country in districts and communities instead of a few in the capital. Experience shows that it works well in local governance programs and in sector programs where service delivery needs to be monitored at the grass root level (agriculture, environment, health, education, rural development sector programs etc.)	Risk of losing contact with realities of people on the ground. May bring high transaction costs. No direct input to dialogue. Difficult to select the most effective intermediary.
Joint donor platforms – created or developed to serve as intermediary between donors and CSOs in various sectors	Donors are able to influence focus of support, selection criteria and administrative set up. Joint funding and reporting requirements facilitates administration of CSO partners. Can reach many more grass root organisations (e.g. Zambia, Uganda), which is not possible with Embassy staff only. Reduces risk of double financing, increases transparency. In line with Aid effectiveness agenda.	Flock mentality and donor driven agenda, limited ownership by partner country organisations. Risk of disagreements in donor group/board, risk of long chain of intermediaries, corruption risk. Less contact with the realities on the ground and the networking with local actors. Difficult to attribute results to a specific donor.
Bilateral arrangements with partner country platforms/umbrellas or organisations as intermediaries	Sweden has direct dialogue, can learn from partners and influence focus of support. Mutual benefits, mutual strengthening of capacities and close dialogue. Can reach out to many grass root organisations, context relevance is good, funding goes to partner country (e.g. Ukraine, Tanzania)	Organisations become implementers of Swedish agenda rather than agents of change on behalf of the local CSOs. Gives power to some organisations at the expense of others. Affects power balances. Risk of double financing.



Review of the Strategy for Swedish Aid Initiatives in Zimbabwe: January 2011 – December 2014

This evaluation assesses the outcomes, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of efforts undertaken within the Swedish Strategy for Aid Initiatives in Zimbabwe 2011-2014, as well as analysing how initiatives under the strategy addressed gender equality, risk and anti- corruption efforts. The Embassy of Sweden has made strong contributions to enhancing governance during the strategy period, particularly in relation to the Constitutional process and electoral reform. Basic social service provision has been strengthened, though the sustainability of these processes remains uncertain. The strategy has provided a degree of structure and sufficient flexibility for the process that led to these achievements. The Embassy has identified key actors, primarily within the UN and civil society that have been able to interact with government systems and processes in a constructive manner during a difficult period

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