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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

FCG Swedish Development AB

Support to the Mid-Term Review in the DRC

Report - Phase 2

Sida

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1 Introduction

This document is the second deliverable of the support to the Mid-Term Review, commissioned by the Swedish Embassy in Kinshasa.

As per the ToRs, the overall purpose of the review is:

1) to provide strategic recommendations for the remaining period of the Strategy in order to fulfil the expected results. The review will assess if the current contribution portfolio is relevant for achieving the objectives Sida out in the Strategy and whether the implementation of the portfolio is "on track" and can be considered effective and efficient. The findings and recommendations of the MTR will be included in an In-depth Strategy report for the period 2015-2017.

2) to provide analysis and recommendations to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to inform the government's instruction to Sida for development of the next strategy proposal.

Since the wars of the late 1990s, DRC faced a complex and protracted crisis with a strong component of conflict-related crises with both short-term humanitarian and long-term development consequences. While the Eastern provinces (North and South Kivus, Ituri) remain the areas mostly affected by violence, new conflict-affected areas (Kasaï, Tanganyika) and rise of existing tensions (Beni) emerged over the past years. Despite huge investment in stabilization, the situation all over the country remains largely volatile, in particular in the East where most of the international assistance used to be concentrated.

The uncertainty of the political dynamics, with the failure to hold elections in 2016, and severe reprisals of demonstrations, strongly hampers the cooperation and development dynamics and collaboration with the State institutions. DRC is also a L3 country in terms of humanitarian emergency since 2017, owing to Sweden's support.

2 Methodology

The analysis is based on desk review of project and strategic documents, as well as on data collection in the field 5-14 March, which included semi-guided interviews, focus groups discussion and direct observation.

The team met with 27 organizations including:

- Donors (EU, USAID, DfID, Belgium)
- Partner UN agencies
- Partner NGOs

Some projects were visited: UNICEF transit center for children associated with armed groups in Goma, and UNICEF health support in the communities of N'Sele, Binza Meteo, Bumbu, as well as Kalembele's hospital.

Interviews with the Embassy staff, and a participatory SWOT analysis with the whole cooperation staff in the Embassy were conducted in a previous visit by the consultant in February.

3 Portfolio review

The portfolio of projects related to the strategy (attached in annex), covers between five and eight projects per strategic objective, plus a few projects under preparation for each Strategic Objective. Some project agreements are also being concluded for the various SOs, and as such the review also takes into account, to the extent possible, the ongoing dynamics in terms of programming.

Overall, the strategy is **relevant** to the needs of the country, targeting various and complementary essential sectors: governance, economy, health and stabilization. The extent of the needs is huge in all of those sectors and while some data exists which allows to prioritize to some extent the interventions (health for example), in some cases the extent of the needs is not clear. Some stakeholders indicated that the specificities of the various provinces were not all considered, the identification of the interventions can tend to be top down. Decentralized entities in the organizations, or local State authorities, are not all involved in the project design or informed of the level of funding available for the successive years, which limits the planning. This is not the embassy's responsibility, but this can still constitute a limitation in the performance of the interventions. There is also to date no consolidated overview of the various types of fragilities in the country, notably in relations to natural resources exploitation since this is one of the main drivers for instability, including on land access and division of the resources between communities and the corporate sector. There are some partial maps on the presence of armed groups close to mine sites, such as those by IPIS. IOM apparently conducted but the team did not get them. There was also an initiative from the UN to address land issues and conflicts[1]. While active conflicts are more easily identified and followed upon, this is less the case for the economic and social issues related to natural resources exploitation, such as land grabbing, which form part of the development dynamics. Sweden supports various aspects of this sector nonetheless. Some stakeholders highlight the need to consider not only the mining sector (or forestry), but also other natural resources, including land for agriculture.

[1] http://ipisresearch.be/publication/analysis-interactive-map-artisanal-mining-areas-eastern-dr-congo-2/ http://www.un.org/en/land-natural-resources-conflict/resources.html

In terms of **geographic coverage**, to some extent, the development strategy also follows the same trend as the humanitarian assistance, being closely related to resilience approaches (for example P4P, PEAR3), with a specific attention on **emergency affected areas**.

The portfolio of project has an accent on the Eastern part of the country, where conflict is active since the early 2000s, while new crises emerged abruptly. This tendency is changing now progressively, and there is increased attention on other provinces or on a national approach. In terms of SO2, there is also a focus on conflict affected areas. Specific projects concern areas with new crises in Tanganyika, and Kasaï for SO3. SO4, to date, still mostly focuses on the East, where longstanding and constantly renewed peace and security challenges are the most obvious. The support through the humanitarian fund as well as the stabilisation fund does mean that Sweden supports interventions that are being proposed as response. There is however limited attention to date on other crises cases, such as the resurgence of the Ituri crisis or the lower levels crises which are strongly underreported, for example in the Uélé, where several armed threats affect the security and livelihoods of the population (LRA, Mbororo, criminals, poachers), or the numerous armed groups disseminated throughout the country.

The interventions also target categories of **vulnerables**, such as women, IDP, autochthons, who are affected largely by conflict dynamics. They do not specifically target the most deprived or poor groups of the population. The loans and credit facility – though relatively small - for example targets the urban areas in the Kivus, while this is an area with relatively good economic indicators, given the cross-border trade with neighbouring countries. Regarding the geographical scope, other donors have a stronger focus on the respective levels of vulnerabilities. For example, USAID stopped targeting North Kivu and focused on Kasaï as one of the most vulnerable areas, for a few years already, or is funding interventions in the Uélé.

The strategy was used mostly as an **umbrella** under which interventions were put in place based on the identification by the Embassy and partners. This explains why the strategy's objectives are very broad - to keep some level of flexibility and adaptation - and not always clearly articulated with the project's targets. There is a strong coherence and interrelation between the strategy and its operationalization through the projects. However, although this is not a necessity to have on-going projects all the time under strategy the projects do not actually cover the entirety of the objectives meaning also that the strategy is not fully applied throughout its cycle and does not reflect the actual interventions on the ground. In some cases, the discrepancies are only due to the end of some projects, without follow-up interventions (SO1), in some others, this relates to the formulation of the objectives and results versus the actual projects on the ground (SO2, SO3). For example, there is currently no on-going project on *Strengthening democratic institutions and rule of law*, or addressing

directly the *Increased participation of women in elected, decision-making forums, primarily at local level.* The SO2, which indicates that , does not only target women and has limited inclusion of the environment sustainability. SO3 only targets neonatal health, while the results are formulated quite generally: *Improved access to high-quality child and maternal care*, The interventions on SGBV prevention are limited to the Promundo project, and there is no direct support to SGBV victims, there is however one contribution being appraised on this area. The SO3 funded ACF for a project related to nutrition, which is the sole on this subject -, which is not clearly an expected result of the strategy - though it could be considered as part of child care broadly speaking. The rationale for this was to transform humanitarian assistance projects into development interventions.

The strategy is also relatively **sector-based** (governance and human rights, economy, health, peacebuilding)which gives a clear division, but does not allow to highlight the development mechanisms put in place under each sector. Those general objectives can also hardly reflect the limited Swedish contribution. Some other stakeholders actually stopped doing sectoral strategies to focus on transversal dynamics. For example, USAID[2] the objectives are more cross-cutting and refer to levels of results throughout the sectors at institutional and operational levels.
Some projects contribute to various Strategic Objectives, though there is still a clear division between the various sectors, with dedicated staff. This concerns only four projects to date however. In most of the cases the projects are multisectoral since they combine sectoral interventions with peace and security approaches and strengthening civil society / women participation.

There is also a growing interest for **multisectoral approaches**, as reported by the various category of stakeholders identified, since vulnerability is often multi-dimensional. At the level of Sweden's interventions, this is visible for example in the P4P, which brings together WFP and FAO, (and has potential to also include UNICEF as well on the nutrition subject). International Alert also combines livelihoods, peace and security and democratic governance.

[2] https://www.usaid.gov/democratic-republic-congo/cdcs

Development Objective (DO) 1: Selected national level institutions more effectively implement their mandates.

Development Objective (DO) 2: Lives improved through coordinated development approaches in select regions.

Transition Objective (TO) 3: Foundation for durable peace strengthened in eastern DRC.

However, out of specific multisectoral projects, the integration of all the interventions is not optimal. At the programmatic level, **synergies** between the projects are not fully in place or exploited. The various organizations funded by Sweden do not interact with each other and even do not know each other. They indicate their interest in knowing more about the various interventions funded by Sweden and how they could coordinate or collaborate further with other counterparts funded by Sweden, since it is easier to coordinate with a few organizations – while other coordination systems are so broad that they mostly serve as information sharing / fundraising platforms. There would also be a direct accountability line for this from Sweden. This would be relevant, notably for stakeholders operating in the same areas or on complementary topics, such as support to civil society, or to mutualize further the programmatic objectives, for example by integrating the support to autochthons as a cross cutting aspects in other interventions, or by asking experts from other projects to intervene in training from others, for example Search for Common Ground on conflict sensitivity and management, as it is already done in the P4P upon recommendation of the Embassy.Fondation Hirondelle could also use the material created by some partners for its own production. Some donors organize such types of meetings, for example USAID, DfID and CIDA. The potential sensitivity and competition between organizations in some sectors would obviously need to be analysed and taken into account for such operation.

In terms of **effectiveness**, most of the projects started recently, and as such the review can only consider the design of the project and their potential for results. Those new projects were often built on previous interventions funded by Sweden, indicating some continuity in the approaches, as well as capitalization on results and integration of lessons learned – as well as to some extent the relative success of previous interventions.

Some interventions are bound by joint or pooled funding modalities, which are often insufficiently funded. This sometimes prevents the deployment of the full intervention logic. For example, the UNICEF CAAFAG project cannot implement the reinsertion component because of a lack of funding.

The projects led to progresses at institutional level, in relations to the micro-finance law or Free, Informed and Prior Consent (FIPC) of local communities and autochtons.

In some cases they faced institutional / political barriers, for example for what concern the revision of the legal framework to integrate the FIPC, which cannot be endorsed yet since an overall reform of the land code has been planned recently. Obviously, in terms of democracy and human rights, the elections will condition the needs and implementation of institutional reforms. The local ownership over development dynamics, political will and general accountability remain limited and

strongly constrain the development pattern. Clientelism at all levels, coupled with the non-payment of civil servants promote a culture of corruption and impunity. No leverages have been identified to date to reverse those dynamics.

Some key drivers exist however. For SO1, the increased mobilization of the population, partly in reaction to the challenges of the context and actions of youths, is also considered as an opportunity. New forms of movements also appeared with the new technologies. Some dynamics at the justice level also happen in relation to SGBV and could be pursued as a potential leverage on a more general fight against impunity. There are also international movements, such as on the due diligence for mineral supply chains, in relations to the US Dodd Frank Act and to the OECD guidance on due diligence for mineral supply chains from high risks and conflict affected areas, which aim to mitigate, but have not had judiciary implications in the DRC yet. The customary justice system, on which a significant part of the population relies given the limited coverage of the formal justice system, is also not fully structured and taken into account. Some studies have been conducted in neighbouring countries[3] that could be used in that respect since some ethnic groups cover various countries. For SO2, some value chains could be specifically supported also, including to promote women's empowerment, like coffee, and collective structures, such as cooperatives or worker associations, in various sectors have also been limitedly supported to date. For SO3, some community / peer-based approaches could also have been expanded in terms of sensitization on prenatal health – through community relays, or nutrition.

Stakeholders interviewed refer to potential adjustments to take into account the evolution of the market and of technologies, for example in the case of reinsertion activities, or in the use of remote banking system for the credit facilities in order to reach out to rural and remote areas. Some local coping mechanisms could also be further studied and integrated as part of approaches targeting the most vulnerable / deprived areas, for example in areas where there is limited cash circulation, or in terms of local conflict resolution mechanisms.

In other cases, the results vary depending on the implementing partners. For example, for the loan and guarantee facility, one institution indicates that the facility does not get much attraction, notably from vulnerable people / women since it remains quite

[3] For example, UNDP conducted some ascertainment studies in South Sudan on Zande group, as well as over 20 other ethnic groups, with the objective to get a consensus on the various customary justice system and streamline their application.

expensive, it replicates an approach from other countries with a very different context, and then that they would hardly reach the target. On the other hand, another institution targeting larger credit customers, indicates its strong success with relatively limited investment (it is estimated that donors would only have to reimburse 150 000 USD – based on 10% disengagement / failure - for 3.5 million USD of investment). The guarantee there contributes to funding cooperatives or medium size loans (between 10 and 50 000 USD).

Logistics and insecurity also constrains the implementation of the activities and caused some delays, since the NGOs have to rely on MONUSCO flights in some areas and the situation is very volatile. There is also limited availability of cash resources and of the possibility to bring cash in some areas, which constituted an issue for the P4P for example.

There are also significant risks related to the context and the various interests. The political / stakeholder analyses are done more or less explicitly by the partners, but this is not always formalized or documented, and conflict analyses at the partner levels remains limited. There are however risks of negative effects, including from the CSOs / CBOs, who can claim for rights that they don't have upon pressure from politicians. Expertise in that respect mostly lies in relations to the SO4 on peace and security, but those dimensions, including through specific activities, could be further integrated.

The **regional approach** was piloted with International Alert and bears specific interest in linking peace and security and women empowerment, since community dynamics and the specific role of women could be significant dynamics that should be strengthened. The actual results in peace dynamics would need however to be clearly monitored, since a number of insecurity drivers are not necessarily related to the communities.

A group on Human Security in the Great Lakes exist at Sweden's level, but so far its impact in coordinating and ensuring synergies have been relatively limited. There is no clear regional strategy on the Great Lakes to maximize synergies for development for example.

Stakeholders interviewed indicate a tendency to **move to support to CSO / community based approaches with some successes**. This appears in most of the projects funded by Sweden, for the SO1 obviously, with support to CSOs, and CBOs. Regarding SO2, this is clear with the P4P and FPP projects, while support to cooperatives was more limited, and only at institutional level. SO3 on health also supports the constitution of local relays, association to manage local issues, and stakeholders indicate that they would like to strengthen this type of work with local committees. SO4 funded a specific community-based component for the reinsertion

of demobilized soldiers, as part of the PNDDR, and the PEAR 3 also has a strong community approach.

Those approaches contribute to build local capacities. However, the CSOs still face numerous challenges in terms of competition, clientelism since they are often organized as companies, staff turn-over, politicization. Community based mechanisms, with the use of local relays appear very promising, as well as all approaches aiming to create sustainable grassroot dynamics (such as cooperatives, or for example more specifically local seed multiplication structures). There are however potential duplications of such community-based groups. Typically, each NGO/agencies will implement its own community based system depending on the projects, but there is no official institutional plan for such mechanisms. They may be closely related, notably since they involve the community leaders but with uncertain level of governance and formalization. In a location that the team visited, the only water pump, used by 19 communities, was in the house of the chief. Some partners also indicate the interest of including a component of capacity building / technical support / mentoring, especially when the organizations are relatively new, or benefit from the Swedish funding only. This would allow to build local relays when the projects finish. Interviewees actually recommend including this as a cross cutting issue, though obviously this would depend on the partners selected, their level of capacity and on the strategic and operational interest to support them.

Indeed, the elections did not take place yet. There is then a general withdrawal from supporting institutions, except in some sectors, such as CENI or health sector – for what concern Sweden's funded interventions. This may cause a gap on the long-term between donors and state officers. The obvious challenges in some sectors, such as public order and crowd management in the case of demonstration, would imply that more follow-up of these sectors would be required. Some stakeholders indicate there that there would be a need in that respect to equip the police with dedicated non-lethal weapons but it is not an area that Sweden supports. Those issues also illustrate the lack of anticipation of issues arising in such a fragile country with limited governance, where the constant staff turnover – depending also of political challenges – imply the need for constant training or mentoring.

Efficiency considerations

Sweden has a **partner-based approach**, and not a donor driven approach, meaning that the projects are launched based on concept notes submitted by the partners, instead of being driven by specific objectives and target from the strategy. Because of this approach, no comparison can be drawn on the cost-effectiveness of various implementation modalities by various NGOs or UN agencies for example in reaching specific goals of the strategy. The advantage is that it strengthens the partnership and

give the opportunity to structure in contact with the grassroots to suggest what they consider is the most appropriate.

This also explains why there are no specific objectives that the strategy / projects should attain in the monitoring framework, based on available data, while each project has its own specific objectives. This monitoring framework indeed mixes indicators on which Sweden's funded project have an influence and other indicators for which there is no intervention funded by Sweden. This means that those indicators do not measure the results of the strategy, but mostly the evolution of the context. For example, for the results 1.1. "Strengthened Democracy and Rule of Law", the indicators are *Improved (lower) Freedom House "Freedom rating" (political rights and civil liberty combined)* and *Percentage of children under age 5 whose birth is registered with a civil authority*, while there is no interventions funded by Sweden on those issues. Overall, 9 indicators out of 24 do not refer to a contribution by Sweden. There are data on the number of SGBV victims assisted while there was no contribution for this. The results framework indeed consists of a mix, a model Sida HQ has opted for and can only have a selected few indicators in the framework – one needs to look at the results framework for each project to get the complete picture.

This implies also that the progresses in relations to the strategy's implementation are not clearly visible and monitored, while some results occur. For example, for SO2, there is nothing on the funding of the MONUSCO SGBV advisor, since the framework does not make reference for example to the number of judgements related to SGBV out of the number of cases identified. Also nothing refers to the PROMUNDO results, or to the work related to HIV AIDS *pair educateur / peer educator*. For SO4 the monitoring framework does not make reference to the national DDR programme or to the UNDP data collection on peacebuilding, and only in terms of number of local conflict resolution platforms supported for the broad I4S framework.

Despite those limitations, the monitoring framework provides nonetheless useful information on the general evolution in relations to the strategic objectives at a macro level in the country.

Partnerships

SIDA plays a clear role in supporting multi-donor/joint funding and pooled interventions, mostly for emergency related assistance, such as the Pooled Fund for humanitarian aid, but also for PNDDR, or by supporting UNICEF interventions, which are funded by various donors, hence largely in SO3 and SO4. For SO1, this would mostly be the case with the support to elections, if the funding is confirmed. There is indeed no coordinated / multi-donor approach on governance – though there were joint programmes in the past with the EU delegation, which finished in 2016

and 2017. Joint programmes are also limited on SO2 (only for the loan and guarantee project, which is led by USAID – FPP interventions are related to the REDD+ however). Hence, the joint approaches remain the most limited for the SO with longer term development perspective, if we consider that health responds to immediate needs.

The NGOs' projects are obviously by nature more restricted in terms of scope and budget and hence have specific added value to deploy specific technical expertise (for example Fondation Hirondelle, Global Witness), building on the added value of some NGOs (ACF which has specific geographical expertise in the Kasaï owing to previous SIDA funded interventions).

The UN are bound by their respective mandates and as such several agencies have to be contracted to implement multisectoral approaches. This proves a specific interest when the interventions can be scaled up – since some UN agencies have broader implementation capacities than most of the INGOs -, when they contribute to build local capacities and institutionalize the interventions, by collaborating with local partners / NGOs or with the State institutions, notably at both national and decentralized levels. In the case of children associated with armed groups, UNICEF has the mandate to coordinate with the DRC Ministry of Defence, which INGOs would hardly obtain. INGOs have more flexibility and can cover various sectors of interventions altogether (for example ACF promoting an integrated approach). The **new provincial authorities**, with the creation of additional provinces, represent also potential leverages though they have limited resources and the overall hierarchical system is still very strong. Their potential influence at institutional, operational and political levels would need to be studied further, as well as their ability to manage various types of resources and implement activities / projects.

On the role of CSOs, some stakeholders indicate that they face strong issues of staff turn-over, and fragmentation, which hamper the sustainability of the interventions, and that their effects on the communities can be limited. They recommend then to extend **the partnerships to members of national and provincial administration or to journalists**, for what concerns advocacy related topics, **to research centers in the universities**, notably students in large universities. This would seem relevant to strengthen the integration into institutional and sustainable structures, though their role obviously differs from that of the civil society. Supporting the inclusion of emerging topics into university curricula, in relations to various governance topics for example, would also be a strong leverage for increased results.

The **corporate sector** was limitedly involved, though it appears in a number of strategic objectives, such as SO1 for what concerns the extractive industry (The Carter Center and Global Witness), SO2 of course (banking facilities, cooperatives, private companies). Private health facilities are also widely used for example. There

is also a partnership between the FEC and Sweden's Chamber of Commerce upon which further interventions could be built, for support to sectorial trade unions and their sensitization on specific topics, coordination with local civil society, gender sensitivity, environment, or identification of replicable business models, or to support their structuration since some of them target quite sensitive groups (taximen for example who are often youths likely to act in security dynamics). P4P is also developing livelihoods activities and support to the value chain, in which local companies could play a role.

In terms of **sustainability**, and quite related to efficiency, the potential for the projects results or dynamics to be sustained over time remains somewhat limited, aside from the work of *the peer educator (people who are in charge of supporting / sensitizing other people facing similar issues)* and use of local structures / community-based mechanisms. The usual approaches of training of trainers for example do not appear clearly. The level of replicability of the interventions sometimes appear limited, albeit some interventions, in the economic sector notably with SO2 or in relations with livelihoods, trigger local economic development. In the health sectors, there is a huge dependency on international assistance, notably since the distribution of kits is quite present for neonatal health for example. Some interventions also contribute to progresses in the institutional framework, notably the micro-finance law, or the social responsibility / community rights aspects.

4 Sweden's comparative advantage

A medium size donor, Sweden however played a key role in bringing forward and influencing the international assistance in the DRC.

Neutrality: Sweden is perceived as a neutral stakeholder in the country, since it has no other interest at national or regional level, either at economic or political level, while most of the other Western countries have companies operating in the DRC, or are bound to the country by a specific legacy (Belgium and the historical colonial past for example).

Competence: the team at the Embassy is seen as competent and reliable, and to be funding adequate projects, based on accurate analysis. It is also recognized to have a pragmatic approach without seeking too much publicity and visibility. The Embassy is perceived as very committed, in a constructive manner, and the staff, including at senior level, can spend time on the ground to visit projects.

Small team: the team is perceived as relatively small by the partners, notably for some of the strategic objectives, where the number of project is higher. There are then various levels of communication, exchanges and monitoring and some partners expressed their interest for more communication – in relations to administrative procedures for example – or exchanges on the progresses. This is however mostly the case for new projects or new staff coming into existing partnerships.

Partnership approach: the quality of the partnership is appreciated since it is based on an actual collaboration and constructive approach, with an openness to discuss challenges and develop new ideas. Stakeholders also highlight the fact that the Embassy participates in activities when it is invited.

Long-term funding: Sweden is one of the rare stakeholders to fund projects on a rather long-term basis (3 years at least and capitalizing on long-term partnerships with the implementing organizations). Interviewees highlight that Sweden should advocate for such longer term approach amongst other donors.

Political relay: some stakeholders highlight the fact that politically, Sweden is also able to advocate for issues in support of their interventions. This was notably the case regarding human rights advocacy on the fight against SGBV. On the other hand, the fact that Sweden is less vocal than some other donors, such as the EU, Belgium or France confers also more impartiality to the country.

Flexibility: stakeholders interviewed appreciate the flexibility of the funding and of the projects. The administrative structure is perceived as relatively light. The flexible funding modality, sometimes used as seeds funding, also allow the organizations to maintain activities and adjust to the specific needs and opportunities of the context.

Furthermore, at an institutional level, Sweden's cooperation is not based on a long-term agreement with the State, hence the projects can be decided at any time without approval by the government, in contrary to the EU delegation for example, or to UNDP, which face issues in working on some specific topics related to the rule of law for example, though working on the rule of law is also a political decision. Stakeholders indicated that this was an opportunity to put in place projects in a more flexible manner, compared with other stakeholders, including on sensitive issues and to adjust to the context. Sweden however engages with the State indirectly since ¾ of the funding goes to the UN, which have agreements with the State.

Multi-layered funding: the projects funded by Sweden in the DRC do not only come from the Embassy but also from SIDA. Although there are ad hoc communication and exchanges, this means that there is no consolidated follow-up and approaches for the whole of the Swedish assistance in countries. This gap or hiatus is perceived by some of the stakeholders as a potential inconsistency.

Challenges around the diversity of the interventions: the activities concern a broad number of sectors as defined in the strategy. This can be seen as a too large a dissemination compared with the funding level of other donors, such as the US, DfID and Belgium (see Report 1). This limits also the visibility and definition of a clear identity for SIDA, in opposite for example to Norway – quite an exceptional case – which is funding only the forestry sector in the Great Lakes. A justification for such a dissemination would be to have specific strategic advantages in all of those sectors or if necessary adjusted to the specific comparative advantages of Sweden. This does not appear clearly and explicitly from the strategy and projects funded. This spectrum is nonetheless also justified since there are also links to Swedish priorities, and it provides the organizations with useful funding, sometimes seed funding, with some leverage effects.

Ability to launch dynamics and promote innovative / specific approaches: In several cases, Sweden played a role triggering new dynamics. The funding is used to actually start new approaches. Several partners report that they could develop innovative practices owing to the Swedish funding (for example, in the P4P, where Sweden funding allowed to pursue and develop an approach originally funded by Belgium, while adding a multi-sectorial modality, and which afterwards received huge funding from Germany to expand to other provinces). Some structures implemented in some activities (Dimitra clubs for example for community discussions) can also be used as platform for further interventions, by UNFPA on

family planning for example. The P4P also constitutes a way to engage with decentralized / local governance structures. In addition, Sweden played a key role in promoting gender in the international assistance by advocating for its inclusion in meetings for example, as well as resilience related interventions in humanitarian assistance (notably through the dedicated pooled fund).

Also, the various cross-cutting issues highlighted in the strategy, gender, environment, conflict sensitivity, appear directly or indirectly in all of the Strategic Objectives, and under various form and levels in the projects. This is the case of ***gender***, since it is the subject or a component / approach for most of the projects. This is also the case of ***conflict sensitivity*** for work in the conflict affected areas, under SO4 in particular. This is also included considering that the whole country is a fragile country, and hence that all of the interventions have a potential to act on stabilization dynamics.

More particularly this is the case for ***environment*** broadly speaking, though this aspect is not always fully developed or articulated in the strategy and in the interventions. Democracy and governance in the DRC has a lot to do with the governance of the natural resources, not only mining sector, but also land, water, forestry. This also covers the monitoring of the division of natural resources between international companies / concessions and local communities and corporate social responsibility in that respect. This sector is also a key driver of livelihoods and economic development, in relations to agriculture activities under SO2 for example. Management of the environment is also crucial in relations to health objectives, in terms of sanitation and access to water for example, as a way to prevent a number of illnesses and epidemics, or while health centres have limited access to potable water. Pollution by garbage is also particularly significant and could generate livelihoods if for example plastic recycling activities were to be implemented. For SO4 on peace and security, natural resources are an essential conflict driver, in relations to conflict financing, control / access to natural resources by armed groups, land disputes between IDPs / host communities / returnees or cultivator and cattle breeders, which is addressed in ISSSS. In addition, climate change impacts the demography and is a potential source of conflict. This is notably the case when cattle breeders have to change their transhumance roads and damage the culture, lands and rivers, without clear mechanisms for accountability. In the Uele notably, Mbororo from various countries actually tend to migrate South from Central African Republic, causing casualties with local population. They are actually named climatic refugees. This causes the risk to replicate the dynamics which arose in Central African Republic over the previous decades.

A recurrent comment is the fact that international assistance contributed to save life in the DRC, but was actually not able to **transform the life of the population**. The same needs are repeated year after year and there is no change in addressing the roots

causes of the crises. Increased attention should then be put on the transformation capacities of the various strategic objectives and projects, especially for a development strategy, while the humanitarian funding aims to address the critical needs. This implies to create local development dynamics and reverse the negative dynamics, around natural resources notably, so that they contribute to the country's development if they were adequately managed. This also means to discuss and conceive for progressive exit strategies for the different types of interventions, which implies that local stakeholders would be able to design and implement ad hoc solutions, as well as adjust and adapt to the evolution of the context.

5 Conclusions & Recommendations

Sweden benefits from a key position in the international assistance framework in the DRC, owing to its neutrality and recognized expertise. This confers legitimacy – and expectations - from the various types of stakeholders, and a unique positioning to get positioned on sensitive subjects, while adapting to the change of contexts.

Though of a relative modest size, it also has the potential to clearly inspire the international development dynamics in the country. The diversity of the Strategic Objectives make sense to the extent that the interventions allow for generating new approaches and self-regenerating dynamics with multiplier effects, which is also the essential component of development.

In the meantime, further attention would be required to address the root causes of conflict and be able to transform the life of the population, which implies a strong focus of the creation of local and self-relient dynamics, and to the sustainability of the interventions, while integrating on the prevention aspect to support earlier response to instability and recurring crises.

Some cross-cutting issues appear essential in terms of content of the interventions, with the environment being a major driver of the various development and insecurity dynamics, albeit coordination remains limited in that respect. The attention to the context and inclusion of the conflict sensitivity / political economy perspective, in close relations to the SO4 on peace and security, is essential. Results in building local capacities in a sustainable manner is also to some extent a core component of the SO1and also appears across the various Strategic Objectives. In addition, community-based approaches and peer learning represent some opportunities, in terms of results and as a first step of the governance chain. Some further leverages for partnerships could be actioned in that respect to include various categories of local partners. Multisectoral and integrated interventions represent opportunities to address the vulnerabilities through immediate and medium term responses, and then different partnerships. This highlights the interest of a stronger integration of the various interventions, at strategic and programmatic levels, notably through increased connections and interactions between the projects.

For a clearer monitoring the consistency of the operations with the strategy and the related monitoring framework could be strengthened, while there are opportunities for renewed partnerships to take into account efficiency and sustainability considerations.

Across the same strategic objectives, the following aspects could then be promoted :

	SO1: Strengthened democracy and gender equality, and greater respect for human rights	**SO2: Better opportunities and tools to enable poor people to improve their living conditions**	**SO3: Improved basic health**	**SO4: Peace and Security**
Linkage humanitarian / development	Support to DRC based structures for the management of development dynamics Strengthening of the governance chain	Focus on most deprived areas, in addition to vulnerable / conflict affected groups as a follow up of humanitarian assistance	See below	Focus on most deprived areas, in addition to vulnerable / conflict affected groups as a follow up of humanitarian assistance
Transformation aspect	Identification and solution to vulnerabilities in the social contract / tissue Legitimacy and accountability of the governance system Focus on stakeholders committing human rights abuses (sensitization, accountability) Justice and fight against impunity / conflict financing	Role of the corporate sector in decreasing the poverty and inequalities Maximization of the use of local resources and local value chains Community based replication of innovative technics, for agriculture notably Support to the strengthening, profitability and reliability of cooperatives Regulatory framework conducive to the reduction of inequalities (concessions & international companies / local communities) and monitoring of the tensions	Integration of prevention More sustainable financing system for the provision of health services (potential for innovative partnerships) Treatment of causes of epidemics through WASH infrastructures Community / peer learning based mechanisms with self-replication systems (ex. Nutrition, reproductive health, HIV AIDS prevention, essential sanitation practices)	Integration of prevention, early warning Local capacities for conflict mitigation Mitigation of external regional threats
Environment aspect	Governance (revision of the regulatory framework), economic and social rights, dedicated CSO / CBOs, research centers	Natural resources & sustainable growth Agriculture and value chains. Livelihoods for deprived groups. Infrastructures	Pollution & waste management	Anticipation of climate change dynamics Identification and mitigation of insecurity dynamics around access to natural resources / conflict financing

Based on this, the following recommendations can be made:

1. **Sweden should have a role in pilot and innovation in the international assistance in the DRC.**

   Given the level of repetition of crises in the country, there is a clear need to design and pilot innovative approaches to address roots causes of crises and bring forward sustainable and self-relient solutions. Sweden, which is active in a number of sectors and is recognized as competent and legitimate, is particularly well positioned to develop such approaches, which could then be scaled up and replicated. This includes the content of the interventions, or the specific approaches / partnerships put in place.

2. **Strengthen the integration and coordination amongst donors on environment and natural resources. Consider the implementation of an observatory on natural governance management – transparency and accountability.**

   The roots causes of fragility strongly relates to management and access to natural resources and integration of the environment challenges for sustainable development (including demographics, waste management, sanitation, access to water, maximization of local resources and value chains, management of natural resources exploitation by international stakeholders). Yet, so far there is no consolidated overview the various layers of fragilities in relations to this, although data is collected in some sectors and some areas by international stakeholders and CSOs. Sweden also supports the CSOs for several years in that respect, with several efforts and types of interventions which would be worth consolidating, in order to get a clear picture of the level of fragilities and risks, for example on the share of natural resources (land, forest, mine) allocated to communities versus international companies, and land grabbing levels. This would be valuable for advocacy and prioritization of the interventions. The search of win win dynamics and dynamics of mutual benefits.

3. **The attention to prevention and prospective analysis should be strengthened.** The focus between response to crises and anticipation / prevention should be rebalanced to strengthen the ability of the various stakeholders to be better prepared for crises and mitigate them, especially since there are a number of recurring crises. This means for example the identification of structural and conjunctural trends and options for development in a coordinated manner with the other donors and the State institutions, strengthening of early warning system on security, social and economics fragilities. This point is also closely related to the previous recommendation.

4. **Creation of local and replicable dynamics should also be a cross cutting elements for all of the strategic objectives,** in order to ensure development and resilience dynamics.
    - Training of trainer / peer learning should be included in a cross-cutting approach across the various sectors.
5. **Driving transformation in key sectors.** Specific attention should be paid to the ability of the interventions not only to provide assistance with immediate benefits, but to transform the life of the population.
6. **Multisectoral approaches and to support community-based organizations, including cooperatives,** should be emphasized.
7. **Reinforce synergies between the various interventions** to maximize the results and as part of multisectoral / multidimensional approaches.
    - Conduct capitalization / lessons learned exercise, or even one day of presentation across the various partners on the Sweden strategy. This would allow for creation of communication lines between Sweden's partners, and sharing of experiences / best practices.
    - Identify opportunities for synergies across projects. This is for example, all health partners, linkages between the support to value chain and loans and credit facilities, the prioritization of autochthons, the use for Search for Common Ground conflict sensitivity tools and perspectives in several other interventions, use by the Fondation Hirondelle of the experience of projects funded by Sweden.
8. **Support the institutionalization of the mechanisms**, notably for community-based approaches, in order to avoid dispersion and multiplication of efforts, and in all the sectors ensure the sustainability of the interventions.
9. Keeping in mind actions and results-oriented approaches, **consider partnerships** with:
    - research centres, universities,
    - decentralized State institutions / local administration,
    - corporate sector.
10. **Strengthen the alignment between the strategic and programmatic cycles** to reinforce the monitoring of the strategy's performance.
11. Regarding the monitoring framework, **distinguish between monitoring of the context, possibly through specific indicators**, which also allows ensuring that the strategy and projects are aligned to the evolution of the country, **and of the strategy's - and related projects - results.**

Annex 1 – List of persons met

Nom et Post-Nom	Organisation	Fonction
Christophe TACCO	USAID	Mission director
Christopher GABELLE	UKAID	Chef de bureau adjoint
Dominic SAM	PNUD	Directeur Pays
Olivier TCHIBOLA MUKUMA	PNUD	Conseiller au programme Gouvernance, politique et administrative
Monah ANDRIABALO	PNUD	Spécialiste en Finance Inclusive
Stephane AMANI	PNUD	
Judith SUNINWA	PNUD	Spécialiste consolidation de la paix
Annelie De BACKER	Ambassade de Belgique	Ministre Conseiller de la coopération au Développement
Claude JIBIDAR	PAM	Représentant et directeur Pays
Agbessi Komla AMEWOO	PAM	Coordinateur P4P
Alexis Bonte	FAO	Representative
Liselot Morreels	FAO	Project Manager
Edna KOSKEY	CENTRE CARTER	Citizen Observation Program Manager
Elysée SINDAYIYA	CENTRE CARTER	Chargé de programmes droits de l'homme
Gary BALDRIDGE	CENTRE CARTER	DRC field Officer Director
Arnold JACQUES DE DIXMUDE	UNION EUROPEENE	Chef secteur environnement, agriculture et santé
Thomas KIRCHNER	UNION EUROPEENE	Chef de section Gouvernance politique et sécurité
Ivan VOEVODSKY	UNION EUROPEENE	Governance section
Thomas DEHERMANN – ROY	UNION EUROPEENE	ECHO manager
Hamidine Bako	FINCA	Chief Operation Officer
François Grondin	PRO CREDIT	Chief Risk Officer
Rubin Rashidi Bukanga	REDD +	National Coordinator
Evelyne Mbata	PNDDR	Chargé de communication & sensibilisation, expert genre et développement
Esther Shimba	PNDDR	Vulnerable group expert
Patricia Tuluka	PNDDR	Reintegration expert
Donat Ongolomeza Bagula	PNDDR	Development expert
Brigitte Iyeli	Diakonia	
Virginie Ebner	Fondation Hirondelle	Project Manager
Patrick Kipalu	FPP	Director
Alain Parfait NGULUNGU	FPP	Project Officer
Nadia Mbanzidi	FPP	Legal expert
Luc Bellon	ACF	Country Director
Abdoul Aziz Thioye	MONUSCO	Director JHRO
Hélène Devaux	MONUSCO	Focal Point Democratic Space, Special Assistant
Matteo Menin	MONUSCO	Coordinator, External Relations and Strategic Planning Unit

Koffi Kounte	MONUSCO	Transitional Justice and Fight against Impunity Unit Coordinator
Cornelia Schneider	MONUSCO	Senior Women Protection Advisor
Marguerite Kunduma	UNFPA	West area coordinator
Gaston MULONGOY	Zébreau asbl	Director
Richard Le Bailly de La Falaise	I4S/MONUSCO	Team leader stabilisation unit
Georges NDIKITUM	International Alert	Country programme manager
JERY IYANYA	International Alert	Evaluation and monitoring manager
Narcisse ZIHALIRWA	International Alert	Project manager Tushiriki wote
Christine Buesser	International Alert	Country Director
Pierre Ferry	UNICEF	Head of Protection section
Francine Kimanuka	UNICEF	Senior Health Specialist
Dr Marthe IDUMBO	UNICEF	Health Specialist
Hyacinthe ADOUKO	UNICEF	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
Anne Daher Aden	UNICEF	Chef de bureau de Goma AI
Jackie KIERNAM KULAGE	UNICEF	Emergecy specialist
Enyo GBEDEMAH	UNICEF	Manager protection
André MUSA	UNICEF	Spécialiste programme protection
Cecilia Khouma	Sweden Embassy	Environment specialist

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Support to the Mid-Term Review in the DRC

This document is the second deliverable of the support to the Mid-Term Review, commissioned by the Swedish Embassy in Kinshasa.

The overall purpose of the review is 1) to provide strategic recommendations for the remaining period of the Strategy in order to fulfil the expected results; 2) to provide analysis and recommendations to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to inform the government's instruction to Sida for development of the next strategy proposal.

The analysis is based on a desk review of project and strategic documents, as well as on data collection in the field, which included semi-guided interviews, focus groups discussion and direct observation.

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