

FCG Sweden

# Evaluation of the application and effects of a Human Rights Based Approach to development: Lessons learnt from Swedish development cooperation. What works well, less well and why?

Volume I: Final evaluation report



**Authors:** Henrik Alffram, Anne Buffardi, Pilar Domingo, Bente Topsøe-Jensen, Otto Nilsson Williams

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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# Foreword

Challenges to attaining sustainable development are significant and more interconnected than ever before. Poverty is multidimensional and its causes are complex, including lack of respect for and fulfilment of human rights. Human rights, democracy and the principles of the rule of law are essential to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the sustainable development goals seek to realise human rights for all. Moreover, democracy around the world is in decline. More people currently live in countries with authoritarian tendencies than in countries making democratic progress.

To handle the complex realities in which we operate the Government of Sweden has identified a number of key perspectives to be integrated in all Swedish development cooperation. One of them is a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) which has been established in Swedish policy since 2002. A HRBA means that human rights and democracy are considered fundamental to development. It is a normative approach and method which implies that human rights standards and principles guide all development – they provide goals as well as means to achieve them. The point of departure is international human rights law which lays down obligations that States are bound to respect. The principle of accountability is therefore key to this approach and central in Sida's daily work. Another key principle is equality and non-discrimination. This principle is at the heart of the Agenda 2030 and its central promise of leaving no one behind.

Effective application of a HRBA implies learning from how it has previously been understood and applied. This evaluation is the first of its kind, taking a long-term perspective to capture general lessons learned and effects of the application of a HRBA in Swedish development cooperation. The purpose of the evaluation is to systematise knowledge and learning and to generate lessons on what has worked well, less well and why, by understanding how and to what extent a HRBA is applied in Swedish development cooperation and to what extent the approach has contributed to enhancement of respect for and promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights, including gender equality.

The evaluation includes experiences and learnings from four different country contexts: Albania, Cambodia, Colombia and Kenya. We hope that the findings of this evaluation can contribute to sharpen the application of a HRBA, in analysis, in financial contributions to our partners work, and in our normative dialogue. All to support people's ability to escape poverty and oppression.

We wish to express our gratitude to the evaluation team and to the time and interest invested by all those who have participated in the evaluation. The evaluation process has served as a learning tool for Sida to compile the collected knowledge from staff at Sida, partners, experts and other stakeholders.

*Sven Olander*

Head of Evaluation Unit  
Sida

*Birgitta Weibahr*

Lead Policy Specialist Democracy and Human Rights  
Sida

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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACF	Arbitration Council Foundation
CINEP	Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular
CIVSAM	Sida's unit for support to civil society
CSO	Civil society organisation
CNVP	Connecting Natural Values and People
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EQ	Evaluation question
EU	European Union
FCG	Finnish Consulting Group
FLED	Forestry and Local Economic Development
GBV	Gender-based violence
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GNI	Gross national income
HDI	Human Development Index
HR	Human rights
HO	Head office
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
ICTJ	International Center for Transitional Justice
ILO	International Labour Organization
KenGen	Kenya Electricity Generating Company
KEWASNET	Kenya Water and Sanitation NGO Network
KPS	Kenya Prisons Service
LGBTQI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex
MAINIAC	Mainstreaming In Action
MDPA	Multidimensional poverty analysis
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIS	National Institute of Statistics (Cambodia)
ODA	Official development assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPC	Olof Palme International Center
PACS	Probation and Aftercare Services
PAT	Partnership for Accountability and Transparency
PDIA	Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation
PFM	Public financial management
PPDP	Public Private Development Partnership
PEA	Political economy analysis
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPPS	Swedish Prisons and Probation Services
STAR	Territorial and Administration Reform
ToR	Terms of reference
(T)QAC	(Technical) Quality Assurance Committee
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WASREB	Water Services Regulatory Board (Kenya)
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicators

# Preface

The evaluation was commissioned by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and conducted by FCG Sweden. The Evaluation Team consisted of Henrik Alffram, Anne Buffardi, Pilar Domingo, Bente Topsøe-Jensen and Otto Nilsson Williams, with support from Juan Pablo Ordoñez (Colombia), Joshua Nyamori (Kenya), Mirela Jonuzaj (Albania) and Pak Soheang (Cambodia). The evaluation report was quality assured by Kim Forss and project manager at FCG Sweden was Johanna Lindström.

The Evaluation Team acknowledges the support provided from Sida, the embassies of Sweden in the four case study countries, as well as all the many informants consulted with.

The content, findings, and recommendations reflect the views of the evaluators, and not necessarily that of Sida.

# Executive Summary

## INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Swedish development policy is anchored in a commitment to ensuring that Swedish development cooperation is operationally directed at promoting and protecting human rights standards in its outcomes across all areas of engagement. Sida is also bound to ensuring that the four principles of a Human Rights Based Approach to Development (HRBA) – namely participation, accountability, openness and transparency, and non-discrimination – apply to the ‘ways of working’ of Sida and its co-operation partners, and across all process aspects of Sida’s development cooperation support.

The evaluation has focused on addressing six questions: (1) the extent to which a HRBA is applied by Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners; (2) whether the application of a HRBA is in line with national policy frameworks; (3) the overall impact of the application of a HRBA; (4) how co-operation partners perceive the HRBA and whether their perception has been influenced by Sida and embassies; (5) if lessons learnt from what works well and less well have been collected and used; and (6) how multilateral organisations perceive a HRBA and whether their perceptions and application of a HRBA can be traced back to Sida or embassies of Sweden.

Data collection and analysis took place from May 2019 to May 2020, drawing on interviews with nearly 300 key informants, six group discussions involving Sida staff, nine group discussions with co-operation partner staff and community members, a review of more than 750 documents and organisational websites, and analysis of national and international statistics. The evaluation is case-based and relies on four country case studies (Albania, Cambodia, Colombia and Kenya), as well as an initial review of Sweden’s overall portfolio and engagement, and inquiry at the head office level of Sida.

In observing the application of a HRBA in the four case study countries, the report presents findings from the evaluation and provides recommendations on what Sida can do to develop and sharpen its application of the approach. However, because a case study approach examines a phenomenon in a specific context, the findings cannot be broadly generalisable to all situations – in this instance, particularly different human rights contexts. The comparative approach undertaken here suggests that there are some commonalities across these four quite distinct national contexts, which may be relevant to other countries where Sweden is working that have similar characteristics. The Conclusions section discusses these observations further.

## APPLICATION OF A HRBA IN PRACTICE

This evaluation highlights an embedded approach to the application of a HRBA, where it underpins overall strategy and the rationale for development cooperation, and is a part of programming – manifested in different ways – rather than a separate area of attention. This embedded approach has resulted in varied application, dependent on the orientation of the individual, organisation or intervention concerned. However, there were no clear patterns observed relating to the thematic or sectoral orientation of Sida’s support.

In practice, the evaluation found no clear distinction between applying a HRBA and putting the advancement of human rights at the centre of the work done by Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners in-country. Often, applying a HRBA and focusing on improving the human rights situation in context were used interchangeably by embassy staff and co-operation partners especially. There was a view among some Sida staff and embassy staff that strict adherence to the four principles of a HRBA could result in a tokenistic ‘box-ticking’ exercise, which needed to be avoided. Rather, there was a view that the priority should be to focus on identifying opportunity structures to support efforts to address the power imbalances between rights-holders and duty-bearers. Generally, Sida staff and co-operation partners (other than some human rights groups) made limited use of the recommendations and considerations of international human rights bodies and mechanisms.

Where Sida staff and co-operation partners in-country are particularly effective in applying a HRBA – most notably in contexts where human rights are more constrained – it is related to an understanding of the political economy context, the ability *in practice* to adapt work and programming to locally grounded choices about what is possible in the protection and realisation of human rights, and to operate in politically informed ways. This requires deep country knowledge, technical and political knowledge, investment in long-term relationships, flexibility, and political skills to navigate existing opportunity structures and context-specific constraints. Adaptive capacity and working with context is important given the political nature of human rights realities, and how they affect all development and governance change processes.

## COHERENCE WITH NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS

The four country case studies have demonstrated a rather similar situation in terms of the existence of a formal political framework conducive for promoting human rights and maintaining formal and informal dialogue on the issue. Sida’s official strategy of supporting national development policies and applying a HRBA is generally accepted by national governments at the normative and formal levels, and Sida’s approach and supported interventions are typically justified on the grounds of alignment with national development strategies and plans.

However, the situation is different when it comes to the actual implementation of human rights policy and norms. All four case study countries demonstrate that the nature of the prevailing political settlement and elite bargain is such that there is varied, often limited political buy-in to either support the realisation of formal human rights commitments, or to enact the norms and principles underpinning a HRBA. Thus, in the four cases, there is a broad range across institutions and, in some cases, a wide gulf between the governments' official commitment to human rights and the degree to which they commit to respect, protect and fulfil those rights in practice.

## OVERALL IMPACT

Assessing the effects of a HRBA is intertwined with assessing achievement of intended programme results. Results frameworks are usually not explicitly oriented around measuring HRBA processes per se, and these mostly seem not to be picked up in follow-up and reporting. Stark realities of shrinking political or civic space, of ongoing levels of conflict and human rights abuses, or deep (and intersecting) inequalities mean that progress is mostly non-linear and multi-level, and that different groups in vulnerable situations may experience reversals and backlash.

It is not possible to isolate the impact of a HRBA from other changes in the wider political and social context; moreover, sustaining gains requires ongoing investment. Capturing impact thus needs to be qualified in terms of what can plausibly be claimed as contribution.

However, interviewees for this evaluation, as well as independent evaluations and Sida assessments have all identified a range of results related to the process of applying a HRBA and to the objective of advancing human rights norms and protecting human rights.

Among rights-holders, reported effects resulting from the process of applying a HRBA included changes in: awareness; capacities and skills; access to and direct participation in decision-making processes; and ability to organise and work collectively, including to contest unequal power relations from a human rights perspectives. Among rights-holder organisations and networks, this included changes in internal operating structures and management capacity, membership and representation. Among individuals, it included a heightened awareness of their rights and capacity for voice and agency.

Performance effects of the application of a HRBA by Sida and co-operation partners included improved access to basic services, rights protection, and voice and agency. Sida-funded interventions were also seen to help prevent human rights violations and provide public support to groups and organisations in vulnerable situations.

Among duty-bearers, reported effects of Sida's application of a HRBA included changes in mindsets and attitudes, capacities, skills and behaviours. Institutionally, they included changes in practices and institutional reform. There are also reported policy and legal changes that contributed to advanced normative change and deepening of human rights standards and commitments.

Arguably, the most important effect of Sweden's application of a HRBA is that it has strengthened and clarified Sweden's commitment to promote and protect human rights through international development cooperation. It has thus provided Sida with the basis for principled, long-term support to actors that promote development towards a more open rather than authoritarian society.

## CO-OPERATION PARTNERS' PERCEPTIONS

Across the four countries, among all co-operation partners, Sweden is seen as a champion for human rights in general and gender equality in particular. This includes an appreciation of Sweden's consistent focus on the importance of international human rights standards, empowerment of rights-holders and accountability of duty-bearers, and targeting disadvantaged groups. At the same time, there is significant variation in how a HRBA is defined or perceived by different stakeholders across the intervention chain and beyond.

Co-operation partners are generally able to reflect on the application of key aspects of a HRBA, including aspects of the HRBA principles, mostly on their own terms and in relation to their specific organisational objectives. It is also the case, however, that many make no distinction between a HRBA and human rights. While Sida's support has enabled partners to promote and protect human rights, there are (with the possible exception of gender equality) few indications that Sida's support has led to changes in partners' perceptions of a HRBA.

There are also (with some exceptions) some noticeable differences in how different stakeholder groups relate to a HRBA. Government agencies tend to reflect on how human rights are represented in national legal and constitutional frameworks and in national development policy plans, but some seem not to explicitly engage with a HRBA. International non-governmental organisations (NGOs) often have their own organisational understanding and mandate in terms of both their human rights work, and their conceptualisation of a HRBA. National civil society organisations (CSOs) vary in their awareness of Sida's understanding of a HRBA, but have their own distinctive approaches to addressing the human rights issues that are their core business. There are some bilateral donor agencies that Sida considers 'like-minded' in terms of a shared perception and definition of a HRBA.

## COLLECTION AND APPLICATION OF LESSONS LEARNT

Lessons specifically on HRBA are not systematically gathered at a strategy or sector level by Sida, embassies of Sweden or co-operation partners in any of the four case study countries. At the project level, there were many examples across the project cycle where lessons are documented and adaptations made. These lessons and adaptations are directly linked to achieving project results, rather than framed around the HRBA principles. The unique configuration of duty-bearers and rights-holders and their influence within a particular sector and country (as well as the influence of

specific leaders within the same institution over time) can limit the direct transferability of lessons across institutions, issue areas, country contexts and time periods.

## MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS' PERCEPTIONS

There is little evidence to suggest that Sweden has directly changed the perception or application of a HRBA within multilateral organisations at country level. Sida is, however, valued for its human rights orientation, which contributes to the political momentum behind the work of multilateral organisations and other co-operation partners to better fulfil their mandates on both advancing human rights and applying a HRBA. Sweden's financial support and presence in political dialogue was valued for helping to sustain and, at times, advance attention to human rights. Financially, this included flexible and core funding to individual organisations. Politically, Sweden's voice was perceived as influential in keeping human rights on the agenda.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

If Sida wishes to remain a global leader in championing human rights through the application of a HRBA, it will need to invest further in this role. Sida's gains to date cannot be taken for granted as other perspectives continue to gain prominence in Sweden's international development policy, and the risk of the HRBA becoming a box-ticking exercise remains high. To this end:

- There is a need to invest resources in re-energising the HRBA in all of Sida, focusing on all six components of P.L.A.N.E.T. as an integrated perspective (participation, links to human rights, accountability, non-discrimination, empowerment, transparency).
- Engage in Sida-wide discussions and workshops, including head office and embassy staff. This should be the basis for exploring Sida's capacity and organisational gaps to ensure that the HRBA is integrated and promoted through partnerships and contribution management.
- Invest in Sida's capacity for monitoring, documenting and learning from the application of the HRBA. Sida should further invest in an evidence base that makes the case for why the HRBA matters for development, and how to apply it effectively. This includes collating and sharing experiences and lessons learnt as part of the HRBA, for Sida, and other target groups.
- Invest in capacity development, training among Sida staff and cooperation partners, and in areas where Sida is perceived to be strong (championing human rights and gender equality, consultative approach, flexible ways of working, consideration of context). This includes multi-directional learning.

# 1 Introduction

This evaluation of the application and effects of a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)<sup>1</sup> – Lessons learnt from Swedish development cooperation was commissioned by Sida's Evaluation Unit and undertaken in 2019 and 2020. The evaluation was commissioned in response to 'Sida's need to understand how a HRBA is being applied, how staff and co-operation partners understand and perceive the approach, what works well, less well and why' (see Annex 1, paragraph 2.2). The evaluation object is the integration of a HRBA in development cooperation by Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners. The evaluation is the first comprehensive effort to evaluate Sida's application of a HRBA overall.

This final report has been revised based on comments from Sida and has been quality reviewed, based on a quality assurance checklist developed in line with the OECD/DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation,<sup>2</sup> a utilisation-focused evaluation approach,<sup>3</sup> a gender responsive and human rights based approach to evaluation, and other ethical considerations.<sup>4</sup>

## 1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the evaluation has been to systematise knowledge and learning and to generate lessons on what has worked well, less well and why, by understanding the application of a HRBA and its four principles – participation, non-discrimination (equality in dignity and rights), openness and transparency, and accountability – in Sida-funded development cooperation from 2010 to 2019. The application of a HRBA across four selected countries has been observed, and the evaluation report analyses findings from this evaluation process in response to the evaluation questions (EQs) (see Section 1.2).

The primary intended users of the evaluation are: selected staff at Sida head office (HO), including policy specialists and advisors for human rights and democracy, thematic networks and support functions (Department for Management Support and the Department for Human Resources and Communication); and embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners in the case study countries. Secondary intended users are Sida's senior management, other donors, and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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<sup>1</sup> In Swedish Government and Sida documents this is sometimes referred to as the rights perspective (rättighetsperspektivet in Swedish). For this report, the rights perspective is referred to as a HRBA.

<sup>2</sup> OECD/DAC. 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Patton, M.Q. 2008.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). 2011; UNEG. 2014.

## 1.2 THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The six EQs, as detailed in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation (see Annex 1), have determined the overall evaluation exercise. The different character of the EQs is reflected in the length and detail needed to provide evidence and answers, with EQ1 being regarded by the Evaluation Team as the overarching EQ. This is reflected in the comparatively longer discussion of the findings for EQ1.

1. To what extent have Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners applied a HRBA throughout the design, planning, implementation and follow-up of Swedish development cooperation in the case study countries? What has worked well, less well and why?
2. To what extent is the Swedish application of a HRBA in line with the priorities set by national policy frameworks?
3. What is the overall impact of the application of a HRBA by Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners in terms of direct or indirect, negative and positive results (both based on the process of applying a HRBA and the performance in terms of effects on the outcome level) in the relevant thematic sectors/areas?
4. How do co-operation partners perceive the HRBA? Are there differences in the definition of the concept between different stakeholders? Has the work of Sida and embassies of Sweden led to changes in the perception of a HRBA?
5. Have lessons learnt from what works well and less well been collected and, if so, to what extent have these lessons learnt been used to develop and adjust the application of a HRBA by Sida/embassies of Sweden and by co-operation partners? Are there any signs of changed ways of working?
6. What is the perception of a HRBA at the multilateral organisations with which Sida and/or embassies of Sweden are engaged in the case study countries? Are there any signs of changes in the perception and application of a HRBA? If so, can this change in any way be traced back to the work/advocacy of Sida and/or embassies of Sweden (in the global dialogue or at the country level)?

## 1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This final evaluation report on Sida's application of a HRBA is structured as follows. Section 1, the Introduction, describes the evaluation purpose and scope and presents the EQs. Section 2 describes the Evaluation Team's methodology and approach, including the methods used, portfolio review and case study selection, data analysis and validation, and limitations. Section 3 situates the evaluation in the context of the wider knowledge base on the HRBA and its history within Sida, and describes Sweden's current policy and guidance on application of a HRBA. Section 4 presents findings in response to the EQs, in six sub-sections as per the EQs. Each sub-section starts with a summary of findings and concludes with key analytical points. The response to EQ1 is longer than the other sub-sections due to the overarching character

of this EQ. Section 5 presents the Evaluation Team’s conclusions based on the analysis of findings, while Section 6 presents recommendations jointly formulated by the Evaluation Team and the Reference Group. Annexes include the ToR for the evaluation, the list of people consulted, the list of documents reviewed, and interview guides.

# 2 Methodology

## 2.1 OVERALL APPROACH

The Evaluation Team's starting point is that the application of a HRBA is a political undertaking. It affects power relations, and has redistributive intent, as it privileges *leaving no one behind*<sup>5</sup>, and supports the realisation of human rights. At its core is changing the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers, empowering the former, and supporting the latter's capacity to deliver on their obligations and political commitment to human rights. For this reason, how a HRBA is integrated into planning and implementation requires an analytical lens that can assess intervention practice in terms of how planning and implementation are adapted to and relevant for the political economy conditions of each country context. This reflects current thinking in international development cooperation on *thinking and working politically*<sup>6</sup> and Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA), which underlines the merits of moving from solution-driven best practice approaches to programming to best fit approaches that focus on locally defined problems and adaptive programming. This analytical lens is applied to the evaluation through a focus on process, which considers *ways of working* in Sida's development cooperation and enables the examination of how perceptions, applications and effects of a HRBA vary across actors and contexts; and a consideration of both the intrinsic and instrumental value of a HRBA.

The six evaluation questions and specific sub-questions (i.e. application of each HRBA principle, across each phase of the programme cycle) served as the framework for data collection and analysis. To answer the EQs, we first conducted a preliminary mapping of Sida's portfolio from 2010 to 2019, and subsequently examined HRBA efforts in four countries through a 'comparative historical' case study evaluation design,<sup>7</sup> described in greater detail below. Case studies enable the exploration of how a certain phenomenon manifests itself in a particular context. By studying the application of the HRBA in distinct national contexts and across a ten-year timeframe, the evaluation was able to examine both spatial and temporal variation, as well as variation among groups of actors and programmes within each country.<sup>8</sup> The temporal element was most evident in the ways in which national contexts have evolved since 2010, which in turn affected country strategies, project design and implementation, and partner choice, so these two dimensions are closely intertwined.

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<sup>5</sup> UNDP. 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Rocha Menocal, A., Cassidy, M., Swift, S., Jacobstein, D., Rothblum, C. & Tservil, I. 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Gerring, J. 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Gerring, J. & Seawright, J. 2007.

Throughout the evaluation, a gender responsive and human rights based approach has been embedded.<sup>9</sup> This has included integrating the following considerations: the composition of the Evaluation Team; the gender balance of the key informants to the extent possible given staffing arrangements; applying a gender lens to the EQs, to the analysis of the context, and to the analysis of the interventions reviewed, and how a HRBA was applied. A gender lens has been applied to the presentation of findings, conclusions and recommendations. This includes to the extent possible, considering the gendered experience of human rights standards and principles, given prevailing gender norms and relations in the wider political economy of the country context, and within the sector; and incorporating a gender analysis within results and findings. Although originally intending to capture sex-disaggregated data, it was in practice deemed inappropriate to ask informants of their gender identities. In addition, and in line with the OECD/DAC Quality Standards, the evaluation was conducted using ethical guidelines, including respecting the confidentiality, protection of source and dignity of those interviewed.

The ToR indicate that Sida's approach to evaluation is utilisation-focused and expects the entire evaluation process to carefully consider use of the evaluation. The Evaluation Team has engaged with the different user groups in varying ways throughout the evaluation process:

- Sida HO staff, including policy specialists and advisors for Human Rights and Democracy, Sida's thematic networks and support functions, were engaged through the Evaluation Steering Group and through data collection and validation processes at HO level. This involved frequent interactions with the Steering Group in Stockholm, including in-person and telephone meetings, and written responses to questions and feedback. This process guided the evaluation design and focus. Other key Sida staff were interviewed and/or were members of the Evaluation Reference Group.
- Embassies of Sweden involved in development cooperation, particularly in the case study countries, have been engaged through the Evaluation Reference Group, and through data collection and validation processes at HO and country levels. There was one inception meeting with the broader Evaluation Reference Group of ~25 people, which included one focal point from each of the four embassies where fieldwork was conducted. Embassy staff were involved through consultations prior to fieldwork, including the identification of sector/intervention focus areas, and individual and group discussions during fieldwork.
- Co-operation partners in the case study countries were engaged through data collection at country level. In all four countries, the Evaluation Team held debriefing sessions with embassy staff and with co-operation partners to share and validate preliminary findings.

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<sup>9</sup> UNEG. 2011; UNEG. 2014.

In line with the utilisation-focused methodology, recommendations based on discussion of findings and analysis in the draft evaluation report were discussed and co-formulated at a workshop with the Reference Group in early June 2020, attended by 11 Sida HQ staff and 1 person from the Embassy of Sweden in Albania.

As a result of the utilisation-focused evaluation approach, the evaluation design differed from the FCG Sweden proposal in a number of ways, as specified further in this section. There were two important differences: more attention was devoted to the portfolio review at the inception phase than originally anticipated, and country-level enquiry was directed towards Sida and embassy ways of working rather than extensive fieldwork with rights-holders.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.2 METHODS

The evaluation draws on primary and secondary data sources – in total, interviews with nearly 300 key informants, six group discussions involving Sida staff (Annex 2), nine group discussions with co-operation partner staff and community members,<sup>11</sup> a review of more than 750 documents and organisational websites (Annex 3), and analysis of national and international statistics.

Data collection and analysis took place between May 2019 and May 2020 and included two phases: an inception phase through to January 2020 (portfolio review and country case selection) and subsequently the evaluation phase, which included two-week fieldwork visits in four countries in January and February 2020 and additional document review and interviews at Sida HO and with other key informants. Evaluation procedures were reviewed and approved by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Research Ethics Committee.

A stakeholder mapping was conducted early in the evaluation process to identify key informants and to ensure a broad representation of informants and facilitate triangulation. The mapping was an organic, open-ended process whereby relevant persons and institutions were identified either from document review or by recommendation from key persons at Sida HQ and embassies. Relevant stakeholders were identified as policy makers, administrators and implementers of Swedish development cooperation activities, co-operation partners, including national government institutions, CSOs, multilateral organisations and private sector agents, as well as end users/beneficiaries. The Evaluation Team deliberately sought to select key informants from all categories identified to obtain diverse responses to the EQs.

It was evident during the evaluation process that the interest and perception of relevance of the evaluation was stronger at the centre – i.e. the Sida HQ and, to a

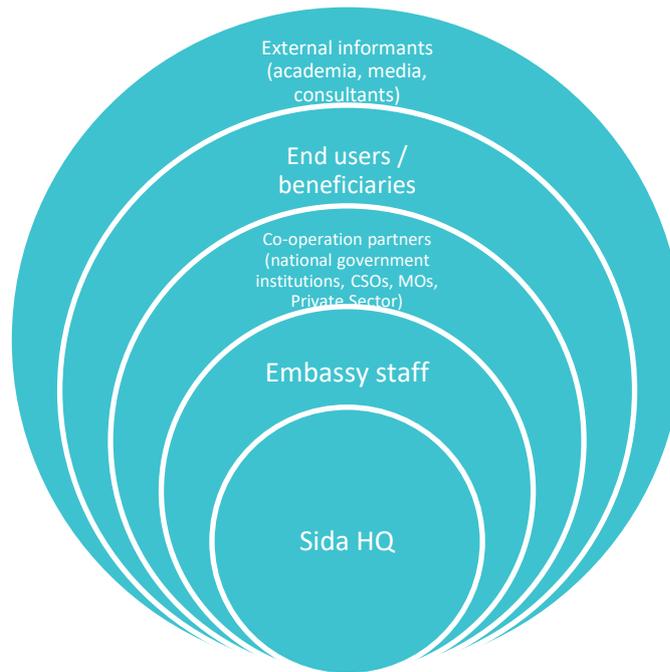
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<sup>10</sup> Sida does not share the view that the utilisation-focused methodology was the reason for the Evaluation Team giving more attention than expected to the portfolio review during the inception phase.

<sup>11</sup> This involved 88 community members/rights-holders, representatives of CSOs, and embassy staff, and is further detailed in the country case study reports in Volume II. Their names are not included in Annex 2.

certain extent, within the embassies – whereas co-operation partners, including CSOs, multilateral organisations and other bilateral donors, end users/beneficiaries of Swedish-funded interventions, as well as external informants (academia, media, consultants, etc.) did not necessarily find the evaluation relevant to their day-to-day activities. Figure 1 shows this phenomenon of decreasing feelings of relevance.

**Figure 1: Evaluation's relevance for different stakeholder groups**



During country case study fieldwork, the Evaluation Team took care to have all identified categories represented among the selected informants, and key informants were purposively selected for their knowledge of and experience with Sida's application of a HRBA at programme, national, regional and/or head office levels. Interviewees were selected based on recommendations from the Steering Group, embassy staff, co-operation partners, other interviewees and the evaluators' familiarity with key actors engaged in human rights and HRBA issues, both nationally and internationally. Country-level informants offered programme, organisational and country-specific perspectives on the EQs and the political economy analysis.

Interviewees currently based at Sida's head office and other key informants based outside of the four case study countries contributed in four ways: (1) as part of the broad portfolio mapping to understand the perceived application of the HRBA across countries and over time; (2) a subsequent round of more targeted interviews to capture understandings of the HRBA at HO level; (3) country-specific efforts from the perspective of staff who had previously been based at embassies; and (4) following fieldwork to verify and explore preliminary findings in greater depth. The Evaluation Team used common interview guides, tailored to individual informants as needed (Annex 4). All interviews were conducted with informed consent. Efforts were made to give interviewees an opportunity to reflect on the concept of and their

practice of applying the HRBA, with the hope that this provided a good use of their valuable time.

Table 1 outlines the categories of the 362 people (key informants and group discussion participants) who contributed to the evaluation.

**Table 1: Categories of informants**

Affiliation	Number	% of total
CSOs (national and international)	101	28%
Sida and Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs	76	21%
Community members/rights-holders	73	20%
National and local government (in the 4 countries)	40	11%
Multilateral organisations	32	9%
Private sector	24	7%
Other donors	8	2%
Other <sup>12</sup>	8	2%

Similarly, **document review** served multiple purposes and took place at multiple stages. In the inception phase, country strategies, strategy reports, Sida HRBA guidance materials and previous reviews contributed to portfolio mapping, country case selection, and refinement of evaluation and interview questions. For the country case studies, a range of documentation was reviewed, directly linked to each EQ: national policy documents (EQ2), human rights assessments, political economy analyses (country Political Economy Analysis overview),<sup>13</sup> external evaluations, embassy assessments, proposals, progress reports, and minutes of meetings with implementing organisations, mid-term reviews, evaluations and organisational websites (EQ1, EQ3, EQ4, EQ5, EQ6). The latter set of programme-specific documents were selected based on the sector and programme focus areas. When screening programme and country-specific documents, the Evaluation Team reviewed the extent to which there was variation across: (1) document type (i.e. discussion of the HRBA in appraisal of intervention documents vs. meeting minutes), (2) programme/sector focus area; (3) organisation; and (4) time (i.e. proposals from the same implementing organisation across grant cycles).

Following fieldwork, three additional structured document reviews were conducted. To inform EQ1 (application of the HRBA in follow-up), the ToR for all decentralised evaluations commissioned by Sida in the four countries from 2010 to 2020 were reviewed to determine: (1) the extent to which the four principles and gender featured in EQs; and (2) whether evaluators' experience in HRBA was a requirement. In order to assess the degree to which Sida discusses a HRBA in formal

<sup>12</sup> Programme implementation unit, political party, Swedish Government institutions other than Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>13</sup> Political economy analysis involves understanding the interaction of political and economic processes in a society, the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time. Collinson, S. 2003.

dialogue with its partners, all Sida Decision on Contributions available on OpenAid concerning the specific interventions looked at by the Evaluation Team were reviewed. To contribute to EQ6 (perceptions at multilateral organisations), the Evaluation Team reviewed formal HRBA policies and strategic frameworks (based on Google searches) for five organisations that were active across case study countries (the European Union (EU), UN Women, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)).

Additional details on the two main phases of data collection and analysis are provided in the next sub-sections.

## 2.3 PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND COUNTRY CASE SELECTION

To guide selection of countries for fieldwork, the Evaluation Team began with all 45 countries with which Sweden has, at some point from January 2010 to September 2019, had a country-specific strategy,<sup>14</sup> based on documents provided on OpenAid.<sup>15</sup> Based on the criteria outlined in the evaluation ToR, the Evaluation Team assessed each country according to the following five criteria:

1. Strategic engagement and effort to work with a HRBA at the embassy and country level,<sup>16</sup> based on country strategy implementation<sup>17</sup> and evidenced through:
  - A. Sida's involvement at the country level in flagship initiatives with an intentional HRBA focus – based on document review and key informant interviews;
  - B. explicit discussion or assessment of HRBA efforts in documents – based on review of country strategies, strategy reports, evaluations and other reports;
  - C. the judgement of key informants – based on consultations by phone and email.
2. Support through Swedish global and regional strategies.
3. Support channelled through multilateral organisations.
4. Geographic and other contextual spread, although the list does not have to cover all regions.
5. Security considerations.

In addition to strategy documents, 31 key informants were consulted, several of whom also spoke with their colleagues, so the perspectives reflect the involvement of

<sup>14</sup> These strategies have been named *Resultatstrategi*, *Strategi för utvecklingssamarbete*, *Samarbetsstrategi*, *Strategi för selektivt samarbete* or *Utfasningsstrategi*.

<sup>15</sup> Development cooperation strategies. <https://openaid.se/sv/development-cooperation-strategies/>

<sup>16</sup> Although not specified in the ToR, during the inception phase the Evaluation Steering Group clarified that this criterion was more important than the other criteria, in order to capture lessons in countries where strategic engagement has taken place.

<sup>17</sup> A general focus on human rights in supported interventions or as a dialogue issue was not considered sufficient to qualify as 'strategic engagement' of a HRBA.

at least another 10 to 15 people. The details of this review and evidence of HRBA efforts for each of the 45 countries are presented in the inception report. As part of the inception phase document review, the Evaluation Team also reviewed evaluation, policy and guidance documents of bilateral and multilateral institutions, including Sida documentation recommended by the Steering Group and reports found through a structured Google search. In total, inception report findings were based on evidence from 167 documents and websites as well as the key informant interviews.

Assessing strategic engagement and effort was challenging for two reasons. First, almost all strategy reports (particularly reports until 2012 when the templates included a special headline for ‘The two perspectives’) explicitly state that a HRBA permeates all interventions as well as the dialogue. Sida’s contribution management system formally requires that all interventions are assessed and described from the perspective of a HRBA. In this sense, all embassies apply a HRBA at this stage and purport to mainstream the approach. In order to distinguish the relative level of engagement across countries, therefore, the Evaluation Team assessed country strategy reports for further evidence of substantive reflections or examples of a HRBA, which were limited. Second, key informants were quite reluctant to characterise HRBA efforts as strategic. Many emphasised that efforts were driven by individuals and were not necessarily sustained over time, particularly when staff moved to other locations. **The limited evidence of strategic HRBA effort identified during the inception phase is an important finding in itself.** It is consistent with observations in a 2018 review of Finland’s application of a HRBA<sup>18</sup> and an internal mapping conducted by Sida’s Department for International Organisations and Policy Support on integration of a HRBA into strategies of multilateral organisations, which also found that documentation of a HRBA was rare and HRBA less visible than expected.

The portfolio review process yielded ten potential case study countries: Albania, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Colombia, Guatemala, Kenya, Moldova, Mozambique, Myanmar and Tanzania. From this list, the Evaluation Steering Group selected Albania, Cambodia, Colombia and Kenya based on an internal Sida assessment of interest of embassies to participate and other ongoing processes and evaluations being conducted in the country.

Table 2 highlights key demographic, socio-economic and institutional indicators across the four case study countries.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Adrien, M-H., Seppo, M. & Poutiainen, P. 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators, UNDP, [openaid.se](http://openaid.se), [www.swedenabroad.se/en/embassies](http://www.swedenabroad.se/en/embassies), World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators. We present the latest figures available: 2018 unless indicated otherwise; GNI per capita and growth 2017 for Albania; Gini index: Albania 2012, Colombia 2017, Kenya 2015; Net ODA 2017 for all countries; Freedom House rating 2020. Freedom House, WGI higher number = higher status. Gini, HDI, GII lower number = higher status.

**Table 2: Key demographic, socio-economic and institutional indicators**

	Albania	Cambodia	Colombia	Kenya
Population, total	2.9 million	16.2 million	49.6 million	51.4 million
Gross national income (GNI) per capita (constant 2010 US\$)	\$4,877	\$1,119	\$7,416	\$1,192
GNI growth (annual %)	2.5%	6.8%	0.7%	6.4%
Gini index (World Bank estimate)	12	-	49.7	40.8
Human Development Index (HDI)	69	146	79	147
Gender Inequality Index (GII)	51	114	94	134
Net official development assistance (ODA) received (% of GNI)	1.2%	4.1%	0.3%	3.2%
Sweden's aid 2010–2019 (US\$)	\$115.2 million	\$300.7 million	\$316.5 million	\$610.6 million
# Embassy staff	14	16	30	67
Freedom House	67	25	66	48
<b>Worldwide Governance Indicators</b>				
Voice and accountability	53	14	44	35
Political stability/absence of violence	59	51	18	12
Government effectiveness	58	32	50	39
Regulatory quality	63	33	65	44
Rule of law	39	11	38	38
Control of corruption	35	9	45	19

## 2.4 COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

Within each of the four case study countries, the Evaluation Team sought to identify and analyse the HRBA at three nested levels:

1. Sida or embassy-wide HRBA efforts concerning all strategic objectives, if any;
2. sector-wide HRBA efforts focusing on a specific strategy objective, if any;
3. intervention-specific HRBA efforts.

The specific sector and intervention areas of focus were selected in consultation with current and former Sida and embassy staff on the basis of strategic and sustained engagement (mature, multi-year interventions), diversity of thematic areas and co-operation partners, and practical and logistical factors. This consultation was also aimed at enhancing the utility and learning focus of the evaluation, where the aim was to collect as much empirical data as possible on the HRBA application. The consequence of this approach was that there was less of a concentrated focus on particular sectors within each country, which had been an original intention by Sida. The limited relevance of applying a strict sector focus to intervention selection was

also made evident by the inception phase finding that where there was strategic engagement with the HRBA, this was very dependent on the work of individual programme officers, and the agreement of Sida in-country and not the result of a sector-level approach to the HRBA. In some embassies, staff also stressed that a sector approach was in practice not applied to work and contributions generally. It was also noted by some embassy staff that context-specific political economy of sector problems, which interventions are trying to address (including to account for sub-national variation), means that generalisable findings on how to apply the HRBA to sectors were unlikely to be meaningful or useful.

Table 3 indicates the focus areas for each of the case study countries, within which specific interventions were reviewed. The focus of the overall evaluation on countries and interventions where HRBA efforts are strategic reflects a ‘most likely’ crucial case selection strategy,<sup>20</sup> positively biased towards cases where application and effects of the HRBA are most likely to be evident.

**Table 3: Areas of focus within each case study country**

Albania	Cambodia	Colombia	Kenya
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market development</li> <li>• Human rights, democracy and rule of law</li> <li>• Environment and climate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights</li> <li>• Public financial management</li> <li>• Employment and labour market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peacebuilding, democracy and human rights</li> <li>• Women’s political participation and economic development</li> <li>• Business development and peacebuilding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment and climate sector</li> <li>• Democracy, gender equity and human rights sector</li> <li>• Inclusive growth through decent work</li> </ul>

During each two-week fieldwork visit, a member of the Evaluation Team and a national consultant conducted in-person interviews and group discussions with key informants and community members in country capitals and, in three of the countries, in at least one sub-national location,<sup>21</sup> supplemented by additional interviews by phone or Skype and in-person interviews with former embassy staff now based in Stockholm or elsewhere. Each case study provides details of the process and data sources in that particular country.

<sup>20</sup> Levy, J.S. 2008.

<sup>21</sup> The Albania case study report includes 6 municipalities and 3 community groups. The Kenya case study report includes interviews and group discussions in 4 locations in 2 counties.

To ensure a **utility focus of the evaluation**, debriefing sessions were held in each country for embassy staff and participating co-operation partners to discuss and verify preliminary findings.

## 2.5 INTERVENTIONS

The specific interventions focused on in each of the four countries are presented below. Each falls within the areas of focus as outlined in Table 3.

### 2.5.1 Albania

**Sustainable Tourism programme**<sup>22</sup> 2015–2020 was co-founded with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which was responsible for implementation. The programme aimed to increase employment and economic opportunities for Albanian citizens – with a particular focus on women and youth-led businesses – to contribute to the improvement of the tourism sector and, more generally, to Albania’s business enabling environment, including workforce development.

The **UNDP-implemented Territorial and Administration Reform (STAR) programme**<sup>23</sup> has operated in two phases (2013 to 2016 and 2016 to 2019). The programmes were based on a request from the Government of Albania to UNDP, which then applied for Swedish funds. The first phase (STAR I) was essentially a re-drawing of the administrative map of Albania through Territorial Reform – i.e. downsizing the number of municipalities. The second phase (STAR II) addressed the responsibilities and capacities of local government and aimed at a well-functioning public administration at municipal level through outreach and gender equality to provide a strong basis for local democracy and citizens’ access to quality public services.

The **Participation and Accountability programme** implemented by Olof Palme International Center (OPC) aims to increase the transparency and accountability of duty-bearers, promote democratic participation and the implementation of social and economic rights through collaboration with a wide group of CSOs. As the Swedish labour movements’ international cooperation organisation, OPC operates in Albania with a specific focus on political rights and labour rights – and in particular women workers’ rights – in addition to general gender and conflict issues.

The **Forestry and Local Economic Development (FLED) programme** implemented by Connecting Natural Values and People (CNVP) from June 2014 to March 2019 was based on a previous collaboration with the Dutch SNV from 2010 to 2014. The FLED programme aimed to strengthen management of decentralised forest and pastures, promote adaptation of user-oriented local government management,

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.usaid.gov/albania/news-information/fact-sheets/fact-sheet-support-tourism-development>

<sup>23</sup> [www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/projects/star-2---consolidation-of-the-territorial-and-administrative-ref.html](http://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/projects/star-2---consolidation-of-the-territorial-and-administrative-ref.html)

increase women's participation in decision-making and economic structures, and provide an enabling institutional, policy and legal framework in support of forest and pasture users.

### 2.5.2 Cambodia

The **Arbitration Council** – established in 2003 by representatives of the government, employers and workers – is an independent institution mandated under the Labour Law to assist in resolving labour disputes. It is supported by the Arbitration Council Foundation (ACF), a registered CSO, which provides technical and managerial services to the council. ACF is also involved in training, research and policy dialogue to strengthen the industrial relations environment. Sida has supported ACF since 2014.

**Diakonia** started working inside Cambodia in 1995 with a focus on food security and livelihood. In 1997, it established a Human Rights and Democracy Programme. Currently, Diakonia has 17 civil society partners, supported with funding relating to Sweden's country strategy or Sida's unit for support to civil society (CIVSAM). Diakonia's programme strategy aims to deliver a broad set of results relating to human rights, democracy and gender equality.

The **Project on Improving Industrial Relations in Cambodia's Garment Industry**, which the ILO implemented with the support of the clothing company H&M and trade union IF Metall, aimed to promote collective bargaining, strengthen regulatory frameworks, and promote more sound policy approaches in the garment industry through policy advice and capacity building at enterprise level, national level and industry level. The project, which was funded by Sida and H&M, was implemented from 2014 to 2017. It had particular relevance for the situation of women, considering that they constitute a clear majority of the workforce in the garment sector.

**Statistics Sweden** has provided support to statistical development in Cambodia since 2009. The support aims to strengthen the capacity of the Cambodian National Institute of Statistics (NIS) to generate basic national account statistics and to make user-friendly statistics available for increased public accountability and transparency. It also focuses on the need to make gender-disaggregated data publicly available. The project focuses on technical capacity development through a Statistics Sweden set-up with a long-term advisor based at the NIS and several short-term experts and missions. Statistics Sweden is one of five entities supported under the Partnership for Accountability and Transparency (PAT), which strives to strengthen the enabling environment for public financial management (PFM) reform through improved public accountability and transparency.

**Transparency International Cambodia**, a national NGO, has received core support from Sida since 2012. It implements a strategy aiming to empower citizens to act individually and collectively against corruption, supporting CSO coalitions to advocate for governance reform, encouraging clean business practices and enhancing the capacity of key government institutions in reform efforts. Transparency International Cambodia is supported under the PAT.

The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** project, Working Towards an Access to Information Law in Cambodia, aimed to facilitate an inclusive process, led by the Ministry of Information, for developing a law on access to information and to more generally promote participatory law-making. The project was implemented from 2014 to 2019. The draft law currently awaits approval by the Council of Ministers.

### 2.5.3 Colombia

Sida has long-standing engagement with UN Women in Colombia. It supports UN **Women's** strategic vision for women's political and economic empowerment in Colombia, and addressing violence against women and girls, conflict-related and otherwise. UN Women's strategy is to focus on the following areas: (1) women's access to leadership roles and participation in decision making at all levels; (2) women's economic empowerment, particularly oriented to the poorest and most excluded women; (3) women's and girls' right to live a life free of violence; (4) the agenda on Women, Peace and Security and humanitarian action, with an emphasis on women's leadership and participation.

**Diakonia** has been working in Colombia since 1997, focusing on peacebuilding and support for human rights and human rights defenders. The intervention, supported by the Embassy of Sweden, is focused on contributing to the enabling social and political conditions for peacebuilding by: (1) improving conditions and guarantees for human rights defenders' work, including on land and environmental rights; (2) addressing drivers of gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation; (3) supporting strategies to address new conflict challenges associated with extraction of natural resources and the use of land (conflict and justice); and (4) continuing to support CSOs' financial, technical and administrative capacities. This intervention includes Diakonia's work with 20 Colombian CSOs. Diakonia applies a gender lens as a matter of organisational policy; and addressing gender-based inequalities and gender justice features prominently in its activities in Colombia.

**International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)** has been operating in Colombia since 2006 (with support from Sweden since 2008). It has focused on the rights of victims in addressing the legacy of human rights abuses in the context of the conflict. Swedish support combines ICTJ engagement with government and state agencies, and with CSOs, to advance the creation and rollout of transitional justice mechanisms. ICTJ applies a gender lens in Colombia, and incorporates gender-specific indicators among output objectives across the Sida-funded interventions it implements.

**Ruta Motor – Phase 2** is a public–private partnership (since 2018) aimed at providing vocational training to disadvantaged youth, building on a previous Sida-funded project. The co-operating partner is Neme, a private sector philanthropic foundation. The intervention combines labour demand and specific skill needs articulated by automotive and industrial sectors through an alliance of private sector enterprises, with relevant tailored training and psychosocial accompaniment of disadvantaged youth. The project is gender responsive and sets out explicit objectives

to address gender inequality, the gendered experience of young women in the labour market, and to develop sex-disaggregated progress on indicators.

#### 2.5.4 Kenya

Swedish support for **water, sanitation and governance** aims to promote effective and efficient, equitable, accountable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) service delivery, efficient water resources management and enhanced CSO participation, knowledge and engagement in WASH sector activities. This support involves both duty-bearers (Water Sector Trust Fund since 2012) and rights-holders (Kenya Water and Sanitation NGO Network (KEWASNET) since 2014) and helps to advance two focus areas that have remained top priorities for Swedish development cooperation throughout the decade: natural resources and the environment; and democracy, gender and human rights.

Sweden's **support to civil society** is primarily channelled via framework agreements to Swedish NGOs that in turn fund Kenyan CSOs. These framework agreements were in place prior to and throughout the period under study (2010–2019). The support focuses on improving governance, combating corruption, enhancing freedom of speech, tackling discrimination and oppression, reducing poverty in all its dimensions, and enabling rights-holders and smaller CSOs to advocate for their rights at local and national levels.

Support for **correctional system reform**, channelled through the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (prior to and throughout the period under study) and the Swedish Prisons and Probation Services (SPPS) since 2014, aims to strengthen capacity to meet international human rights standards related to the fair, impartial and efficient administration of justice and to reduce prison overcrowding through alternative sentencing, based on improved risk and needs assessment. Interventions are targeted at influencing individual behaviours and institutional processes among the principal duty-bearers: the Kenya Prisons Service (KPS) and Probation and Aftercare Service (PACS).

**The Public Private Development Partnership (PPDP), Inclusive Growth through Decent Work in the Great Rift Valley**, which was initiated in 2015, aims to reduce poverty and improve living conditions through decent work and access to rights-based services among rural populations in Narok and Nakuru counties. The actors involved cover the international private sector, multilaterals, parastatals and NGOs, national government and two county governments, trade unions, and affected communities.

## 2.6 DATA ANALYSES AND VALIDATION

As noted earlier, the EQs and a more detailed evaluation matrix (presented in the inception report) that broke the questions into their component parts served as the basis for both data collection and analysis. For the country case studies, the Evaluation Team used a standardised template, oriented around the EQs, along with a context analysis and overview of Sida's strategy and Sida-funded interventions. To develop case study reports, data from interviews, group discussions and documents

provided the basis to answer the EQs, looking for variation across interviewees, organisations, sectors, time, and data source type. Of these, differences across sector were least prominent, so this was not subsequently used as a key analytical dimension. Rather, there were other features of specific programmes and focus areas that appeared to shape the HRBA considerations, which we discuss in the report. As noted, preliminary findings were shared in debriefing/validation workshops with embassy staff and with co-operation partners, who provided clarification and feedback. Case study reports (Volume II) were submitted to the Sida Steering Group in April 2020, all of which have undergone internal peer review, independent quality assurance review, and received feedback from each embassy and from Steering Group members.

Once the case study reports had been drafted, the Evaluation Team held a three-day workshop to analyse and discuss country findings for each EQ and to identify common themes and differences, including how each national context has evolved over the past decade and the implications for HRBA application. These cross-case findings were then supplemented with findings from the inception phase, interviews with Sida HO staff and the review of decentralised evaluations (EQ1), Sida Decision on Contributions (EQ1) and multilateral organisational HRBA guidance (EQ6). Again, data across sources was first analysed by EQ and then salient findings jointly reviewed to draw out key commonalities across the countries and sources and to identify points of difference. Together, these processes served to triangulate findings across sources of evidence and determine key dimensions along which findings varied, which are highlighted in Section 4.

## 2.7 LIMITATIONS

The findings presented in this report and their potential utility are affected by constraints related to the design of the evaluation process, the evaluation object, breadth of scope, case and interviewee selection, and the case-based approach.

In terms of the design of the evaluation process, the ToR noted that primary users should include Sida HO staff (policy specialists and advisors for Human Rights and Democracy, Sida's thematic networks and support functions), staff of embassies involved in development cooperation, particularly in the case study countries, and co-operation partners in the case study countries. This list covers hundreds of people, whereas utilisation-focused evaluation is often more effective when the primary user group is small and has strong ownership and engagement throughout the evaluation process. Moreover, one of the key principles of utilisation-focused and participatory evaluation is the need for primary users to be involved in defining the EQs and approach.<sup>24</sup>

As a result, the potential for use of the evaluation varies across user groups. Because countries were selected during the inception phase, embassy staff and co-

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<sup>24</sup> See, for instance, Chambers, R. 1997; UNDP. 1997; Patton, M.Q. 2008.

operation partners became involved only after the EQs and the orientation of the evaluation were determined (notably, the choice to focus on countries and sectors with strategic HRBA effort). As such, the evaluation responds primarily to the EQs and strategic engagement selection criteria as set out in the ToR, which was developed by Sida HQ staff, represented by the Steering Group. This was reflected in varying engagement of different stakeholders at country level and a function of a centrally commissioned evaluation. Due to staff and partner time constraints, it was not feasible for most key informants to participate in a series of individual and group meetings (kick-off meeting, in-depth interview, focus group discussion, debriefing meeting) or to convene more intensive participatory workshops, as originally intended. Furthermore, this evaluation coincided with other evaluations and reviews covering similar themes that were taking place at the national level by co-operation partners and specific projects. The lack of involvement of embassy staff and co-operation partners at the initial question formulation and evaluation design stage may therefore limit the usefulness of the evaluation for these potential user groups. Although debriefing discussions and materials aimed to highlight findings that would be most relevant, co-operation partners may find that the evaluation is of limited direct use for their ongoing work.

As noted in section 1.1, the evaluation object poses specific challenges for measurement, including the often undocumented nature of ways of working, particularly the application of a HRBA. The inception phase confirmed that there is no single definition of what constitutes a HRBA, how it is integrated in the international policy and practice of different international development organisations, or how it is applied in practice. Section 4, which discusses the evaluation findings – particularly on EQ1, EQ3, EQ4 and EQ6 – reports these differences.

Given the wide scope of the evaluation, it is oriented more towards breadth rather than depth. The ten-year timeframe increases the likelihood that interviewee responses may be affected by recall bias, so the more recent national context and current activities may be more salient in people's minds than the HRBA efforts in 2010. To mitigate this bias, former embassy staff who are now based elsewhere were interviewed and documentation was reviewed throughout the time period. The wide scope of the evaluation also posed challenges for reporting results, which could be presented according to the broad EQs, detailed sub-questions in the evaluation matrix, OECD-DAC criteria, project, country and/or overarching Sida implicit and/or explicit theories of change. Ultimately, the six EQs provided the most straightforward structure to respond to the ToR, within which the Evaluation Team has sought to highlight details and variations that were most prominent in the data.

The decision to pursue a 'most likely' case selection strategy by definition excludes programmes without an intentional focus on a HRBA and consequently does not reflect the full range of Swedish development cooperation, particularly where HRBA efforts may have struggled. Similarly, although interviews with a range of stakeholders and informants who were not identified by Sida were included, recommendations of key informants often reflected people with whom the commissioning agency had closer and more positive relationships. Community meeting participants were selected by the co-operation partners. The experiences

profiled here are therefore likely to be positively biased. Moreover, many interviews and group discussions took place with people in country capitals, where embassies, multilateral organisations, national government institutions and many co-operation partners are based, and their perceptions may be more oriented towards urban and national concerns.

Finally, because a case study approach examines a phenomenon in a specific context, the findings cannot be broadly generalisable to all situations – in this instance, particularly different human rights contexts. The comparative approach undertaken here suggests that there are some commonalities across these four quite distinct national contexts, which may be relevant to other countries Sweden is working with that have similar characteristics. Section 5 discusses these observations further.

## 3 The HRBA as applied by Sida

This section presents a review of the wider policy context of how the HRBA has evolved. First it describes Sida's understanding of the HRBA according to the ToR. Second it summarises the history of the HRBA in Sida and Swedish development cooperation. Third, it describes Sida's guidance on the application of the HRBA.

### 3.1 EVALUATING SIDA'S APPLICATION OF A HRBA

Swedish development policy is anchored in a commitment to ensuring that Swedish development cooperation is operationally directed at promoting and protecting human rights standards in its outcomes across all areas of engagement. Sida is also bound to ensuring that the four principles of a HRBA – namely participation, accountability, openness and transparency, and non-discrimination (equality in dignity and rights) – apply to the ways of working of Sida and its co-operation partners, and across all process aspects of Sida's contribution management. In addition to these four principles underlined in the ToR, Sida guidance further identifies the principle of empowerment, and of the importance of links to human rights (discussed in Section 3.3).

In this respect, the definition of a HRBA in the evaluation ToR takes, as a starting point, a linear theory of change whereby the four principles of participation, accountability, openness and transparency, and non-discrimination (equality in dignity and rights) are *process* components to be integrated in Sida's development cooperation; and that the advancement of human rights standards and other outcomes relating to poverty and democracy are about the *performance* of development cooperation, resulting from the application of these principles.

Thus, where Sida and its co-operation partners base their ways of working on the:

*... principles of this approach (including empowerment of rights holders and capacity development of duty bearers), the initiatives supported by Sweden will contribute to sustainable results in terms of enhancement of respect for and promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights, including gender equality, which in turn contributes to leaving no one behind. (See Annex 1, Terms of reference)*

The ToR further stress that a HRBA primarily focuses on the human rights of disadvantaged groups – i.e. marginalised women, men, girls and boys who face discrimination – and on those whose human rights are at risk of being violated.

## 3.2 HISTORY OF THE HRBA IN SWEDEN'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Support for human rights has long been an important part of Swedish development cooperation.<sup>25</sup> In 1997, a HRBA was introduced through the government's first comprehensive presentation of the role of human rights in Swedish foreign policy.<sup>26</sup> The policy stated that human rights should be integrated in all aspects of Sweden's foreign policy and that a HRBA should be developed in all development cooperation. In 2003, a HRBA became more firmly rooted at the centre of Swedish development cooperation through Parliament's adoption of Sweden's Policy for Global Development. The policy noted that past development efforts had put insufficient emphasis on human rights, democracy and good governance, and stated that a HRBA<sup>27</sup> as well as the perspectives of people living in poverty, should permeate all aspects of Sweden's efforts to contribute to equitable and sustainable development.<sup>28</sup>

Sweden's commitment to human rights and the central position the Policy for Global Development, in particular, gave to a HRBA has subsequently been further underscored and embedded in the government's policy frameworks for international development. The aid policy framework of 2013 stated that 'Sweden's aid is based on human rights and must be guided by a multidimensional view of poverty that takes as its starting point the perspectives on development of people living in poverty themselves, and a rights perspective'.<sup>29</sup> The government's most recent development policy, issued in 2016, similarly states that Swedish development cooperation 'takes as a point of departure and is characterised by the perspective of poor people on development and by a rights-based perspective'.<sup>30</sup> These two perspectives are described as *overarching* and should be analysed and integrated in all aspects and at all stages of Swedish development cooperation. In addition, the policy highlights three thematic perspectives on which the development cooperation should be based: a conflict perspective, gender perspective, and environmental and climate perspective.

Sida has, over the years, taken a range of actions in order to operationalise the HRBA as laid down in the Policy for Global Development and the government's policy frameworks, and since 2010 in the government's ordinance for Sida.<sup>31</sup> Even though Sida reportedly needed some time to turn the HRBA into a way of working,<sup>32</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Wohlgemuth, L. & Odén, B. 2019.

<sup>26</sup> Government of Sweden. 1998. Mänskliga rättigheter in svensk utrikespolitik. Skr. 1997/98:76. Stockholm 5 March 1998.

<sup>27</sup> In the Policy for Global Development, and often in Swedish development cooperation more generally, a HRBA is referred to as a rights perspective.

<sup>28</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2015., Govt. Bill 2002/03:122. Stockholm. 15 May 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2014. Aid policy framework-the direction of Swedish aid. Government Communication 2013/14:131. Stockholm 13 March 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Government of Sweden. 2016. Policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Government communication 2016/17:60. Stockholm 14 December 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. Instruktion för Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Sida). 22 July 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Annex 1. Terms of Reference. 2019.

explicit guidance on its application was included in the 2005 contribution management manual *Sida at Work*.<sup>33</sup> Sida's current information technology (IT)-based system for results management and appraisal of contributions (Trac), introduced in 2012, includes help texts to assist Sida programme officers in using the HRBA throughout the programme management cycle. Sida has also developed and published briefs and tools that provide information and inspiration on the application of the HRBA presented in Sida's page on its HRBA methods and tools, dated 2015.<sup>34</sup>

### 3.3 DEFINING THE HRBA AND A SUMMARY OF SIDA'S GUIDANCE ON APPLYING THE HRBA

#### 3.3.1 Defining the HRBA

At the international level there is a definition of the HRBA set in the United Nations (UN) statement **The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation Towards a Common Understanding Among UN Agencies**, issued in 2003. From this followed the development of different guidance and training documents within UNDP.<sup>35</sup>

According to the UN Common Understanding:<sup>36</sup>

- 'All programmes of development co-operation, policies and technical assistance should further the realisation of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.'
- 'Human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process.'
- 'Development cooperation contributes to the development of the capacities of 'duty-bearers' to meet their obligations and/or of 'rights-holders' to claim their rights.'
- 'The human rights *principles* identified in this agreement are: universality and inalienability; indivisibility; inter-dependence and interrelatedness; equality and non-discrimination; participation and inclusion; and accountability and rule of law.'

The UN Common Understanding also lays down the following elements as necessary, specific, and unique to a human rights-based approach:

- 'Assessment and analysis in order to identify the human rights claims of rights-holders and the corresponding human rights obligations of duty-bearers as well as the immediate, underlying, and structural causes of the non-realization of rights.'

<sup>33</sup> Sida. 2005.

<sup>34</sup> Sida. 2015. Human Rights Based Approach at Sida. [www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/](http://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/)

<sup>35</sup> Piron, L-H. & O'Neil, T. 2005.

<sup>36</sup> UN. 2003.

- ‘Programmes assess the capacity of rights-holders to claim their rights, and of duty-bearers to fulfill their obligations. They then develop strategies to build these capacities.’
- ‘Programmes monitor and evaluate both outcomes and processes guided by human rights standards and principles.’
- ‘Programming is informed by the recommendations of international human rights bodies and mechanisms.’

The UN statement of 2003, drawn up at a UN workshop where UN agencies reflected on how human rights could be meaningfully integrated into development, was an important milestone in the history of human rights politics. In this effort to systematise growing activism around the connections between human rights and development among donors and NGOs, the statement also recognised that in practice ‘each agency has tended to have its own interpretation of approach and how it should be operationalized’.<sup>37</sup> Since then, the evolution, definition and practice of the HRBA within multilateral organisations, UN agencies, bilateral donor organisations and (international) NGOs has varied. This has reflected different organisational realities, resources, and political and normative orientations of donor organisations.<sup>38</sup>

The knowledge base on how various HRBAs feature in development practice shows, first, that definitions of HRBA are thus diverse, as is the application of a HRBA among different organisations.<sup>39</sup> Second, despite this variation, HRBAs tend to share: a commitment to the realisation of human rights; that this commitment should inform all development work of the respective organisation; that this should draw on similar sets of principles, in turn derived from the normative basis of human rights; and that focuses on altering the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers, empowering the former and supporting the latter to be better equipped and politically committed to the realisation of human rights. Third, the existing knowledge base recognises that the political economy conditions of context affect what is politically possible regarding how a HRBA (however it is defined) can be applied. Fourth, as with all agendas of transformative intent, practitioners have to find a balance between implementing the development vision and priorities of their (funding) organisations (bilaterals, multilaterals or NGOs) and prioritising enabling bottom-up agendas framed by rights-holders about which rights should be prioritised, and how strategic approaches for change should be pursued. Finally, in this respect, applying a HRBA affects power relations and is an inherently political endeavour in pursuit of normative goals, and thus in practice requires (and reflects) politically strategic choices made by development practitioners engaging in its application.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> UN. 2003.

<sup>38</sup> Piron, L-H. & O’Neil, T. 2005; Cornwall, A. & Nyamu-Musembi, C. 2004; OECD. 2006.

<sup>39</sup> Broberg, M. & Sano, H-O. 2018; Hickey, S. & Mitlin, D. 2009; Schmitz, H.P. 2012.

<sup>40</sup> Broberg, M. & Sano, H-O. 2018; Cornwall, A. & Nyamu-Musembi, C. 2004; Piron, L-H. & O’Neil, T. 2005; Piron, L-H. & Sano, H-O, 2016; OECD. 2006.

### 3.3.2 Sida's definition of a HRBA and guidance on its application

Sida's definition of and guidance for the HRBA is presented on a dedicated Sida webpage.<sup>41</sup> Sida's application of the HRBA establishes an interactive interconnection between human rights standards and human rights principles, which are mutually reinforcing and co-constitutive.

The webpage states that:

*Sida's application of the HRBA entails a focus on both **what** human rights to achieve and **how** to do it in a way that is based on and leads to the four human rights principles of: non-discrimination; participation; transparency; accountability.*

*The main purpose of the HRBA is to empower boys, girls, men and women to claim their human rights (as rights holders) and to increase the capacity of those who are obliged to respect, promote, protect and fulfil those rights (as duty bearers).<sup>42</sup>*

The Sida HRBA webpage further presents the **P.L.A.N.E.T. checklist**. The acronym sets out the questions that need to be considered when applying a HRBA to development cooperation practice.

**Participation:** Is there active and meaningful participation of those involved – including opportunities for them to influence the formulation of problems, planning, implementation and follow-up?

**Links to human rights:** What links are there to human rights laws, treaties and systems (such as complaints mechanisms, courts and human rights bodies) at the national, regional and/or international levels? Are they sufficient? Do they need to be revised or are they non-existent and need to be developed from scratch?

**Accountability:** Who are the duty-bearers? Do they have the knowledge, mandate, resources and willingness to achieve their human rights obligations? Do rights-holders know who the duty-bearers are and can they hold them to account?

**Non-discrimination:** Who are the rights-holders? Have they been taken into account? Are people in vulnerable situations considered? Is discrimination actively counteracted?

**Empowerment:** What capacity do duty-bearers have to fulfil their obligations and what capacity do rights-holders have to claim their human rights? Can their capacity be strengthened?

**Transparency:** Is information available in an accessible way to duty-bearers and rights-holders? Are they able to attend and observe meetings and processes where issues that affect them are discussed?

The two additional principles included in this list are 'empowerment' and 'links to human rights'. The first underlines the power relations between power-holders and duty-bearers. The emphasis, however, is on *addressing the capacity needs* of these two sets of actors. This assumes that the challenge to overcome is one of capacity.

<sup>41</sup> The Sida HRBA webpage can be found here: [www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida](http://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida)

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida>

The second asks how programming objectives are or can be grounded in human rights laws, treaties and systems.

Two further features of Sida's guidance on applying a HRBA for Sida staff include the following. First, as noted earlier, there is specific **thematic guidance** on the application of the HRBA features in ten thematic areas, including: education and skills development; environment and climate; health; market development; peacebuilding; private sector collaboration; research; sustainable rural livelihoods systems; water and sanitation; and democratic governance.<sup>43</sup>

In addition to the thematic guidance, there are separate sub-sections on the rights of children, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex (LGBTQI) persons, and persons with disabilities. In the latter two categories, this includes briefs for several countries and regions where Sida is active.<sup>44</sup> The briefs do not follow a common structure, nor necessarily speak to P.L.A.N.E.T. They are uneven in content, but speak to the objectives of different thematic areas addressed in Sida's development cooperation.

Finally, although not stated explicitly on Sida's HRBA webpage, there is an **appreciation of the importance of context specificity** as an organisational feature of Sida that should inform its application of the HRBA. This involves learning on how human rights principles are interpreted and adapted to local problems and contexts – something that is particularly important within a context of shrinking space for democracy and human rights.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> On Sida's thematic guidance and the HRBA, see [www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/thematic-areas](http://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/thematic-areas) .

<sup>44</sup> On the rights of children, see [www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/childrens-rights](http://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/childrens-rights); on the rights of LGBTI persons, see [www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/rights-of-lgbti-persons](http://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/rights-of-lgbti-persons); and on the rights of persons with disabilities, see [www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/rights-of-persons-with-disabilities](http://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/human-rights-based-approach-at-sida/rights-of-persons-with-disabilities).

<sup>45</sup> See, for instance, [www.sida.se/English/press/current-topics-archive/2018/shrinking-space-for-democracy-and-human-rights](http://www.sida.se/English/press/current-topics-archive/2018/shrinking-space-for-democracy-and-human-rights); Pettit, J., McGee, R., Dixon, H., Scott-Villiers, P. & Goyder, H. 2015.

## 4 Responses to evaluation questions

In this section of the report, findings are presented for each of the six EQs, evidenced by the cross-case analysis, supplemental document review, and interviews from the inception and evaluation phases with Sida HQ and other key informants not based in the four case study countries.

### 4.1 EVALUATION QUESTION 1

**To what extent have Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners applied a HRBA throughout the design, planning, implementation and follow-up of Swedish development cooperation in the case study countries? What has worked well, less well and why?**

#### Box 1

This evaluation highlights an embedded approach to the application of the HRBA, where it underpins overall strategy and the rationale for development cooperation, and is a part of programming – manifested in different ways – rather than a separate area of attention. This embedded approach has resulted in varied application, dependent on the orientation of the individual, organisation or intervention concerned. However, there were no clear patterns observed relating to the thematic or sectoral orientation of Sida’s support.

In practice, the evaluation found no clear distinction between applying the HRBA and putting the advancement of human rights at the centre of the overall work of Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners in-country. Often, applying the HRBA and focusing on the improvement of the human rights situation in context was used interchangeably by embassy staff and co-operation partners especially. There was a view among some Sida and embassy staff that strict adherence to the four principles of a HRBA could result in a tokenistic ‘box-ticking’ exercise, which needed to be avoided. Rather, there was a view that the priority should be to focus on identifying opportunity structures to address the power imbalances between rights-holders and duty-bearers. Generally, Sida staff and co-operation partners (other than some human rights groups) made limited use of the recommendations and considerations of international human rights bodies and mechanisms.

When Sida staff and co-operation partners are particularly effective in applying the HRBA – most notably in contexts where human rights are more constrained – it is related to an understanding of the political economy conditions of context, the ability *in practice* to adapt work and programming to locally grounded choices about what is possible in the protection and realisation of human rights, and to operate in politically informed ways. This requires deep country knowledge, technical and political knowledge, investment in long-term relationships,

flexibility, and political skills to navigate existing opportunity structures and context-specific constraints. Adaptive capacity and working with context is important given the political nature of human rights realities, and how they affect all development and governance change processes.

#### 4.1.1 Strategy and strategic engagement

In this sub-section, the strategy documents at global, regional and national levels are reviewed along with the nature of the strategic embassy-level engagement.

##### *i. Global and regional policy and strategy documents*

In 2019, Sida's work was governed by 44 geographic and thematic strategies issued by the Swedish government. The geographic strategies are either country specific or regional. Sida's work with Cambodia, Colombia and Kenya is primarily mandated by country strategies. In the case of Cambodia and Kenya, support is also provided through the regional strategies for Asia and the Pacific<sup>46</sup> and Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>47</sup> respectively. There is, at the time of writing, no regional strategy for Latin America, and Sida's regional support in Latin America was phased out in 2010. Regarding Albania, Sweden has not had a country strategy since 2012, and Sida's support has, since 2014, primarily been mandated by the Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform Cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey.<sup>48</sup> In addition to the geographic strategies, part of Sida's support to the four case study countries is guided by Sweden's thematic strategies, including the Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations,<sup>49</sup> the Strategy for Research Cooperation and Research in Development Cooperation,<sup>50</sup> and the Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation in the Areas of Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law.<sup>51</sup>

In keeping with the policy that all Sweden's development cooperation should be permeated by a HRBA, the approach is highlighted in most of Sweden's current cooperation strategies. However, the extent to which the strategies engage with and provide guidance for operationalisation on the basis of a HRBA varies. The Strategy for Multilateral Development Policy,<sup>52</sup> for instance, makes no reference at all to human rights or a HRBA. The Strategy for Sweden's Regional Development

<sup>46</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2016. Strategy for Sweden's Regional Development Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific Region 2016–2021.

<sup>47</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2016. Strategy for Sweden's Regional Development Cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa 2016–2021.

<sup>48</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2014. Sweden's Reform Cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014–2020.

<sup>49</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2017. Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations for the Period 2016–2022.

<sup>50</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2014. Strategy for Research Cooperation and Research in Development Cooperation 2015–2021.

<sup>51</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2017. Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation in the Areas of Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law 2018–2022.

<sup>52</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2017. Strategy for multilateral development cooperation.

Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific Region 2016–2021 and the Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations 2016–2020<sup>53</sup> have a clear and explicit HRBA focus. Under the regional Asia and Pacific strategy, Sweden should contribute to sustainable development through ‘mutual interaction between human rights, democracy, gender equality, environment and climate change’. The purpose of the civil society strategy is to support the development of a vibrant and pluralistic civil society operating from a HRBA in order to improve the conditions of people living in poverty and to increase respect for human rights and promote sustainable development. Under the strategy, civil society is identified as having a key role in the promotion of human rights. The strategy states explicitly that civil society should conduct its work from a HRBA permeated by the four principles of participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency.

Over the past ten years, Sida has taken several actions to strengthen the application of a HRBA across the strategies governing its work and among its global-level co-operation partners. Considering the country and case-based focus of the present evaluation, these actions have not been assessed systematically. They include, however, efforts to strengthen the human rights focus of the World Bank;<sup>54</sup> support to the development of the EU’s work with a HRBA;<sup>55</sup> work to underline the importance of a HRBA within the Global Partnership for Education;<sup>56</sup> contributions to ensuring a strengthened HRBA in UNESCO’s International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education;<sup>57</sup> and capacity development on a HRBA for Swedish civil society, government and private sector actors at the Sida Partnership Forum.<sup>58</sup> Sida has also cooperated with other agencies and actors to exchange experiences of working with a HRBA.<sup>59</sup> For Africa, Sida staff and embassies had, for a number of years, access to the assistance of a helpdesk on HRBA, and an external helpdesk on human rights and democracy, including a HRBA, has recently been commissioned for Sida at large.

*ii. Global strategic engagement on human rights and a HRBA*

The HRBA, as laid down in the Policy for Global Development, and the government’s policy framework for international development cooperation are closely linked to and reinforced by a number of other initiatives and strategic directions guiding Sweden’s foreign policy more broadly. These include: the government’s feminist foreign policy,<sup>60</sup> which focuses on global gender equality and women’s human rights; the Drive for Democracy initiative launched in 2019 to

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<sup>53</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2016. Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations for the Period 2016–2020.

<sup>54</sup> Sida. 2019. Sidas årsredovisning 2018.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Sida. 2020. Sidas årsredovisning 2019.

<sup>57</sup> Sida. 2018. Sidas årsredovisning 2017.

<sup>58</sup> Sida. 2016. Sidas årsredovisning 2015; Sida. 2014. Sidas årsredovisning 2013.

<sup>59</sup> Sida. 2013. Sidas årsredovisning 2012.

<sup>60</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2019. Handbook. Sweden’s feminist foreign policy.

defend and promote democracy around the world;<sup>61</sup> and the Global Deal initiative launched by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to address global challenges in the labour market and promote social dialogue and sustainable growth.<sup>62</sup>

### *iii. Country strategy*

In all four case study countries, Sweden's country strategies make an explicit commitment to advancing human rights as part of Sweden's strategic engagement. However, the degree to which the HRBA is explicitly articulated in the strategy documents has varied over time and between countries.

In **Kenya**, Sweden's development cooperation strategies from 2010 to 2019 are explicit in their prioritisation of human rights, both as a rationale for Sida support and as key normative objectives. The foundations for an explicit HRBA in Kenya can be seen in Sweden's support for governance reform efforts in the early 1990s, a focus that continued throughout the 2000s. This includes the Mainstreaming in Action approach (MAINIAC), pursued from 2003 to 2008, which integrates the four HRBA principles in six sectors and aimed to develop capacity among staff at the embassy and within the Kenyan government.<sup>63</sup>

In **Cambodia**, Sida's overarching and explicit theory of change has long been to support the institutions and structures required for upholding democratic development and human rights, as well as to strengthen the capacity of rights-holders to claim their human rights and hold those in power to account. The focus has been on institutions and organisations where continued changes seem possible despite a context of limited democratic space.<sup>64</sup> The overall importance attached to human rights issues appears to have **gradually increased** during the period under review.

In **Colombia**, Sweden has helped to support peacebuilding and to improve human rights in a conflict setting, both through the political dialogue and through Sida programming.<sup>65</sup> The theory of change has been that support to long-term processes of bottom-up mobilisation, voice and agency, combined with support to institutional and political reform in preparation for the peace process, can contribute to enabling a transition from conflict to peace, and improving democratic governance and human rights. To this end, Sweden has invested in: building different civil society and state capabilities relating to peacebuilding; providing accompaniment and logistical support to civil society actors to ensure safe access to networks and key meetings; and cultivating buy-in from relevant actors in the conflict.

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<sup>61</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Drive for Democracy. [www.swemfa.se/drive-for-democracy](http://www.swemfa.se/drive-for-democracy).

<sup>62</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2016. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, along with OECD and ILO, launches Global Deal in New York. [www.government.se/articles/2016/09/prime-minister-stefan-lofven-along-with-oecd-and-ilo-launches-global-deal-in-new-york](http://www.government.se/articles/2016/09/prime-minister-stefan-lofven-along-with-oecd-and-ilo-launches-global-deal-in-new-york).

<sup>63</sup> Brun et al. 2008

<sup>64</sup> Sida. 2018. Strategirapport 2017 för Kambodja, 2014-2018.

<sup>65</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2016. Strategy for Swedish Development Cooperation in Colombia 2016–2020; Government Offices of Sweden. 2009. Strategy for Swedish Development Cooperation in Colombia 2009–2013 (extended to 2016).

In the case of **Albania**, Sweden has been engaged with development cooperation in the country since 2001. From 2010 to 2019, development cooperation between Sweden and Albania has mainly been governed by two specific geographical results strategies.<sup>66</sup> Except for civil society support through Swedish NGOs, synergy with other strategies has been limited. The 2009–2012 strategy was bilateral and focused specifically on Albania in support of the establishment of a stronger democratic state, sustainable development, and improved opportunities for achieving EU membership, mainly in the sectors of democratic governance and human rights, and natural resources and environment. The 2014–2020 regional results strategy for East Europe, Western Balkan and Turkey has added a third sector: increased economic integration in EU and market economic development. Attention to human rights is primarily addressed under governance and civil society, but different aspects of a HRBA have been at the centre of most interventions also in the sectors of environment and economic development.<sup>67</sup> A feature of Sweden’s engagement in Albania is that it is in line with overall EU foreign policy priorities and based on the country’s own priorities in pursuit of EU membership.<sup>68</sup> Thus, the human rights orientation of the strategy mirrors the EU accession requirements.

*iv. Multidimensional poverty analysis*

In 2017, Sida launched a new framework for understanding poverty in multiple dimensions, the multidimensional poverty analysis (MDPA). Emphasising the perspectives of people living in poverty, the MDPA should contribute to an increased understanding of the situation of different groups in society, going beyond statistical averages. The MDPA looks at four dimensions of poverty: resources; opportunities and choice; power and voice; and human security. The MDPA relates to the HRBA and notes that being poor through lacking *power and voice* concerns the articulation of rights and participation in decision-making structures, and that being poor in terms of *human security* means that violence and insecurity undermines possibilities of exercising human rights. The political and institutional context, which is one of four areas that should be assessed as part of the MDPA in order to understand the causes of poverty and possibilities to escape it, refers among other things to human rights.<sup>69</sup>

MDPAs have been carried out by external consultants in Kenya in 2018,<sup>70</sup> and in Cambodia in 2019,<sup>71</sup> as input for the development of a new country strategy. The reports from these two MDPAs make no explicit reference to a HRBA. The Kenya report makes little or no use of the recommendations of international human rights

<sup>66</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2009. Strategy for Development Cooperation with Albania, January 2009–December 2012; Regeringskansliet 2014. Resultatstrategi för Sveriges reformsamarbete med Östeuropa, Västra Balkan och Turkiet, 2014–2020.

<sup>67</sup> Strategirapport för reformsamarbete i Östeuropa, Västra Balkan och Turkiet 2014–2020 – Albanien, 15.04.2019; Buhl-Nielsen, E., Devine, C., Groenbech, M. & Svedberg, M. 2019.

<sup>68</sup> Government Offices of Sweden. 2009. Strategy for Development Cooperation with Albania, January 2009–December 2012. p.15.

<sup>69</sup> Sida. 2017. Dimensions of Poverty: Sida’s conceptual framework.

<sup>70</sup> Diwakar, V. & Shepherd, A. 2018.

<sup>71</sup> Andersen, H. 2019.

bodies and mechanisms, but it discusses poverty in relation to the principles of participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability. The two reports do not apply the rights-holder and duty-bearer concepts but do discuss issues of capacity and empowerment of individuals and institutions. The MDPA report for Cambodia, in particular, provides a succinct analysis of recent developments in the country's overall human rights situation. Both the Kenya and Cambodia reports include a gender focus, with presentations and discussions of gender-based gaps in access to resources, opportunities, power and human security. The Colombia MDPA is currently being developed.

v. *Sida's strategic engagement on human rights at country level*

Improving the human rights situation and advancing human rights norms in ways that alter the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers was described as core business of Sida's strategic orientation at the embassy level. Relevant features of Sida's strategic engagement across the different countries include the following.

First, (as discussed further in relation to EQ4) in the four case study countries, Sida and (more variably so) Foreign Ministry staff are seen by other stakeholders to prioritise human rights, and to support advancing human rights norms and standards in both development cooperation and in the political dialogue in which Sweden engages. However, advancing human rights was often perceived as constituting the HRBA, such that **support to human rights and application of the HRBA were often perceived as interchangeable** in Sweden's engagement in-country by informants across the stakeholder groups.

Second, in some cases at embassy level, **the relationship between Sida staff and the work of Foreign Ministry staff was seen as a key space for strategically supporting the advancement of human rights norms and standards in the country**. This is an example of politically informed ways of working that in some settings combines a two-pronged approach to human rights work. This includes working through political dialogue with government and through development cooperation that supports the empowerment of rights-holders or contributes to building the capacity of duty-bearers. The degree to which strategic engagement is integrated between the political and development sections at embassy level varies from country to country.

### Box 2: Examples of strategic engagement

- In Cambodia, Sweden has long been an important actor in terms of funding, but traditionally less so in terms of dialogue according to one study<sup>72</sup> and some key informants. This seems to have changed, as in the recent past its role both as funder of human rights activism and, according to interviewees, as a vocal actor in the human rights dialogue has increased. Sida and the Embassy of Sweden in Cambodia are now seen as more purposeful in supporting human rights

<sup>72</sup> Andersen, H., Larsson, K.-A. & Öjendal, J. 2019.

- defenders, speaking out and maintaining a broad and inclusive dialogue on human rights issues, and acting to secure freedom of expression and assembly.
- In Colombia, Sida and Foreign Ministry staff were seen by other stakeholders to support advancing human rights norms and standards in all the areas of aid and political dialogue in which it engages. Sweden's support to the peace process has included both strategic engagement with the government in support of peace talks and to push for an inclusive and participatory peace process, and investment through Sida in civil society capacity to claim human rights rights, and state capacity to meet human rights obligations. This investment has been oriented to supporting the peace process and the implementation of the 1991 Constitution, in which human rights have constitutional rank.
  - In Albania, in terms of *foreign policy*, main actions are related to the Universal Periodic Review processes, policy dialogue with government, and participation in the EU accession process. Dialogue is a key instrument in the promotion of human rights and gender equality in particular in relation to the Albanian government, as well as with other donor agencies. Alignment with national policies and establishment of partnerships with Albanian and Swedish actors are other important instruments to promote a HRBA. Some of the key characteristics of Swedish *development cooperation* in Albania are the strong commitment to strengthen public administration capacity, promote gender equality and provide core support to civil society.<sup>73</sup>
  - In Kenya, human rights and democracy, gender and climate are intended to be cross-cutting priorities for the embassy's externally facing work. The embassy aims to take advantage of windows of opportunity to further advance the realisation of Kenya's very ambitious Constitutional aspirations; for instance, when the country hosts international convenings, this provides an additional platform to raise the voices of rights-holders and highlight the need for continued efforts to fulfil the obligations the country has set for itself. A minority of key informants, but from multiple organisations and sectors, thought Sweden could be more vocal in triggering discussion of rights in national policy dialogues. Questions were raised regarding the importance of Kenya's stability in the region and what appears to some as an increasing reluctance of international actors to speak about rights issues because of the country's strategic importance to national and international interests in Eastern and Central Africa.

Third, **the role of the embassies accompanying actors** in vulnerable situations was valued by many CSOs as contributing in different ways to protecting human

<sup>73</sup> Embassy of Sweden. 2018. Strategy Report 2017 for Albania Implementing the Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014–2020, 15.04.2018. pp. 2–3.

rights in at-risk situations, giving voice and visibility to specific rights struggles, and contributing to shaming of ongoing rights violations.

Finally, there is a perception among co-operation partners and beneficiary groups that **Sweden enacts the HRBA in the ways of working that characterise Sida's development cooperation support in-country**. This is further strengthened by the view among embassy staff that the HRBA provides a normative and moral compass for its work. More broadly, Sida is also seen by other informants to engage in the practice of the HRBA principles, as a matter of course – enabling participatory processes, championing openness and transparency, supporting rights-holders to hold duty-bearers to account, and working to address structural patterns of discrimination.

Overall then, Sweden is strongly associated with a HRBA – no matter what specific definition of a HRBA is applied by different stakeholders (see EQ4). Moreover, it is considered within embassies and among co-operation partners that the components of the HRBA – including its principles, and the norms and standards that it champions – are part of the DNA and core values of Swedish foreign policy, of its international development cooperation efforts and practice, and of Swedish social norms. The data collected by the Evaluation Team does not suggest that there are clear variations in the application of a HRBA between the thematic areas or sectors to which Sida's development cooperation is directed.

#### 4.1.2 HRBA principles and the role of P.L.A.N.E.T.

The country case studies show that the HRBA principles are applied in diverse ways, both across and within countries, and across and within sectors. In all four countries, although not always explicitly in programme documents, the **four human rights principles are reflected in Sida's work, with varying degrees of focus across interventions**. In addition, a focus on the **empowerment of rights-holders** and sometimes **basing programming on international human rights standards** were also evident in interventions. There appears to be a varied understanding among Sida staff of what the HRBA is, which in turn affects its application. There is a more common wider understanding, however, that supporting the advancement of human rights norms and standards is at the core of Swedish international development cooperation.

**The HRBA principles were valued on their own merit as constitutive components of a human rights-based society, and as objectives to be pursued among some Sida staff.** In some cases, there was the view that an interactive, circular and mutually reinforcing relationship between principles and norms was valuable and central to supporting the advancement of human rights. That is, HRBA principles were not only considered as process components, but also as intended outcomes. In addition, human rights norms and standards were considered not only as intended objectives, but as providing normative guidance that should underpin the practice and process of programming. In several cases, the principles were integrated in response to political economy conditions of context, and in dialogue with co-operation partners and other informants to identify the main human rights challenges and features of the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers, and how that needed to be addressed.

**P.L.A.N.E.T. was mentioned explicitly on only a few occasions by Sida staff** in the four case studies. When mentioned, it was noted as a useful checklist, but mostly seemed not to be a prominent point of reference when discussing the application of the HRBA. However, **five of the six principles elaborated in P.L.A.N.E.T.** were often referred to in discussions with Sida staff and co-operation partners, not necessarily in relation to P.L.A.N.E.T. but in terms of how Sida staff and co-operation partners tended to describe aspects of Sida-funded interventions that they saw as relevant to the application of a HRBA. Reference to the ‘link to human rights’ norms and standards was the least evident (i.e. the ‘L’ of P.L.A.N.E.T.)

The principles were used both in reference to the **internal practice** of how interventions are implemented and in relation to the **external intended change process** – i.e. how they were intended to alter the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers and advance human rights norms and standards. These internal and external dimensions to how the principles are understood are not mutually exclusive, and in many cases were both present in intervention design and/or the practice of applying a HRBA.

In practice, Sida was perceived by co-operation partners to enact the four key principles – participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability – in its ways of working. This was especially so as regards the principles of participation and non-discrimination. Sida staff engagement with co-operation partners, for instance, was frequently characterised as consultative and participatory, allowing for locally grounded agenda-setting, and for co-operation partners to lead on defining (in practice) how principles of the HRBA should feature in projects and programmes. **This consultative and dialogic dynamic between Sida staff and co-operation partners enables local ownership of how both the HRBA and human rights objectives feature in interventions.**

#### *i. Participation*

Generally, of the four HRBA principles, participation was perceived by embassy staff and co-operation partners as the most closely associated with Sida’s application of the HRBA, and the easiest to integrate. It is associated with supporting rights-holders’ capacity to take part in decisions that affect their lives and to lead on the realisation of their human rights, contributing to their empowerment as citizens and in relation to duty-bearers. In addition, interventions that accommodate broader participation – for instance, of targeted groups – in defining programming objectives and processes were also seen by Sida staff as contributing to rights-holders’ voice and agency, as relevant and possible to programmes. However, it was reported that participation has been more difficult in relation to children’s rights.

Among Sida staff, the principle of participation was commonly appreciated for its intrinsic value, as fundamental to inclusive decision making and political engagement that enhances the possibility of empowered and proactive citizens, and in all countries, advancing women’s participation across intervention areas. Further, the instrumental value of using participation as the basis for constructive dialogue between rights-holders and duty-bearers was underlined by Sida staff and many co-

operation partners, and, to a lesser degree, in relation to advancing wider development and governance objectives.

In Colombia, for instance, engaging the different parties to the conflict was seen by both Sida and co-operation partners as fundamental for peacebuilding, contributing to the possibility of a common purpose among conflicting interests in the peace process. There was also a recurrent concern both among Sida staff and co-operation partners that participation needs to be meaningful and not tokenistic, otherwise it would risk undermining the credibility of meaningful progress on human rights and building inclusive processes.

In Albania, the concept of participation was realised through: support to inclusive consultations and community meetings to engage as broad a group of citizens (rights-holders) as possible in needs identification, planning and budgeting processes; a focus on change of organisational culture, mentality and practices; economic empowerment, especially of women, as leverage for participation in political decision making; and introduction of new technology (apps) for contributions in discussions.

In Cambodia, some co-operation partners identified the principle of participation as an objective in itself. UNESCO's Sida funded access to information initiative sought to both ensure broad participation in the development of the Access to Information Law and to develop a participatory approach to law-making. In a context where shrinking civic space is a challenge, this was an example of support to government–civil society dialogue. One of Transparency International Cambodia's (TIC) primary goals is to increase public demand for budget transparency, which the organisation is striving to advance through public forums at the sub-national level. These forums have provided opportunities for people to interact with and provide direct feedback and comments to national and sub-national public administrators.

In Kenya, participation and citizen consultation is widely expected and commonly undertaken by the government. Enhancing participation in Sida-supported interventions included: CSO engagement in the review of the 2016 Water Act; the creation of PPDP community action plans based on community ranking of priority needs; involvement of prison and parole officers in training their peers and conducting prison audits; and development of criteria for participation of beneficiaries in proposal design with potential CSO grantees and involvement of beneficiaries in closeout assessments.

Mostly, it was found that co-operation partners appear to subscribe to the idea that interventions should be designed in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders and, when feasible, with rights-holders. This was also specific to the particular context, issue and problem in terms of how broadly consultation is possible, or indeed intended. But overall, Sida, as noted, is perceived to be a donor that has a consultative and frequent engagement with co-operation partners. Some co-operation partners remarked that this contributed to a 'socialisation' into the practice of participation, including in the degree to which it incentivises meaningful buy-in and support to intervention objectives.

In Cambodia, for instance, all partners consulted appear to take reasonable steps to ensure stakeholder input, particularly in project design and development of organisational strategies. Notably, Diakonia in Cambodia and Colombia, and the

ICTJ in Colombia, underlined both the intrinsic and instrumental value of integrating participatory processes in internal organisational planning and agenda-setting, involving beneficiary organisations and rights-holders (directly or indirectly) in identifying intervention priorities and strategic choices. Both the work of Diakonia in the two countries, and of ICTJ in Colombia, addressed women's rights and gender inequality, through participatory engagement of women as rights-holders in identifying intervention priorities as relevant.

In the Ruta Motor Phase 2 intervention in Colombia, which focuses on business development and peacebuilding, programming documents and reported implementation practice emphasise the value of ensuring that the target group (disadvantaged youth) take part in programme design and implementation. The principle of participation was seen as an important *process* feature in supporting voice and agency of disadvantaged youth (including young women in vulnerable situations) in an unequal society, contributing to their employability and empowerment, and to the sustainability of the intended outcome of relevant skills training for business partners, thereby securing ongoing buy-in from participating businesses.

#### *ii. Non-discrimination*

Non-discrimination features variably across projects and programmes, and not always explicitly as a HRBA principle. It was often not clear that integrating non-discrimination was an intentional HRBA *process* feature of interventions, aside from the widely shared perception that Sida is associated strongly with addressing discrimination and exclusion. Rather, non-discrimination – when it was included in documents – often featured as an intended outcome of development cooperation. In all cases, non-discrimination was connected explicitly to addressing gender-based discrimination.

In both Colombia and Kenya, the rights-oriented national constitutions of 1991 and 2010 respectively provide a powerful opportunity structure on which to pin non-discrimination in Sida's development support – not primarily as an input, but rather as an intended outcome and explicit goal. In Colombia, UN Women included non-discrimination as an objective in itself, and which is associated with the HRBA, in its strategic vision, for which Sida is providing non-earmarked funding. Thus, the principle was especially prominent for UN Women not only as a matter of process in programming, but also as an explicit objective in relation to overcoming gender-based forms of discrimination.

To varying degrees, other discrimination challenges are addressed in interventions across the countries in relation to minority ethnic groups, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTQI communities, Roma and Egyptians (in Albania and Colombia), and internally displaced people and refugees (Colombia).

In Colombia, there was explicit mention of the need to address intersectional inequalities, within Sida, among co-operation partners and CSOs, as an important area to address on issues of discrimination. This was noted both as a *process* feature in relation to addressing internal organisational dynamics of the co-operation

partners, CSOs or government agencies that Sida or cooperation partners work with, and as a wider objective of social transformation.

### *iii. Accountability*

There was overall a blurred line between accountability and transparency in all four countries. As regards the internal dimension of accountability (i.e. accountability within organisations), there is some confusion on what features of this are intended as a consequence of the application of a HRBA, or are simply a principle of good programming.

Where there was mention of accountability as an internal organisational issue, it included (as in Albania) accountability being strengthened through a focus on co-operation partners/institutions' legitimacy and governance structures, introduction of formal agreements (memorandums of understanding) and requirement for financial contributions. Sida's direct efforts to ensure that its co-operation partners are accountable in their own operations relate primarily to monitoring of co-operation partners' systems for financial management, anti-corruption and audits.

In the case of Diakonia, both in Cambodia and in Colombia, the international NGO has, for many years, worked with its partners to improve their organisational systems of transparency and accountability. It has: provided training sessions; supported partners' own capacity development initiatives; encouraged partners to establish boards of directors, rules and regulations for their governance and financial management; and, more recently, introduced whistle-blower mechanisms. Forum Syd is undertaking similar internal system strengthening efforts with its CSO framework partners in Kenya.

Across all four countries, several of the Sida-supported interventions have an explicit focus on promoting accountability externally, at a societal level, aimed at contributing to a rebalancing of the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers. In Cambodia, in a context in which the justice system is otherwise not equipped to hold power-holders to account for human rights violations and other crimes, Sida's support to OHCHR and NGOs that expose these actions may be regarded as contributions to accountability and, in many situations, is the only form of justice or accountability available.

In Albania, accountability is enhanced through the publication of information and results through diverse channels, engagement of CSOs and citizens (rights-holders) in municipal budget monitoring, establishment of youth parliaments and/or youth advisory boards, strengthening of women's political and economic participation, and support to legislative processes to strengthen accountability of duty-bearers.

In Kenya, efforts to strengthen accountability tended to relate to addressing the accountability of duty-bearers to rights-holders, in terms of *which organisations* Sweden supports across the different interventions and *how* the issue is addressed so that duty-bearers can fulfil their obligations. For instance, after supporting duty-bearers in the water sector, more recent contributions have also funded the Kenya Water and Sanitation NGO Network (KEWASNET) to strengthen citizen awareness and empowerment.

*iv. Openness and transparency*

Across all four countries, transparency was perhaps the most elusive of the four principles in how it was represented across the different interventions. According to P.L.A.N.E.T., the principle is related to whether information is available in an accessible way to duty-bearers and rights-holders; and if they are able to attend and observe meetings and processes where issues that affect them are discussed. In this view, it is an enabling process feature for the realisation of human rights. In turn, the right to information is a valued human rights outcome in itself.

In Albania, transparency was intrinsically linked to accountability, as both a precondition and a result. Promotion was through demand on the quality of Sida co-operation partners' internal processes, systematic use of baseline data to document results, as well as open planning processes and insistence on publication of information (plans, budgets and reports) and a deliberate use of proactive and positive language – e.g. 'integrity and transparency' rather than 'anti-corruption', especially when dealing with duty-bearers.

Similarly, in Kenya, there were examples in each area where programmes sought to improve openness. For example, the Water Sector Trust Fund, a state corporation, uses transparent criteria to identify counties and prioritise households within them, and to publicly advertise for tenders; once awarded, it holds a public launch to explain the objective and amount of funding provided. Across programmes, conducting ongoing monitoring and making this information available either institutionally or to the broader public was a common means of improving transparency.

In the case of Colombia, transparency and the right to information is also associated with knowledge production, and documenting human rights abuses related to the conflict. Transparency was articulated as (the right to) access to information and knowledge with regard to establishing truth and memory relating to the legacy of conflict and ongoing violence. Transparency was also associated with accountability, as in the case of the ICTJ's work, including support for the Truth Commission, and research organisations like the Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP), or member-based CSOs such as Colombia Diversa (working on LGBTQI issues), where Sida support has focused on establishing records of human rights violations. Again, transparency is both an input into enabling truth-telling around human rights abuses and a way of contributing potentially to holding duty-bearers or perpetrators of abuse to account; it is also an objective, as a measure of the capacity of rights-holders to access information that will enable the realisation of their human rights.

*v. Empowerment*

P.L.A.N.E.T. also includes empowerment as a principle of its HRBA, and asks:

- What capacity do duty-bearers have to fulfil their obligations and rights-holders have to claim their human rights?
- Can their capacity be strengthened?

In all four countries, empowerment was an explicit part of the HRBA in practice. Within embassies, and among most co-operation partners, whether there is a common

understanding on HRBA principles and how these should be applied, all shared the view that advancing human rights involves a change in power relations between duty-bearers and rights-holders. There were efforts to address gender-based inequalities in all cases in relation to empowerment of women as rights-holders. Across most interventions, there was an explicit concern with addressing the power imbalance between rights-holders and duty-bearers. Moreover, this was acknowledged as a core component of what a HRBA should involve – both as process and intended outcome.

In Cambodia, all reviewed interventions have a strong empowerment focus, often paying particular attention to the situation of women. Several of the supported interventions, including support to UNESCO, the ACF, the ILO and TIC, have strived to fulfil human rights by enhancing the capacity of both rights-holders and duty-bearers, and creating platforms where these actors can meet. While this cannot be realistically achieved in all interventions, there is broad agreement about the need to create or identify such platforms. The focus of CSO capacity-development initiatives has often been driven by what type of training the donor is set up to deliver, even though intended beneficiaries may be consulted on training needs. Previous evaluations have suggested that capacity-development initiatives are most effective when tailored to the needs of specific communities or organisations.<sup>74</sup>

In Kenya, programming is oriented to supporting the implementation of the Kenyan Constitution, which creates an especially conducive institutional framing for altering the relationship between duty-bearers and rights-holders across different sectors and services. However, substantively shifting power relations between historically marginalised rights-holders and duty-bearers remains a challenge; these relationships have also been complicated by a proliferation of new duty-bearers at the sub-national level and continued contestation between authorities at the national and county levels. Informants indicated that awareness of citizen rights was much more advanced than understanding of obligations.

At the same time, while the concept of empowerment features in some change narratives, it is not consistently present in documents on programme planning, design and follow-up.

#### *vi. Links to human rights norms and standards*

Some Sida-funded interventions contain a general reference to how they are **linked to human rights standards** and some of the four HRBA principles, but more explicit explanations of their basis in international human rights law are rare. Across the case study countries there is little reference to, or use of, both international human rights instruments and the outputs (general comments and conclusions) of the international human rights mechanisms. In Cambodia, in the interventions reviewed, there have been no consistent attempts to frame project goals and indicators in terms of human rights. In Albania, links to human rights norms are present in the efforts to strengthen legislation and public administration. Although it is important not to equate human

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<sup>74</sup> Bryld, E., Alffram, H. & Sedara, K. 2012.

rights with constitutional rights, importantly – in all four countries – domestic norms are mostly not at odds with international human rights standards. All four countries are state parties to the main international human rights conventions. In Colombia, international human rights have constitutional status under the 1991 Constitution. The work of UN Women in Colombia is explicitly grounded in international human rights norms, underlining the progress on women’s rights through the evolving international norms regime.

Recurrent responses among embassy staff and co-operation partners on how principles are present signal three related points. First, how the HRBA is integrated into interventions is also informed by the dialogic relationship with co-operation partners, who bring their own understanding of the HRBA, and the weight they attach to different components of what this is understood to mean. Second, the demands on programme design and implementation to integrate multiple perspectives and analyses as per Swedish development cooperation policy mean that there is a risk that these get diluted, and become box-ticking exercises. Third, it was generally found that variation in the application of the HRBA across interventions and countries was not linked to sector specificity. Rather, there were other features of specific programmes and focus areas that appeared to shape HRBA considerations – a broader or smaller set of duty-bearers affecting accountability relationships, for instance.

In Kenya, when asked how co-operation partners worked with people and organisations who may be less inclined towards prioritising rights as the focus of their work, informants highlighted the importance of making the HRBA practical, demonstrating how changes could improve people’s daily work and enable organisations to fulfil their institutional mandates. For government agencies, this mandate was often directly linked to the implementation of the Constitution through laws and regulations.

#### 4.1.3 The HRBA in intervention design, planning, implementation and follow-up

Similar to the finding above that projects and programmes varied in the extent to which each HRBA principle featured in their activities, and how the principles featured, the Evaluation Team found variation in how a HRBA was applied across different phases of the project cycle. It was frequently noted that in considering the HRBA in Sida’s work, most informants focused on the importance of supporting human rights, and much less on the HRBA principles and how these have featured in development cooperation. In addressing this EQ, the Evaluation Team focused on surfacing the formal organisational constraints and enabling features of the life cycle of interventions, and the actual ways of working that characterise the application of the HRBA in practice by Sida and co-operation partners.

##### *i. Design and appraisal*

The evaluation has looked at the **decision-making chain** for Sida’s financing of programmes and projects to identify how and when a HRBA is introduced and secured. In general, the Sida financing mechanism is open in terms of subject or focus within a given country, regional or thematic strategy. Co-operation partners may be government institutions, private sector actors, think tanks, foundations, international NGOs, local or regional CSOs, as well as bilateral or multilateral donor

agencies. Importantly, Sida may support potential partners in strengthening intervention logics and formats, but there is usually no specific application form for programming. There is a requirement that proposals align with Sweden's strategic priorities. In this respect, the demand-led engagement with country stakeholders was identified as an example of Sweden's consultative and interactive approach to engage with partners in a transparent and participatory dialogue process, and to accommodate locally driven agendas – within the strategic framing of the country strategy.

The **process** from the time a proposal is received by Sida to sign-off for an implementation agreement for a specific intervention varies in duration and complexity.<sup>75</sup> It is during this process that the application of the HRBA is introduced by Sida if it is not present or sufficiently explicit in the potential co-operation partner's proposal. Sida staff often express their opinions on the co-operation partners' preliminary ideas, capacity, concept notes and draft proposals, seeing this as a key opportunity for sharing Sida's guidance materials and tools on applying the HRBA. Variably, informants have highlighted the value of the proposal stage in ensuring that the HRBA is embedded from the outset, putting human rights on the agenda from the initial dialogue and ensuring that the co-operation partners' design incorporates HRBA principles. It is during this process that co-operation partners can be nudged into internalising and adapting the HRBA.

At the same time, it was not evident that how Sida works to integrate the HRBA in all its scope is consistent across countries and sectors, as evidenced also by the uneven presence of the HRBA principles. **Sector-specific features did not stand out** in the fieldwork; rather, this depended on the particular focus of the intervention, the approach of the co-operation partners, and the particular configuration of country-level Sida staff engagement with the design phase, as well as the nature of the wider social and political context.

In any event, the consultative process of the proposal and design phase itself signals a way of working in Sida that involves *practising* the principles in decision making. Sida is seen to 'walk the talk' when it comes to the HRBA principles. This participatory dynamic was highlighted not only in relation to the interaction between Sida and the co-operation partner, but also with regard to how beneficiary organisations have the opportunity to contribute to the identification and framing of the specific problem that interventions are intended to address – for example, related to governance, peacebuilding or development in Colombia. Sida staff, for instance, were described as being actively engaged in visiting end-user communities or organisations and incorporating views into the dialogue on intervention design.

The Evaluation Team found differences in terms of how the HRBA features in the **dialogue with co-operation partners**, depending on the maturity of the partnership.

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<sup>75</sup> It may take longer than a year to enable a detailed and interactive planning and assessment process. An example from Albania (CNVP) showed that the process may take between 12 and 18 months from the time the first application is received by Sida to an agreement being signed. Discussions for the PPDP in Kenya began in 2015 and the final appraisal of intervention took place in 2018.

Establishing a new partnership is considered more time consuming in being able to reach an agreement on the final design, in general terms as well as in terms of integrating a HRBA. Thus, long-term partnerships are valued, and there appears to be a strong interactive engagement between Sida and the co-operation partners as second or third phase proposals are negotiated, with more clarity on the HRBA, as Sida's expectations and approach have, by then, been accepted and internalised by co-operation partners. This was especially underlined in Albania.

In the case of Cambodia, an assessment of proposals supported by Sida shows that most, but not all, potential co-operation partner organisations provide a context assessment which in turn identifies and (variably) reflects on the capacity of relevant rights-holders and duty-bearers. Individual project goals are sometimes formulated in terms of rights (e.g. gender equality or access to information). However, a detailed presentation of these human rights and their foundation in international human rights law is rare. Indicators used to monitor progress towards intervention goals often relate to the HRBA principles when the goals they measure are framed in human rights terms. Particularly common are indicators relating to participation, but reviewed interventions also include indicators concerning transparency, accountability and non-discrimination in terms of gender equality.

The flexible structure in the design process of the (Technical) **Quality Assurance Committee** ((T)QAC) is an opportunity to assess the HRBA content of interventions. The QAC can include members of the embassy staff, external specialists and specialist advisors from Sida head office. The QAC was perceived by some interviewees as a key opportunity for exchange among staff from different sectors and thematic areas to discuss the HRBA. This was less likely once contributions were approved, and as programme officers operate more autonomously. However, in Kenya, the degree of scrutiny at this stage was perceived to be inconsistent and some staff felt that there was a need to provide a much finer level of detail in specifying *how* HRBA principles should be applied and at what stages. In Cambodia, a review of QAC minutes indicated that aspects of the HRBA other than gender equality were not frequently discussed in a substantial manner.

Following the back-and-forth interaction between Sida and its potential co-operation partner organisation, the resulting draft project document is ready for **appraisal**. It is expected that by this time, the HRBA has been discussed in detail and the principles integrated properly into the draft project document. The Evaluation Team reviewed a number of appraisal documents. Generally, they assess the HRBA in a brief and semi-standardised statement.

In Cambodia, the evaluation found that eight out of nine appraisals included a HRBA assessment and that these assessments concluded that a HRBA was either considered in the intervention design or was the intervention's underlying principle. In Colombia, most appraisal documents reflect at least briefly on the individual HRBA principles, either as part of the assessment of how the HRBA was applied or when other aspects of the intervention are discussed.

Proposals as well as appraisals vary as to whether they focus on the potential co-operation partner organisation's own systems and procedures or whether they focus on larger societal-level issues – i.e. the degree to which human rights are respected,

protected or fulfilled. Generally, the appraisals do not contain any negative reflections from a HRBA perspective, or suggestions where the HRBA could be enhanced. Where specific reservations have been made or suggestions put forward, these have tended to be related to gender equality. Gender equality issues have also been the main issues raised in the QAC minutes that were accessed and reviewed by the Evaluation Team.

Overall, how the HRBA is explicitly understood to contribute to advancing programme objectives is not systematically integrated in interventions, and often not developed in great detail during the design phase. Assumptions about how HRBA principles and human rights norms and standards are interconnected or contribute to programme objectives vary significantly in proposals. This reflects variation with regard to how the HRBA is understood and weighted across co-operation partners. Key informants also noted that the consultative and dialogic dynamic between the programme officer and the co-operation partners was most likely to shape how human rights feature in the intervention logic. This process of consultation and dialogue sets the parameters of which human rights goals are identified and prioritised, how this addresses rights-holders' needs and duty-bearers' roles, as well as wider human rights-related vulnerabilities, as well as if and how HRBA principles are integrated into the design.

#### *ii. Implementation*

The focus of the evaluation here was on documenting the relevant features of Sida's way of working that affect how the HRBA is applied in practice, and how this in turn affects the practices of co-operation partners. It was also found that co-operation partners invariably have their own approach to the practice of integrating a HRBA in interventions. Independently of how explicitly the HRBA components may feature in programme design and follow-up, the process and experience of implementation may be affected by how HRBA principles are put into practice. This is so in terms of how Sida staff enact the HRBA, how co-operation partners and other beneficiary organisations or groups may replicate or apply their own reading of human rights principles, and how they determine the human rights objectives they are pursuing as part of intervention objectives. Sida staff, moreover, noted that formal reporting on results did not capture the full breadth of ways of working of different intervention actors in practice, including on the application of different components of the HRBA. Therefore, a lack of detail in design and appraisal documents did not necessarily mean that the HRBA principles were not applied in practice. At the same time, proposals where a HRBA featured prominently did not necessarily mean that the principles were integrated in meaningful ways in practice.

There are some recurrent features of how Sida works in practice that affect how the HRBA is applied, even when these are not explicitly underlined in programme documents. It is important to note that these practices were reported in several cases, but do not necessarily characterise a purposeful approach to applying the HRBA. Rather, they serve to illustrate how deeply internalised the HRBA principles seem to be among Sida staff, along with explicit attachment to advancing human rights norms.

Co-operation partners and other informants valued Sida's **substantive and frequent engagement with the implementation process**. It was reported that Sida programme officers engage in frequent dialogue and what was described as 'participatory and horizontal relationships' with co-operation partners as well as with beneficiary grassroots organisations and CSOs. Across interventions, informants confirmed the hands-on and close accompaniment of Sida staff and recognised the value of close dialogue throughout the implementation, not only confined to Annual Review Meetings, and not only or principally as a control mechanism. Meeting minutes, where available, suggest that these conversations focus more on progress towards results and stakeholder engagement rather than addressing concerns about how the HRBA as a method underpins the intervention.

In this process of accompaniment and frequent engagement, Sida is recognised as a transparent and reliable, yet subtle, behind-the-scenes and non-hierarchical agency. **Sida operates on the premise that values (including human rights principles) cannot be imposed from outside but need to be incentivised and encouraged to surface organically** through the process and experience of implementation. This can result in more embedded ownership among co-operation partners and other stakeholders in the implementation chain of the merits of human rights principles. In Albania, for instance, '... in spite of the fact that the loudest voice usually wins in Albania, the Swedes have professionalised the influencing through nudging, which in the end results in national ownership', stated an external informant.

In this nudging and facilitating role, Sida seems also adept at providing a platform for discussion and exchange of opinions and experience, including between rights-holders and duty-bearers. In Albania, an example of this was the initiative to facilitate the discussions on the Chapter 27 on Environment in the EU accession protocol, as well as gender. Sida takes the initiative to support meetings and workshops where opinions and experiences can be exchanged and where participants from various institutions and sectors are offered a space for dialogue. This approach to participation has also been important in the work of the Embassy of Sweden in Cambodia, and in Colombia in relation to the peace process, where Sweden (as Sida and as the political mission) was seen as a trusted party to facilitate such exchanges.

Relatedly, embassy staff (Sida and Foreign Ministry) underlined **the importance of 'going local' and adapting the normative underpinnings of the HRBA to match what is useful, what is politically possible, and what chimes with co-operation partners' and other stakeholders' appreciation of the HRBA**. In Colombia, for instance, most co-operation partners noted that Sida is at its best when it adapts to locally driven definition and appropriation of the HRBA by those that stand most to gain by it – affected rights-holders. One staff member further noted huge variation in ownership of the HRBA, what this looked like, and how its utility was valued, at the national and (very diverse) sub-national levels, across issues, and across different human rights and conflict-related problems.

Sida's commitment to ownership, voice and participation by co-operation partners and beneficiary groups and organisations is made possible by the fact that, as already noted, **there is, in practice, flexibility in how the HRBA is present in intervention design and implementation**. This flexibility is not only relevant to Sida's

application of the HRBA, but was appreciated by co-operation partners as a wider organisational feature of Sida that enabled local ownership of how the HRBA is applied. This flexibility was found to be characteristic of Sida. It was also an inherent way of working of many co-operation partners that are grappling with locally grounded human rights agendas.

The practice of working through locally driven/locally owned processes and understandings of human rights makes the HRBA more meaningful to rights-holders, and relevant to context – including in relation to how strategies to advance human rights norms should be decided. Sida was seen to let **the rights agenda develop organically within programme design and its implementation, driven by rights-holders’ understandings of their human rights challenges, and their choices on strategic action with regard to human rights objectives.**

Sida’s practice of **investing time in long-term relationships helps to build trust and to cultivate common goals on advancing human rights standards and principles** among co-operation partners. This was observed by many co-operation partners across the four countries. This can also help incentivise buy-in from less traditional allies, such as the private sector actors that have seen value in investing (for instance, in the Ruta Motor project supporting tailored training of disadvantaged youths in Colombia).

**Funding modalities were reported to make a difference.** For instance, core funding – as in the cases of UN Women, ICTJ and Diakonia in Colombia, and in turn some grant recipients – was repeatedly underlined as enabling flexibility, ownership and long-term investment in human rights principles and advancing the realisation of human rights. Among the interventions reviewed in the four countries, there was no indication that core funding or long-term partnerships resulted in drawbacks.

**Investing in logistical, protective and political accompaniment on human rights issues** was reported as a distinctive feature of Sida’s human rights support. This includes measures such as providing basic safety and protection for rights-holders in moments of heightened vulnerability, often related to situations of armed/violent conflict and systemic impunity. It also involves giving visibility to human rights vulnerabilities where this does not raise risk, through reporting, or visits by programme officers or Foreign Ministry staff to on-site locations where either vulnerability is heightened or there is a promising story of change. In Colombia, for instance, facilitating physical or logistical access to decision-making sites to enable participation of rights-holders in the peace process (such as getting women activists to the peace talks in Havana).

**Politically strategic engagement**, including through Sida and the Foreign Ministry and joint efforts, was seen as important by interviewees in Cambodia and Colombia. It was reported that when Foreign Ministry staff and Sida staff work together strategically to maximise leverage on human rights issues, using political space where opportunities arise to cultivate government commitment and buy-in to addressing human rights issues, this amplifies the possibility of advancing human rights protection or advancing human rights norms and standards.

Different skill sets among **Sida staff** were reported as important to applying the HRBA in practice. This included: **technical skills (on human rights, including in**

**relation to different sectors); deep knowledge of context; and political skills**, to be able to identify key windows of opportunity, and be politically smart in engaging with context. The presence of national programme officers with decision-making capacity seems to be a strength for understanding the nuances on human rights issues and how these evolve over time.

**Effective leadership** that is both committed to the HRBA, politically and organizationally, was perceived to be an important facilitating factor – leadership in national institutions, among Sida staff, in the political missions, and at Sida HQ. Leadership is also a reflection of the ability of embassy staff/programme officers to lead on HRBA within the remit of interventions, and in the relationship with co-operation partners. Previous assessments of a HRBA have found that **leadership commitment** has been a key factor for success.<sup>76</sup> However, there are also examples where Sida staff and co-operation partners have worked to advance human rights issues and integrate a HRBA in political, institutional and social norms in contexts where human rights were not signalled as a priority.

While these features were all important in explaining Sida's effectiveness in practice in applying (elements of) the HRBA, at the same time, it is fundamental not to overstate them as deliberate ways of working specifically in relation to the application of the HRBA. Rather, intervention design and implementation are strongly shaped by how different human rights issues are politically experienced and weighted in the political economy conditions of the country, and by Sida's adaptive capacity. The latter also depended on individual programme officers' skills, technical knowledge and knowledge of context. As already noted, individual skills are critical, but a finding of this evaluation is that there are organisational challenges to ensuring that these are effectively rewarded and leveraged to support the application of the HRBA.

The challenges facing staff in having to navigate multiple perspectives (also at country level) in development cooperation – combined with lesser experience of a HRBA among younger staff – was indicated as relevant. There is a sense, as reflected in interviews with Sida staff, that some of the earlier attachment to and understanding of a HRBA has become lost within Sida, exacerbated by an expanding number of perspectives.

Sida staff also acknowledged that national interests can end up 'on collision course' with the HRBA, particularly where the interests of rights-holders collide with strong political and economic interests (e.g. large-scale agriculture, resource exploitation).

### *iii. Follow-up, results reporting, and learning*

Results reporting or end-of-intervention narratives mostly did not integrate the HRBA consistently. However, specific objectives on advancing human rights issues relating to rights-holders and duty-bearers, or the different HRBA principles, did

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<sup>76</sup> Sida. September 2009.

feature in intervention reports, albeit to varying degrees. In part, it was noted by Sida staff, that Sida's systems for follow-up of interventions do not sufficiently ensure reporting and learning on HRBA. It was suggested that improved follow-up would be facilitated if further thought was given to development of appropriate goals and indicators already during the appraisal and approval phase of an intervention.

Sida has sometimes made the HRBA a formal dialogue issue in relation to its co-operation partners. However, of 42 Sida **Decision on Contribution** documents relating to interventions assessed by the Evaluation Team, only 2 explicitly mentioned the HRBA as an issue for further dialogue between Sida and the co-operation partner. Several of the Decision on Contribution documents included issues linked to the four HRBA principles, particularly gender equality. A review of **minutes from annual or semi-annual review meetings** between Sida and its co-operation partners shows that Sida *in practice* occasionally raises questions and concerns on the HRBA with those partners. In Cambodia, it was found that matters of gender are the most common issues raised, but questions concerning co-operation partners' anti-corruption or anti-fraud policies have also been raised.

A review of the ToR of **38 evaluations and reviews** commissioned by Sida or its co-operation partners in the four case study countries indicates that these assessments have had some role in promoting and strengthening the application of a HRBA. Six of the 38 evaluations included an evaluation question about the application of a HRBA generally. Sixteen other ToR, most from Kenya, included questions relating to specific HRBA principles, but not to a HRBA as such.

#### 4.1.4 Key points

In this section the report has considered how Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners have applied a HRBA throughout the design, planning, implementation and follow-up of Swedish development cooperation across the case study countries. To this end, the Evaluation Team has considered how the HRBA features at the levels of global strategy, country strategy development and Sida-funded interventions in relation to country-level work of Sida and the relevant co-operation partner(s).

The evaluation process reviewed how Sida and co-operation partners understand Sida's application of a HRBA (including the four principles that are relevant for this evaluation, and P.L.A.N.E.T.) and how the HRBA is integrated in strategy documents and in Sida-funded interventions. This has included: first, identifying the explicit statement of how the HRBA features in Swedish development cooperation; and second, exploring how the country case studies captured the different *ways of working* of Sida, embassy staff and co-operation partners, and the interaction between them, as this affects the implementation process. This has also involved identifying how programmes have been connected up strategically, not only across interventions and sectors, but also between Sida activities and the political missions in-country.

For EQ1, therefore, the Evaluation Team has reviewed how embassies have engaged strategically **both formally and in practice** with the political economy context in order to apply the HRBA in ways that are adapted to context realities, and to what is politically possible, including in relation to addressing the sector problems

and change objectives identified in Sida-funded interventions and programmes. This included capturing how Sida staff, Foreign Ministry staff and co-operation partners in-country navigate their organisations' systems of programme design and implementation, their HRBA mandate *and* the political and social context to shape how the HRBA is understood and applied in practice. In this respect, the Evaluation Team assessed if and how the embassies and co-operation partners have been able to fully understand and adapt to context-specific power dynamics and the interest structures that sustain, challenge or change the relationship between duty-bearers and rights-holders, including in ways that may not be captured in intervention documents.

In terms of findings, first, **there is variation in how the HRBA is understood, and in what ways it is considered to be most effectively implemented in practice, among Sida staff, other embassy staff and co-operation partners.** This more interactive understanding of the relationship between HRBA principles and human rights norms and standards among Sida staff is in keeping with Sida's guidance on application of the HRBA.

Second, in practice, **there is no clear distinction between applying the HRBA as a method, and putting the advancement of human rights at the centre of Sida's overall work in-country,** with varying levels of strategic interaction with Foreign Ministry staff, with staff at Sida HO, and with co-operation partners. Often, applying the HRBA and focusing on improving the human rights situation in context were used interchangeably by embassy staff and co-operation partners especially. This was true across all sectors.

Third, and relatedly, when Sida, embassy staff and co-operation partners appear to be particularly effective in applying the HRBA – most notably in contexts where human rights are more constrained – the combination of an **understanding of the political economy context, the ability *in practice* through implementation to support locally grounded choices about what is (politically) possible in the protection and advancement of human rights protection** is important.

Fourth, **context-specific political economy conditions, attentiveness to locally driven agendas, and the technical and political skills of individual Sida staff seemed to be more relevant than the sector category in dictating how the HRBA as a method could be most effectively applied.** Sector-specific characteristics were important in determining the nature of the power relations between rights-holders and duty-bearers. However, these characteristics in turn mirror wider features of the formal legal and regulatory conditions of each country, as well as the nature of the prevailing political settlement and informal rules that dictate state–society relations.

Fifth, Sida staff in-country mostly consulted proactively with co-operation partners, rights-holders and relevant interlocutors among duty-bearers and, in some cases, the private sector, to identify strategic windows of opportunity for the HRBA to be applied in Sida-funded interventions. This involved engaging strategically, including in ways that might not have been formally recorded or documented in intervention documents during the programme cycle.

Sixth, it was found that integrating more formal triggers throughout Sida's contribution management process might further encourage and support co-operation

partners' application of a HRBA as well as Sida's own reporting, documentation and learning.

## 4.2 EVALUATION QUESTION 2

**To what extent is the Swedish application of a HRBA in line with the priorities set by national policy frameworks?**

### Box 3

The four country case studies have demonstrated a rather similar situation in terms of the existence of a formal political framework conducive to promoting human rights and maintaining formal and informal dialogue on the issue. Sida's official strategy of supporting national development policies and applying a HRBA is generally accepted by national governments at the normative and formal level, and Sida's approach and supported interventions are typically justified on the grounds of alignment with national development strategies and plans.

The situation is different, however, when it comes to the actual implementation of human rights policy and norms. All four country case studies demonstrate that the nature of the prevailing political settlement and elite bargain is such that there is varied, often limited political buy-in to either support the realisation of formal human rights commitments, or to enact the norms and principles underpinning a HRBA. Thus, in the four countries, there is a broad range across institutions and, in some cases, a wide gulf between the governments' official commitment to human rights and the degree to which they commit to respect, protect and fulfil those rights in practice.

### 4.2.1 National policy and legal frameworks

The four country case studies have demonstrated a rather similar situation in terms of the existence of *formal* political and legal frameworks conducive to the realisation and promotion of human rights and that allow for formal and informal dialogue on the issue. Relevant normative frameworks include the national constitution, relevant legislation, official status of international or regional human rights conventions, and national development policies, strategies and plans.

In all four countries, the state is a party to key international human rights treaties. Constitutional texts are in line with the normative content of international norms and standards. The constitutions of Colombia (1991) and Kenya (2010) in particular are exemplary texts in how they integrate human rights norms, and protection and judicial review mechanisms for their realisation. In Colombia, furthermore, the legislation on transitional justice and the peace agreement of 2018 are highly innovative legal frameworks aimed at addressing the legacies of human rights violations after 50 years of conflict. In Albania, the EU accession process commits the country to the European Convention on Human Rights. These, as well as national development plans such as Kenya's Vision 2030, in all cases speak of national policy and legal frameworks which on paper are respectful of human rights. Furthermore,

the national discourse in all four countries was found to officially promote the four HRBA principles.

Sida's official strategy of supporting national development policies and applying a HRBA is therefore well-aligned with and easily accepted by national governments at the normative and formal levels. In all four cases, Sida's approach and supported interventions are typically justified on the grounds of alignment with national development strategies and plans, while the national discourse in all four countries was found to officially promote the four HRBA principles.

The situation is different, however, when it comes to the *actual implementation* and law enforcement of these human rights norms. All four country case studies demonstrate that the nature of the prevailing political settlement and elite bargain is such that there is variable, often limited political buy-in to either support the realisation of formal human rights commitments, or to enact the norms and principles underpinning a HRBA. State capacity may be weak, and susceptible to capture by powerful interests. Thus, in the four countries, there is a broad range across institutions and, in some cases, a wide gulf between the governments' official commitment to human rights and the degree to which they commit to respect, protect and fulfil those rights in practice. Ultimately, while many state institutions, including the judiciary, are working poorly from a human rights perspective, they are functioning very well as tools to protect the interests of those in positions of economic and political power.

A number of hindering factors identified in Albania are valid in the other case study countries as well – for example, institutional instability and constant re-shuffling of staff in government institutions; the lack of inter-ministerial coordination and low level of government ownership of important processes; and lack of sufficient budget allocations, resulting in serious underfunding of otherwise sound legislative frameworks. In Kenya, substantively shifting power relations between historically marginalised rights-holders and duty-bearers remains a challenge. With devolution, these relationships have been complicated by a proliferation of new duty-bearers at the sub-national level and continued contestation between authorities at the national and county levels. In Colombia, the state does not have full control of the national territory, so the possibility of upholding human rights is at the mercy of disruptive actors, in some cases armed. These structural political economy factors contribute to the undermining of the formal human rights policy framework.

#### **4.2.2 Sida's use of national policy frameworks to maximise the HRBA**

The embassies of Sweden navigate this contradictory political context where, on the one hand, the formal policy and legislative frameworks for a proactive application of a HRBA are in place, but on the other hand, prospects for the realisation and protection of human rights is weak due to variable institutional capacity, political will and interest, and insufficient resources. The formal frameworks, however, provide leverage for Sweden and other donors to hold duty-bearers accountable to the standards set out in each framework. They also provide a platform for support to CSOs and other political actors (rights-holders) to demand accountability and transparency from government institutions (duty-bearers). Embassies use the

opportunity provided by the normative framework to create platforms and fora for human rights and democracy actors to meet and discuss – an initiative made possible by the formal national frameworks in spite of a de facto less open political and human rights environment. The auspices of a donor or embassy in this situation are important, as they provide legitimacy and protection for participants who would otherwise be exposed and vulnerable in politically hostile environments.

In the case of Albania, EU accession remains an important lever. In Colombia, successive governments appear to care about the country's international reputation on matters of governance and credibility and on their rule of law capacity.

Where the political and civic space is more restrictive, and where explicit language on human rights is more challenging, including from a 'do no harm' perspective, options for Sida's engagement include (for instance) 'going with the grain' of what is politically possible, such as focusing on development outcomes with less explicit language around human rights. The challenge lies when there are economic interests and development pathways but where more politically agile footwork is called for in terms of supporting rights-holders' capabilities, mobilisational capacities and resource needs.

The Swedish government's strategy documents can provide a clear steer, as in the cases of Cambodia and Colombia on the commitment to address human rights vulnerabilities and support rights-holders. In the case of Cambodia, the lack of government commitment to human rights has not weakened Sweden's support; on the contrary, in 2014 and 2017 there has been an increased human rights focus in Sweden's overall support motivated by recent negative human rights developments. Sida and the embassy have, at the same time, been committed to upholding a dialogue with a broad set of Cambodian actors.

However, it was also noted that the effectiveness of Sida and of Foreign Ministry staff to navigate in challenging human rights contexts is not only a matter of instruction from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or country strategy orientation. Individuals in decision-making roles shape trajectories of human rights engagement, and how the HRBA is mobilised and implemented in practice. Interviews in Stockholm confirmed this observation, as personal engagement is a strong driver for specific policies – in this case, the HRBA. Furthermore, the nature of the relationship between the Ambassador and the Head of Development Cooperation can be important; their background and career pathways contribute to setting the tone of embassy relations, not just with the government, but also with co-operation partners and CSOs who receive Sida funding. This personal variation in these key decision-making roles over time was perceived to influence the nature of the political presence of Sweden in-country.

### 4.2.3 Key points

The four country case studies have demonstrated a rather similar situation in terms of the existence of a formal political framework conducive for promoting human rights. Sida's official strategy of supporting national development policies and applying a HRBA is generally accepted by national governments at the normative and formal levels.

The situation is different, however, when it comes to the actual implementation of human rights policy and norms. All four country case studies demonstrate that the nature of the prevailing political settlement and elite bargain is such that there is varied, political buy-in or capacity to either support the realisation of formal human rights commitments, or to enact the norms and principles underpinnings of a HRBA.

### 4.3 EVALUATION QUESTION 3

**What is the overall impact of the application of a HRBA by Sida, embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners in terms of direct or indirect, negative and positive results (both based on the process of applying a HRBA and the performance in terms of effects on the outcome level) in the relevant thematic sectors/areas?**

#### Box 4

Assessing the effects of the HRBA is intertwined with assessing the achievement of intended programme results. Results frameworks are usually not explicitly oriented around measuring HRBA processes per se and these mostly seem not to be picked up in follow-up and reporting. Stark realities of shrinking political or civic space, of ongoing levels of conflict and human rights abuses, or deep and intersecting inequalities mean that progress is mostly non-linear and multi-level, and different groups in vulnerable situations may experience reversals and backlash.

It is not possible to isolate the impact of the HRBA from other changes in the wider political and social context; sustaining gains requires ongoing investment. Capturing impact thus needs to be qualified in terms of what can plausibly be claimed as contribution.

However, interviewees, independent evaluations and Sida assessments all identified a range of results related to the process of applying the HRBA and to the objective of advancing human rights norms and protecting human rights.

Among rights-holders, reported effects resulting from the process of applying the HRBA included: changes in awareness; capacities and skills (advocacy, analysis); access to and direct participation in decision-making processes (budget consultation, review of legislation, discussion with companies); and ability to organise and work collectively, including to contest unequal power relations from a human rights perspective. Among rights-holder organisations and networks, this included changes in internal operating structures and management capacity, membership and representation. Among individuals, it included a heightened awareness of their rights and capacity for voice and agency.

Performance effects of the application of a HRBA by Sida and co-operation partners included improved access to basic services, human rights protection, and voice and agency. Sida-funded interventions were also seen to help prevent human rights violations and provide public support to disadvantaged groups and organisations.

Among duty-bearers, reported effects of Sida's application of a HRBA included changes in mindsets and attitudes, capacities, skills and behaviours. Institutionally, they included changes in practices and institutional reform. There were also reported policy and legal changes that contributed to advanced normative change and deepening of human rights standards and commitments.

Arguably, the most important effect of Sweden's application of a HRBA is that it has strengthened and clarified Sweden's commitment to promoting and protecting human rights through international development cooperation, and has thus provided Sida with the basis for a principled, long-term support to actors that promote development towards a more open rather than authoritarian society.

#### 4.3.1 Reporting results on the HRBA

Across international development, the term 'impact' is defined and used in different ways. This ranges from the broad definition of the OECD/DAC 'positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects... holistic and enduring changes in systems or norms, and potential effects on people's well-being, human rights, gender equality, and the environment'<sup>77</sup> to more specific sector or methodological definitions.<sup>78</sup> The wording of the EQ here is taken directly from the ToR; however, the remainder of this section uses the term 'results' rather than 'impact' to cover a range of changes that took place. It covers changes along the spectra from those that are more closely attributable to Sida's application of a HRBA (direct results) to those that are of a higher order and long term (indirect results).

At the same time, as noted in the inception report and in Section 2 of this report, on methods, applying a HRBA is a political undertaking. This affects how it can be applied in practice given the political context, and has implications for what are reasonable expectations on results, and the related theory of change. First, how the different components of the HRBA can be applied (as process and intended results) is bounded by the political context, and the particularities of what is possible given the context and the specific characteristics of the sector problem that is being addressed through programming. This confirms our finding (already in EQ1) that generalisable sector-specific findings have not been feasible. Second, the integrated and interconnected nature of a HRBA means that it is not easy to separate out how individual principles may have contributed to results. Relatedly, there is value in analysing the application of the HRBA in aggregate, as it is the interactive dynamic across HRBA principles and human rights standards that was also seen to have contributed to change.

Bearing these caveats in mind, results are presented to reflect the *process* and *performance* aspects of Sida's application of a HRBA, in response to EQ3 and the wider ToR.

<sup>77</sup> OECD. 2019b.

<sup>78</sup> Hearn, S. & Buffardi, A.L. 2016.

It should also be noted that EQ1, EQ4 and EQ6, which discuss how the HRBA has been applied and to what extent Sida has influenced its co-operation partners' perceptions and application of a HRBA, also contribute to answer the EQ posed in this section. In answering it, the Evaluation Team has relied on key informant interviews and a review of external evaluations, Sida's assessments of progress, and project reports. In some cases, the Evaluation Team also drew on co-operation partners' own reports and internal assessments. These sources have provided information and examples of positive results relating to the application of a HRBA.

On the question of the balance between positive and negative results of a HRBA, there are two findings. **First**, the application of a HRBA did not lead to any negative results, such as backlash against groups in vulnerable situations, in the reviewed interventions in the four case study countries. However, the risk of 'doing harm' that might result from working with human rights problems, in ways that are not responsive to context conditions, was raised by Sida staff in-country and by some co-operation partners.

This is in keeping with the existing literature on a HRBA, which has argued that its application is challenging in failed states, where the state is vulnerable to capture by armed groups, where there are conditions of closed political space, or where it may be difficult to identify a duty-bearer that can uphold rights.<sup>79</sup> In such contexts, applying a HRBA may heighten the risk of backlash or exacerbate the vulnerability of intended beneficiary groups.

However, this evaluation found that even in difficult contexts, the risks of a HRBA can be neutralised by applying the HRBA principles within the limits of what is politically possible, and by creating the conditions for potential rights-holders to exercise voice and agency in identifying the risks of harmful results. This may include creating the space for them to participate more, for instance, in intervention design, and in identifying what human rights challenges they face, or how they might be better protected from human rights abuses or the risk of backlash. As reported in EQ1, EQ2, EQ4 and EQ6, ensuring 'do no harm' in the application of a HRBA in Sida-funded interventions is strongly associated with deep understanding of the political economy context at national and sub-national levels, gender-based (as well as other intersecting) inequalities, and conditions of vulnerability.

The variation reported in *how* a HRBA is applied precisely signals the importance of the capacity to adapt it to context conditions. This capacity to diminish the risk of harm of a HRBA was attributed by co-operation partners and rights-holders to the practices of Sida and co-operation partners (noted in EQ1) to work in context-responsive ways, and to investing in close engagement with co-operation partners and rights-holders, privileging their analysis of risk and exposure to backlash.

**Second**, the cost implications of the HRBA approach were not clearly identified in the evaluation, but were noted at country and head office levels. On the one hand, it was found that the costing and resource implications of the HRBA were not

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<sup>79</sup> Broberg, M. & Sano, H-O. 2018.

documented (if or where relevant) regarding the application of the principles – for instance, in programme design and implementation. However, it was reported in interviews with Sida staff and co-operation partners that applying the HRBA in practice has cost implications.

For instance, while there is a recognition that an increased participation of rights-holders in project design, implementation and follow-up can lead to better development outcomes and improvements in the realisation of human rights,<sup>80</sup> extensive involvement of stakeholders at these stages can be time consuming. It can take resources and attention away from other pressing needs in an intervention, including activities with a direct bearing on the promotion or protection of human rights. One organisation in Colombia, for instance, noted that on a limited budget, facilitating frequent participatory processes had efficiency costs, which needed to be taken into account in decision-making processes.

At head office, in order to make the HRBA a more prominent perspective in Sida's work, it was observed that there will be a need to invest resourcing in it. Whether this takes the form of increasing staff resources, investing in capacity development, or reforming the system of design, approval, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to integrate explicit triggers to monitor that the HRBA has been duly applied at each stage, investing further in the HRBA will have resourcing implications for Sida.

**Third**, in noting that the application of the HRBA is not resource free, a further finding – noted by some informants among co-operation partners and expert informants – is that its application is not necessarily considered as 'win-win' for all stakeholders. This finding underlines the political nature of the HRBA. In the objectives that it pursues of advancing the protection and realisation of human rights, it results in a redistribution of power and resources between rights-holders and duty-bearers, and between rights-holders and elite interest groups, which can act as spoilers in blocking wider developmental objectives. The evaluation found that the normative commitment to the HRBA by Sida and its co-operation partners help to guide its application in the design and implementation of its interventions. However, awareness of this cost-benefit calculation by relevant stakeholders affected by interventions was found to be important to inform how to apply the HRBA most effectively to at best incentivise the buy-in of potential spoilers, and at least neutralise their obstructive efforts with a view to advancing intended results.

#### 4.3.2 Results of the process and performance aspects of the HRBA

In this sub-section we present findings in ways that distinguish between results related to the process and performance components of the HRBA. However, a clear-cut distinction between results associated with the process and performance aspects of the HRBA was by no means evident. This was underlined by both country-level Sida staff and co-operation partners, as noted in EQ1. In many cases, moreover, the

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<sup>80</sup> OECD. 2019a.

HRBA principles were intended not only as process components of implementation of interventions, but as explicit objectives of change, including in relation to strengthening human rights. For instance, non-discrimination was as much an intended objective as a way of working in the implementation of Sida-funded interventions.

*i. Process-related results*

In aggregate, a wide range of results were reported in all countries by Sida, co-operation partners and **rights-holders** related to the application of the HRBA principles.

In Kenya, these included: changes in awareness of rights and the capacity for agency (expressed as ‘awakened the consciousness’); strengthened capacities and skills in advocacy and analysis; access to and direct participation in decision-making processes both in relation to the interventions themselves and wider change processes (including in budget consultation, review of legislation, discussion with companies); and improved ability to organise and work collectively.

In Cambodia, evaluations indicate that Sida’s application of the HRBA – despite a challenging human rights context and severe restrictions on the freedoms of association, assembly and expression – has contributed in aggregate to increased awareness among and empowerment of targeted rights-holders, and to enhanced civil society capacity to contribute to the empowerment of rights-holders. Even though the overall possibilities for people to take part in and influence matters of public governance remain limited, Sida’s support to Diakonia and its partners (for instance) has contributed to giving people voice and strengthened their possibilities to claim services at local level and influence public policy making.

As noted in EQ1, the principle of participation was especially prominent. It was considered to have contributed to supporting gender equality across several of the interventions reviewed, including embedding practices that facilitated gender equality in targeted areas. Significantly, there was consistent emphasis across countries in considering how women’s participation in decision making would be enhanced including through the experience of being able to participate in decision making processes within Sida-funded interventions. Notably, the principles of **participation** and **non-discrimination** were reported to be somewhat mutually reinforcing.

For instance, in Kenya, a shift in attitudes towards and involvement of women over a relatively short period of time was particularly noted in the Masai communities involved in the PPDP. Where previously, communication with the Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen) took place with several male elders rather than the entire community, young women are now accepted in their role as trainers, working with older men, and women are taking up adult education and other capacity development opportunities. Other communities and government officials have indicated a desire that the PPDP be even more inclusive, to extend to the entire county of constituents they represent, and be replicated elsewhere.

In Cambodia, Sweden’s ambitions to mainstream gender equality in supported interventions and increase participation of women was noted as a contribution, including among trade union representatives. One of the most significant

contributions in Cambodia from a non-discrimination perspective is perhaps the long-term support Sweden has provided, through different actors and in close dialogue with both donors and the government, to promote education for all and increased access to education for girls. Other aspects of non-discrimination, including education for children from ethnic minorities, have also received attention and achieved results within the education support, but are less prominent than gender equality in other sectors and interventions reviewed.

Sida's application of a HRBA has, in many of the interventions reviewed by the Evaluation Team, included a **target group** focusing on those in situations of vulnerability. Special attention has been paid, for instance, to marginalised groups such as LGBTQI and people with disability in Albania; disadvantaged youths, internally displaced from the conflict, and LGBTQI in Colombia; and children from ethnic minorities, girls and garment factory workers in Cambodia. Notably, in all four countries, **non-discrimination** was mostly interpreted as a focus on gender equality. In this respect, Sida's support was reported to have had an immediate and direct effect on issues of women's rights, voice and agency. In some interventions, such as in Diakonia's work in Cambodia, this has contributed to organisational efforts to develop non-discrimination policies and practices.

The application of a HRBA has also contributed to elevating the focus on advancing human rights objectives among co-operation partners and to an enhanced focus on the empowerment of rights-holders, in particular, and of duty-bearers, though less prominently. Indirectly, in the degree to which the HRBA principles have been explicitly or implicitly embedded in Sida's contribution management, it was recognised that Swedish support has been relevant in enabling narratives and concrete experiences of **empowerment** of rights-holders across interventions reviewed for the evaluation.

In Cambodia, the application of a HRBA has contributed to more CSOs and community-based organisations working with a human rights and democracy agenda, and to national human rights organisations interacting more closely with local communities, taking empowerment of rights-holders seriously. In Colombia, this focus on empowerment has contributed to proactive engagement between rights-holders and duty-bearers. The HRBA has contributed to the capacity of different categories of victims of the conflict to be better equipped and confident to engage with the peace process; disadvantaged youths are empowered not only through improved skills and employment opportunities resulting from the Ruta Motor intervention, but also through improved self-confidence to engage with potential employers, and greater awareness of their employment rights. Importantly, **the consistency of Swedish political support on human rights issues** has helped to amplify the effect of the application of the HRBA principles – in this case (for instance), capitalising on the political effect of this support on duty-bearers.

In turn, and interconnected with Sida's initiatives to empower rights-holders in their engagement with duty-bearers, are efforts across the four countries that create new channels (or reinforce existing channels) for rights-holders to **participate** in and influence societal processes affecting their lives. It was noted, for instance, how in Albania, support was provided to inclusive consultations and community meetings to

engage as broad a group of citizens (rights-holders) as possible in needs identification, planning and budgeting processes.

In Cambodia, Sida-funded interventions appear to be associated with progress in terms of strengthened operational structures and **transparency** among many CSOs, but not to a significant extent in terms of their internal democratic governance. CSOs typically remain hierarchical, and the absence of a broad membership exercising ultimate control over operations and governance undermines their legitimacy as advocates for human rights and democracy. In Kenya, changes in **internal operating structures** and management capacity, membership and representation were reported among rights-holder organisations and networks resulting from Sida's influence.

The application of the HRBA principles has also had positive results among **duty-bearers**. In Kenya, reported effects included changes in mindsets and attitudes, capacities, skills and behaviours (e.g. quality of court reports, professional conduct regarding confidentiality). Institutionally, they included changes in practices (such as the formalisation of water service providers and introduction of prison audits, action plans and training curricula). In Colombia, Sida-funded interventions have also contributed to **enhanced state capacity** to: engage with different rights-holders relating to the implementation of the peace process; deepen institutional reform efforts relating to violence against women and girls; incentivise private sector buy-in on the merits of working with disadvantaged youth to improve their employment opportunities; and in relation to strengthening the emerging transitional justice architecture. In Albania, changes were observed in organisational culture in public institutions aimed to provide enabling structures for citizens' participation, accountability and transparency. In Cambodia, the Arbitration Council (a national institution with quasi-judicial authority derived from the Labour Law) has played a key role in addressing labour disputes, and Sida's support has been essential in securing the council's independence and credibility.

#### *ii. Performance-related results*

The application of the HRBA focused directly on the links to, and advancement of, human rights norms and standards, and human rights protection was recorded in all four case study countries. How explicitly the link to human rights norms and standards was recorded in Sida-funded intervention documents varied. But direct results were reported through interviews and, in some cases, in reporting where contribution to progress on human rights norms – including as a result of the application of the HRBA in Sida-funded interventions – was documented.

Also, as noted earlier, in many of the interventions, the HRBA principles featured as explicit performance objectives, not just as process components.

In Colombia, it was reported that a focus on human rights norms in Sida-funded interventions contributed to concrete gains in **institutional, organisational and technical capacity** among civil society, rights-holders and duty-bearers to advance human rights. This included (for instance) the ability of different stakeholders to use the existing constitutional framework to hold duty-bearers to account on social and economic rights, and on gender-based violence (GBV). Across the board in Colombia, Sida was recognised as having contributed to enhanced capacity for voice

and **participation of rights-holders** as an objective in decision-making processes. This was the case in Sida-funded support to disadvantaged or excluded groups for protection of their rights taking part in the peace process, with concrete results in terms of rights commitments that feature in the peace agreement. This has been especially important with regard to women's organisations and victims of the conflict. In addition, it was reported that Sweden's funding of basic logistical and material support to enable these groups to travel safely to and participate in the peace talks was important in advancing the peace agreement links to human rights norms.

It was reported that the **objective of improved accountability** regarding the protection or realisation of human rights was advanced through Sida-funded interventions – for example, contributing to building up the knowledge base and information on rights, and availability of such to rights-holders. In Colombia, this has been through investment in databases and evidence-based reporting on different rights abuses and, more recently, in the truth and memory component of the transitional justice process. In Cambodia, Sida has contributed directly to transitional justice, including through significant contributions to the UN-assisted initiative to bring to justice those most responsible for the grave human rights violations during the Khmer Rouge regime from April 1975 to January 1979. These are further recognised as contributions to accountability. Accountability for human rights abuses here was a human rights objective, and not primarily related to the HRBA as process.

Accountability and transparency in relation to duty-bearers' capacity to meet their human rights obligations were also found to have been advanced – for instance, through Sida's support for Diakonia and Transparency International Cambodia. This has reportedly contributed to **enhanced capacity of duty-bearers to meet their obligations** through recent improvements in government budget transparency. Diakonia and ILO have also contributed to improved grievance procedures among CSOs and garment factories respectively, and support to the Arbitration Council Foundation has been important for effective labour dispute resolution and for protecting labour rights.

**The strategic focus by Sida and some co-operation partners on strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers and rights-holders (sometimes simultaneously)**, with the aim of creating a conducive environment for accountability and transparency, was found to work well. Across the four countries, several Sida-supported interventions have contributed to a rebalancing of the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers. In Kenya, as noted earlier, interventions have supported duty-bearers in the water sector and, more recently, KEWASAET in its capacity for citizen awareness on entitlements, and empowerment. This work with duty-bearers and rights-holders has also characterised Sida's work in Colombia, in relation to its support to the transitional justice architecture through the work of the ICTJ (for example).

Among the **higher-level results** that application of a HRBA has contributed to (by way of its instrumental value) are advances in other development and governance objectives – for example, improved access to basic services in Kenya; and improvements in the labour rights situation and better access to education in Cambodia, particularly among marginalised groups. A recent evaluation also noted that Diakonia in Cambodia had contributed to:

*... increasing political awareness and voter participation in the local elections 2017, raising minimum wages in the garment industry and among public servants, reducing domestic violence and increasing access to justice and psychosocial support for survivors of violence, influencing government policies on gender equality, budget transparency and land dispute resolution.*<sup>81</sup>

Small-scale corruption relating to basic administrative services has reportedly been reduced. Transparency International Cambodia and several of Diakonia's partners have raised awareness, conducted research, and advocated around issues of corruption for many years at national and local levels.

The application of the HRBA was also found to advance legal and policy alignment with human rights norms, and actual experiences of the realisation and protection of human rights. In Cambodia and Colombia, through its support to NGOs assisting victims of human rights violations, including legal aid organisations, Diakonia has contributed to bringing those responsible for human rights violations to justice. In other cases, Diakonia's partners have given visibility to and raised public awareness of human rights violations, and to reaffirming the state's obligations for the realisation of social and economic rights. In Colombia this has included work on enhancing capacity of CSOs and rights holders for legal mobilisation before the courts.

Sweden's support in Cambodia and Colombia overall was reported to contribute to **preventing human rights violations**. This was underlined, by co-operation partners and rights-holders, as especially valuable in the context of a deteriorating human rights situation.

Arguably, the most important effect of Sweden's application of a HRBA is that it has strengthened and clarified Sweden's commitment to promoting and protecting human rights through international development cooperation, and has thus provided Sida with the basis for a **principled, long-term support** to actors that promote development towards a more open rather than authoritarian society. Long-term engagement with co-operation partners that have, over time, demonstrated their own commitment to the HRBA principles *in practice*, and to advancing human rights norms as explicit objectives of their work, has contributed to sustaining progress on the application of the HRBA. This long-term engagement has also contributed to the survival of organisations engaged in structural change processes by which human rights can become meaningful in shaping social and political life. This support was reported as having given many of these actors some space (albeit sometimes limited) to continue operating. In Cambodia and Colombia, this has in turn probably contributed to avoiding further deterioration of the human rights situation and to maintaining a foundation for positive advances once the overall socio-political environment becomes more conducive to democratic developments.

Sida staff in-country and co-operation partners highlighted that the HRBA is not a new approach. Many co-operation partners were selected, and have continued to

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<sup>81</sup> Nilsson et al. 2018.

benefit from this long-term perspective, precisely because the HRBA was core to their mandate or they were already champions of human rights. Where this was the case, informants reported (as discussed under EQ4 and EQ6) that they did not feel that Sida has substantively changed their understanding or application of the HRBA, as this was considered to be intrinsic to how they work, and what they aim to achieve through their work.

In Kenya, Swedish support and the consistent prioritisation of human rights has enabled co-operation partners to make the HRBA more prominent in their work, and in their engagement with other stakeholders for whom human rights has not been a priority. It has allowed them to be more active, expand their reach and, in some instances, to more quickly advance shifts that were already underway in the country – for instance, regarding progress on implementing the human rights in the 2010 Constitution. At the sub-national level, where community members and government representatives were previously less familiar with the HRBA principles and continue to be affected by their earlier experiences with KenGen, Sweden’s involvement in the PPDP appears to be more directly associated with changes in how people are thinking and approaching their work, including consideration of the HRBA by private sector entities such as Akiira Geothermal Ltd.

### 4.3.3 Key points

First, assessing the effects of the HRBA is **intertwined with assessing achievement of the intended programme results**. Process- and performance-related results cannot be easily separated. Results frameworks include measures of changes in the HRBA principles as they link directly to a programme’s design and expected change pathways, but are not explicitly oriented around measuring the HRBA processes per se, and mostly seem not to be picked up in reporting.

Second, **stark realities of shrinking political or civic space, of ongoing levels of conflict and human rights abuses, or deep and intersecting inequalities mean that progress is mostly non-linear and multi-level, and that some groups may experience reversals and backlash**. It is not possible to isolate the impact of the HRBA from other changes (for better or worse) in the wider political and social context. Capturing impact thus needs to be qualified in terms of what can plausibly be claimed.

Third, changes can be observed as a consequence of the focus by Sida and co-operation partners on the four human rights principles, notably participation and the gender equality aspects of non-discrimination. Equally important (or even more so) for attainment of results appears to be that Sida more generally has put **human rights at the centre of some of its operations**. For this, the other principles – related to empowerment and links to human rights norms (the ‘E’ and the ‘L’ of P.L.A.N.E.T.) are of great importance for the effective promotion and protection of human rights. In this respect, integrating the fuller understanding of a HRBA – as reflected in P.L.A.N.E.T. in its entirety – is more useful for Sida staff and for how this is communicated to co-operation partners in Sida-funded interventions for the advancement and protection of human rights.

Fourth, in returning to the theory of change underpinning the HRBA, the evaluation found that in relation to both process and performance, its application by Sida and co-operation partners contributes both to the advancement of human rights, and support for the advancement of other development and governance objectives. However, the sustained effects of the HRBA benefits depend on sustained investment in it by Sida, alongside ongoing support to long-term co-operation partners and end users (rights-holders and duty-bearers) in shaping how the HRBA is applied in response to the political economy context, and the specific needs in relation to intervention sectors.

## 4.4 EVALUATION QUESTION 4

**How do co-operation partners perceive the HRBA? Are there differences in the definition of the concept between different stakeholders? Has the work of Sida and embassies of Sweden led to changes in the perception of the HRBA?**

### Box 5

Across the four case study countries, Sweden is recognised among co-operation partners as a standard-bearer for human rights in general and gender equality in particular. This includes an appreciation of Sweden's consistent focus on the importance of international human rights standards, empowerment of rights-holders and accountability of duty-bearers, and targeting of disadvantaged groups. At the same time, there is significant variation in what is defined as or understood by a HRBA by different stakeholders across the intervention chain and beyond.

Co-operation partners are generally able to reflect on the application of key aspects of the HRBA, including aspects of the HRBA principles, mostly on their own terms and in relation to their specific organisational objectives. It is also the case, however, that many make no distinction between a HRBA and human rights. While Sida's support has enabled co-operation partners to promote and protect human rights, there are (with the possible exception of gender equality) few indications that it has led to changes in their perception of a HRBA.

With exceptions, there are also some noticeable differences in how different stakeholder groups relate to the HRBA. Government agencies tend to reflect on how human rights are represented in national legal and constitutional frameworks and in national development policy plans, but some seem not to explicitly engage with the HRBA. International NGOs often have their own organisational understanding and mandate in terms of both their human rights work and their conceptualisation of the HRBA. National CSOs, to varying degrees, are more or less aware of Sida's understanding of a HRBA, but have their own distinctive approaches to addressing the human rights issues that are their core business. There are some bilateral donor agencies considered 'like-minded' by Sida, with whom there is a shared perception and definition of a HRBA.

#### 4.4.1 Co-operation partners' perceptions of the HRBA

The Evaluation Team talked to a broad range of co-operation partners, including government agencies, other bilateral donor agencies, international NGOs and national CSOs, as well as individual development actors. Across the four case study countries, Sweden is recognised as a standard-bearer for human rights in general and gender equality in particular. This includes an appreciation of Sweden's consistent focus on the importance of international human rights standards, empowerment of rights-holders and accountability of duty-bearers, and targeting of disadvantaged groups.

At the same time, as reflected in the quotations from the Kenya fieldwork (Box 6), there is huge variation in what is defined as or understood by a HRBA by different stakeholders across the intervention chain and beyond.<sup>82</sup>

#### Box 6: Different reference points for a human rights-based approach among key informants in Kenya

*'An approach that considers the wellbeing of the person, taking into account their special needs, dignity as human beings.'* (Staff member, Kenyan government agency)

*'Ensuring that development interventions reinforce rather than violate human rights.'* (Community leader)

*'An approach that puts human beings, their interests, rights and views, at the centre of each phase of the intervention.'* (Staff member, national civil society organisation)

*'The Constitution prescribes minimum government guarantees, access to water, health [for] citizens, especially lower income. [HRBA means] that development doesn't have a negative impact like displacement.'* (Staff member, Kenyan government agency)

*'From where I'm sitting, it's not necessarily that new an approach but [HRBA is] placing rights at the centre of everything, using the lens as identifying problems as human rights issues that therefore have to be addressed. ... what are the obligations of duty-bearers... how do you improve agency of rights-holders... [it] also removes some of the cultural relativity that tends to creep in... allows us to focus on international standards.'* (Programme officer, multilateral agency)

As the quotations in Box 6 show, in Kenya people have different reference points when explaining how they conceive a HRBA and varied in the extent to which they start from more conceptual understandings or give very concrete, applied examples. Interviewees spoke about specific rights of individuals to water, quality health care, a safe work environment and access to information, and how these rights could be fulfilled. The Kenyan Constitution appears to be widely known and was a common reference point. Informants even cited specific articles, and a female community member had a copy with her at one of the community meetings. Other informants

<sup>82</sup> Cornwall, A. & Nyamu-Musembi, C. 2004.

referenced international laws and standards, including those that specifically related to their work, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Mandela Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. Linking human rights to international agreements was perceived to be less political, reinforcing common frameworks established by the international community.

While most of those interviewed by the Evaluation Team were familiar with the term ‘HRBA’ and many claimed that they apply the concept in practice, it is also the case that many made **no distinction between a HRBA and human rights**. Others used expressions such as *‘putting the person in the centre’*, *‘knowing what the people on the ground think of our projects’*, *‘non-discrimination in project design’*, *‘people’s power – holding duty-bearers to account by knowing rights’*, *‘looking at the situation of both rights-holders and duty-bearers’*, and *‘thinking about human rights in all we do’* to describe what a HRBA means to them. Very few interviewees were aware of Sida’s definition of a HRBA. Some used the rights-holder and duty-bearer concepts when talking to the Evaluation Team, but there was some confusion on how to apply these. Very few interviewees referred directly to the four principles applied by Sida in the HRBA. Regardless of their awareness of a HRBA, however, interviewees across the four countries (as noted in EQ1) engaged with the four principles and could provide examples of how their organisation related to one or more of them, both on an organisational and societal level. In the case of Cambodia, some co-operation partner representatives even said they were familiar with the HRBA but that they did not regard it as relevant for their work or the Sida-funded intervention in question.

#### 4.4.2 Differences in the definition of a HRBA<sup>83</sup>

Informants’ affiliation was not consistently associated with their perception of a HRBA. For example, in Kenya, although Swedish and multilateral informants tended to reference international law more frequently, Kenyans tended to reference the Constitution, and co-operation partner staff tended to reference specific rights and rights-holders, this was not the case across the board. When asked about lessons from integrating a HRBA in practice, one person specifically noted the assumption, particularly in development circles, that there is a shared understanding of the HRBA and emphasised the importance of having an explicit discussion of the HRBA at the outset.

**Government agencies** tended to reflect first how human rights are represented in national legal and constitutional frameworks and in national development policy plans. But their concern is with human rights and citizen rights – and some seem not to engage with the HRBA. They grapple with the politics of the human rights issue most pertinent to their mandate, and the relationship between duty-bearers and rights-holders. At the same time, where state capacity is weak, government agencies are

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<sup>83</sup> In considering the differences in how stakeholders define a HRBA, for this EQ the Evaluation Team does not address multilateral organisations’ definitions, which are addressed in EQ5.

susceptible to state capture, which can take multiple forms. In Albania, the weight of corruption undermines duty-bearers' capacity to deliver on the rule of law, and on protecting the human rights of Albanian citizens.

There are some **bilateral donor agencies** that Sida considers to be 'like-minded', including the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with whom there is a shared perception and definition of a HRBA, as expressed by the SDC representative interviewed in Albania: '*The shared philosophy and the same way of working converge nicely*' and '*Sida has clear lines of meeting the HRBA and is quite vocal and coherent*'. In Albania, in the collaboration with the Dutch embassy, the joint efforts to address the Albanian government advocating for the Pride Parade (non-discrimination) was mentioned as an example of shared prioritisation of human rights. This means that there is a mutual reinforcement of the importance of working with human rights, recognised by both sides. In the Sustainable Tourism programme, Sida collaborates closely with USAID, which does not have a focus on a HRBA per se. However, according to USAID, Sida has nudged the principles into the programme, although Sida itself is not satisfied with the programme's level of commitment to the HRBA.

**International NGOs** often have their own organisational understanding and mandate in terms of both their human rights work and their conceptualisation of the HRBA. For instance, Diakonia has applied a HRBA since the 1990s. Its HRBA policy explicitly links to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is grounded in the principles of participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination. It underlines that power relations shall be analysed and acted upon from an intersectional perspective, and it uses the rights-holder and duty-bearer concepts in its analysis. The HRBA applied by Diakonia thus contains the same main features as Sida's application or interpretation of a HRBA. In a context with shrinking space for civil society, Diakonia's practical application of a HRBA has primarily focused on working with partners on issues of protection, risk and context assessments, identification of alternative advocacy strategies (including co-operation partners' advocacy in Sweden), strengthened ties between local and national organisations, and promotion of solidarity and cooperation. This was echoed in both Colombia and Cambodia. The ICTJ reproduces the UN common definition of the HRBA, including in its proposals to Sida in Colombia.

**National CSOs** were, to varying degrees, more or less aware of Sida's understanding of a HRBA, but have their own distinctive approaches to addressing the human rights issues that are their core business. In many cases, this was not articulated as the organisation's specific version of a HRBA, but across the four countries, they responded with fluidity to specific questions on the four principles.

#### 4.4.3 Changes in perceptions of the HRBA

Across the four countries, Sweden is seen as a champion for human rights in general and gender equality in particular. This includes a keen focus on the importance of international human rights standards, empowerment of rights-holders and duty-bearers, and disadvantaged groups.

While there are recognised changes, the influence is very uneven, and is context- and organisation-specific. Partners appreciate the interaction they have with embassy staff and Sida staff on issues of human rights and the platforms the embassy supports or provides for discussing human rights issues with other actors. They did not explicitly express that Sida or the embassy had contributed to changes in their perception of a HRBA. Many recognised, however, that Sida pays particular attention to issues of **gender equality**, and some of Diakonia's partners have expressed appreciation of the gender-related training that Diakonia provided and indicated that this had led to a change in perceptions.

In the case of Albania, in the **interaction with co-operation partners**, Sida's influence has not been on the normative perception of a HRBA, but mainly in its practical implementation. **This has been practised in different ways – through delegated implementation, through continuous nudging and flagging of the human rights principles, and by providing a platform for discussion and exchange of opinions and experiences.** One example is the initiative in Albania to facilitate the discussions on the Chapter 27 on Environment in the EU accession protocol, as well as on gender. Sida facilitates meetings and workshops where opinions and experiences can be exchanged and where participants from various institutions and sectors are offered a space for dialogue.

Thus, co-operation partners are able to reflect on the application of key aspects of a HRBA, including the four principles, mostly on their own terms and in relation to their specific organisational objectives. However, overall the evaluation has found that **there is insufficient evidence of a shared definition of what constitutes a HRBA, and that this actively guides intervention design and operations.** This is notwithstanding some shared understandings of what a HRBA might include. Apart from the multilateral organisations discussed in Section 3.6, among the organisations assessed as part of this evaluation, only Diakonia has a specific definition of a HRBA. Sida's support has enabled the co-operation partners to promote and protect human rights, but there are (with the possible exception of gender equality) few indications that this has led to changes in their perceptions of a HRBA.

#### 4.4.4 Key points

Among co-operation partners, Sweden is recognised as a standard-bearer for human rights in general and gender equality in particular. This includes an appreciation of Sweden's consistent focus on the importance of international human rights standards, empowerment of rights-holders and accountability of duty-bearers, and targeting of disadvantaged groups. There is also significant variation in what is defined as or understood by a HRBA by different stakeholders across the intervention chain and beyond.

Co-operation partners are generally able to reflect on the application of key aspects of a HRBA, including the four principles, mostly on their own terms and in relation to their specific organisational objectives. Many, however, make no distinction between a HRBA and human rights. While Sida's support has enabled co-operation partners to promote and protect human rights, there are (with the possible

exception of gender equality) few indications that this has led to changes in their perceptions of a HRBA.

There are also some noticeable differences in how different stakeholder groups relate to the HRBA. Government agencies reflect on how human rights are represented in national legal and constitutional frameworks and in national development policy plans, but mostly do not engage with the HRBA. International NGOs often have their own organisational understanding and mandate in terms of both their human rights work and their conceptualisation of the HRBA. National CSOs vary in their awareness of Sida's understanding of a HRBA, but have their own distinctive approaches to addressing the human rights issues that are their core business. There are some bilateral donor agencies that Sida considers to be 'like-minded', with whom there is a shared perception and definition of a HRBA.

## 4.5 EVALUATION QUESTION 5

**Have lessons learnt from what works well and less well been collected and, if so, to what extent have these lessons been used to develop and adjust the application of a HRBA by Sida/embassies of Sweden and by co-operation partners? Are there any signs of changed ways of working?**

### Box 7

Lessons specifically on the HRBA are not systematically gathered at a strategy or sector level by Sida, embassies of Sweden or co-operation partners in any of the four case study countries. At the project level, there were many examples across the project cycle where lessons are documented and adaptations made. These lessons and adaptations are directly linked to achieving project results, rather than framed around the HRBA principles. The unique configuration of duty-bearers and rights-holders and their influence within a particular sector and country (as well as the influence of specific leaders within the same institution over time) can limit the direct transferability of lessons across institutions, issue areas, country contexts and time periods.

Across the four case study countries, lessons on the HRBA are not systematically gathered at a strategy or sector level. As noted in EQ1, 16 per cent of decentralised evaluation ToR in the case study countries included a question about the application of a HRBA. At the programme level, however, there were many examples across the programme cycle where lessons are documented and adaptations made. These lessons and adaptations are directly linked to achieving programme results, rather than framed around the HRBA principles. Therefore, lessons appear to be oriented towards the more operational single-loop learning question 'are we doing it right?'

more than the strategic double-loop learning question ‘are we doing the right thing?’<sup>84</sup>

In terms of **formalised processes**, as noted in the response to EQ1, there are some common opportunities and constraints related to how interventions are reported, and where the system documents or monitors how the HRBA is being applied. For both the embassies and co-operation partners, changes in the external context and the start of a new strategy or project cycle were the time points that would trigger discussions about adjustments, particularly to the double-loop learning question. Adjustments were also made based on new information, reflection and discussion as part of initial conversations and brainstorming between Sweden and co-operation partners, needs assessments, inception phases, ongoing monitoring and feedback from beneficiaries and duty-bearers, annual reviews, mid-term reviews, measurement conducted as part of a programme component (e.g. prison audits), and field surveys to assess programme effects. Lessons and changes were documented in programme documents, work plans and budget narratives, review meeting minutes, and final appraisal of intervention documents.

**Less formal processes** were also perceived to provide an important mechanism to reflect and share lessons. Chief among them are ongoing conversations between embassy staff and co-operation partners, and among partners, target institutions and intended beneficiaries. Sida is perceived to be more flexible than other donors, and co-operation partners very much appreciated a partner that allowed them to adapt aspects of programme design and implementation. Long-term core funding was also thought to enable the HRBA to take root, since societal changes in the HRBA processes and outcomes require more than one time-bound intervention.

Adjustments that were reported related to *what* and *how* co-operation partners were implementing the programme, as well as *who* they worked with. In Kenya, for example, multiple programmes added a new component of their work focused on rights-holders (judiciary, corrections, water) or duty-bearers (PPDP), seeking to balance attention between the two groups. These changes were addressed in three ways: by integrating new activities into an existing programme of work; adding a complementary programme led by the same organisation; or by more intentionally linking to other efforts in the broader sector, particularly by CSOs.

Across programmes, knowledge-sharing also takes place through Sida annual learning weeks, specialised networks (e.g. human rights, CSO networks) and partner workshops hosted by embassies (on gender, for instance); again, these platforms may include issues around a HRBA, but are not explicitly oriented as such. In the past, Sida regional democracy and human rights advisors supported cross-programme knowledge-sharing by facilitating connections among staff, co-operation partners and countries (among other types of advisory support and training).

Some key informants – both embassy staff and co-operation partners – indicated a desire for cross-programme workshops on a HRBA and specialised training; other

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<sup>84</sup> Argyris, C. 1993.

staff felt that current procedures were sufficient. Although there are no systematised procedures for institutionalising accumulated knowledge over time, this can be facilitated by the continuity of staff, particularly national staff whose tenure at the embassy is often longer than their Swedish colleagues. There may be opportunities to formalise these insights and experiences; for instance, having long-serving staff provide new colleagues with an overview of the evolution of the human rights situation in the country and the role of Sida and other key actors over time. The rotation of Swedish staff can help facilitate knowledge-sharing across countries, but is dependent on the initiative of the individual.

Previous reviews of the HRBA in East Africa and in Kenya specifically found that at that time, there was little documentation of how the HRBA had been applied in practice. The consistency of several of our key findings with those reviews – including varied interpretation and application of the HRBA and the lack of an explicit strategy for integration of all principles throughout the programme cycle – itself suggests that earlier lessons on application of the HRBA did not result in institutional adjustments to respond to them.<sup>85</sup>

Despite the lack of systematic collection of lessons on the HRBA, Sida invests in research and knowledge production on the situation of human rights in many of the countries to which it channels support. This research is an invaluable resource that can be used to draw lessons from different human rights challenges that can inform wider debates on the HRBA. For instance, in Colombia, Sida's investment in knowledge production and data on different aspects of how human rights have evolved in the country's political history are invaluable resources in relation to specific rights campaigns (such as on LGBTQI cases in the work of *Colombia Diversa*) documenting human rights in relation to the conflict, through the work of the research institute, CINEP, or now investing in the Truth Commission as part of the peace process.

The substantial variation in how the HRBA is applied, as documented in this evaluation, suggests that future efforts to document and apply lessons learnt from a HRBA beyond the programme level may be more usefully oriented around a specific problem or actor type, rather than more general reflections on lessons learnt. Similar to advocacy initiatives, the unique configuration of duty-bearers and rights-holders and their influence within a particular sector and country (as well as the influence of specific leaders within the same institution over time) can limit the direct transferability of lessons across institutions, issue areas, country contexts and time periods. There may, however, be opportunities to share lessons on leveraging the Kenyan Constitution and the National Commission on Human Rights, or improving participation of LGBTQI communities in Colombia.

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<sup>85</sup> Brun, S., Dawidson, K., Hulterström, K. & Mattsson, S. 2008.

### 4.5.1 Key points

Across the four case study countries, the Evaluation Team found no evidence to indicate that lessons on the HRBA are systematically gathered at a strategy or sector level.

Where lessons are documented across the project cycle and adaptations made, they tend to be directly linked to achieving project results, rather than framed around the HRBA principles.

## 4.6 EVALUATION QUESTION 6

**What is the perception of the HRBA among the multilateral organisations with which Sida and/or embassies of Sweden are engaged in the case study countries? Are there any signs of change in the perceptions and application of the HRBA? If so, can this change in any way be traced back to the work/advocacy of Sida and/or embassies of Sweden (in the global dialogue or at the country level)?**

### Box 8

There is little evidence to suggest that Sweden has directly influenced a change in the perceptions or application of the HRBA among multilateral organisations at country level. Sida is, however, valued for its human rights orientation, which contributes to the political momentum behind the work of multilateral organisations and other co-operation partners to better fulfil their mandates regarding both advancing human rights and applying a HRBA. Sida is at the same time valued for the consistency with which it champions gender equality and gender equality. Sweden's financial support and presence in political dialogue was valued for helping to sustain and, at times, advance attention to human rights. Financially, this included flexible and core funding to individual organisations. Politically, Sweden's voice was perceived as influential in keeping the discussion of human rights on the agenda.

Table 4 highlights how key multilateral institutions across the four case study countries interpret the HRBA and guide their staff and co-operation partners in its application. These documents reflect core similarities, including a base in international law and principles of participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability, which featured in all except the ILO. Across organisations and compared to Sweden's interpretation of the HRBA, the scope varies, as does guidance on its application. For instance, the UNDP policy notes that accountability needs to be viewed through the prism of justice, both through the resolution of competing claims and distributive justice. And, unlike OHCHR, which lists indivisibility and interdependence as separate principles, UNDP indicates that the 'scarcity of resources and institutional constraints' may require the prioritisation of some rights over others – in particular the right to food, basic education and health.

**Table 4: Interpretation and guidance on the HRBA among multilateral institutions active in the case study countries<sup>86</sup>**

<i>Orientation</i>	<i>Principles</i>
<b>Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)</b>	
Focus on the rights contained in and derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other international human rights instruments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Universality and inalienability</li> <li>2. Indivisibility</li> <li>3. Interdependence and interrelatedness</li> <li>4. Non-discrimination and equality</li> <li>5. Participation and inclusion</li> <li>6. Accountability and the rule of law</li> </ol>
<b>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)</b>	
Grounded in the UN Common Understanding UNDP policy based on the values, standards and principles of the UDHR and subsequent human rights conventions	<p>‘Pairs’ of human rights principles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Universality, linked to indivisibility</li> <li>2. Equality, linked to non-discrimination</li> <li>3. Participation, linked to inclusion</li> <li>4. Accountability, linked to the rule of law</li> </ol>
<b>European Union (EU)</b>	
Adopts the Rights Based Approach (RBA), which is considered to go ‘beyond the formally recognized Human Rights, to include other types of rights, such as intellectual property rights, basic economic and social delivery rights as well as sexual and reproductive health and rights’. RBA emphasises strengthening of the ‘capacity of duty bearers to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and the corresponding capacity of the rights-holders to promote and protect their rights and fundamental freedoms’.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applying all rights, relates to universality and indivisibility of human rights</li> <li>2. Participation and access to the decision-making process</li> <li>3. Non-discrimination and equal access</li> <li>4. Accountability and access to the rule of law</li> <li>5. Transparency and access to information</li> </ol>

<sup>86</sup> Sources: Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. n.d. Frequently Asked Questions on a Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation. UNDP. 2015. A Human Rights-based Approach to Development Programming in UNDP – Adding the Missing Link. UNDP. 2006. Applying a Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation and Programming: A UNDP Capacity Development Resource Capacity Development Group Bureau for Development Policy. European Commission. 2014. Toolbox: A Rights-Based Approach, Encompassing All Human Rights for EU Development Cooperation, Commission Staff Working Document. International Labour Office. 2010. International Labour Migration: A Rights-based Approach. UN Women. 2019. Progress of the World’s Women, UN Women. UNESCO. 2006. Strategy on human rights: I. Further integrating a human rights-based approach into UNESCO programming. I. Advancing human rights in an era of globalization. III. Strengthening partnerships. Also the UN Women website was reviewed and no clear policy or strategy on a HRBA was found.

<b>International Labour Organization (ILO)</b>	
Like the EU refers to a rights-based approach, as set out in the Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration – a very broad collection of principles, guidelines and best practices, grounded in international human rights, labour, refugee and humanitarian law.	15 principles covering decent work, means for international cooperation on labour migration, global knowledge base, effective management of labour migration, protection of migrant workers, prevention of and protection against abusive migration practices, migration process, social integration and inclusion, migration and development For instance, principle 14 states: ‘Governments and social partners, in consultation, should promote social integration and inclusion, while respecting cultural diversity, preventing discrimination against migrant workers and taking measures to combat racism and xenophobia’.
<b>UN Women</b>	
UN Women website was reviewed and no clear policy or strategy on HRBA was found. UN Women underline the advancement of women’s rights, and the focus on the principles of equality and non-discrimination, which are identified as human rights principles (UN Women 2019). In Colombia, in addition, there is a strong focus on women’s participation and protection, in the context of conflict, and the Women, Peace and Security	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Equality</li> <li>2. Non-discrimination</li> <li>3. Principle of progressive realisation</li> </ol>
<b>UNESCO</b>	
UNESCO's Strategy on Human Rights sets as a priority for the Organization the integration of an HRBA in all its programmes and activities. Applies HRBA as set out in the UN Common Understanding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Universality and inalienability</li> <li>2. Indivisibility</li> <li>3. Interdependence and interrelatedness</li> <li>4. Non-discrimination and equality</li> <li>5. Participation and inclusion</li> <li>6. Accountability and the rule of law</li> </ol>

As noted in EQ4, when the Evaluation Team asked key informants working for these and other multilateral organisations in the four case study countries what a HRBA meant to them, they articulated the concept in different ways. That said, their responses were broadly consistent with Sweden’s approach and particularly among

UN agencies, staff on both sides saw each other as like-minded partners who have worked together – in some cases for decades – to jointly pursue common aims. Indeed, across the four case study countries, **Sida was perceived to play a reinforcing and an enabling role**, which allowed multilateral partners to fulfil their institutional mandates and commitment to human rights.

There is **no evidence to suggest that Sweden has directly influenced a change in the perceptions or application of the HRBA among multilateral organisations**. Rather, Sweden's financial support and presence in political dialogue was valued for helping to sustain and, at times, advance attention to human rights. Financially, this included flexible and core funding to individual organisations as well as contributions to multi-donor funds. Politically, Sweden's voice within both multilateral and national government fora was perceived as influential in keeping the discussion of human rights on the agenda, particularly when other member states or national actors were reluctant to raise it. Informants identified examples of specific activities in the case study countries – most notably Sweden's leadership in ensuring that human rights remain a visible component of international support to the peace process in Colombia and, recently, its active involvement in shaping the European Development Cooperation Strategy for Cambodia and Albania.

In as much as it was not found that Sweden has directly influenced a change the perception or application of HRBA in multilateral organisations at country level, this is equally true with regard to whether multi-lateral organisations found Sida's application of HRBA to contribute to changes in their perception of integrateing a more gender responsive understanding of HRBA. At the same time, in the case of Colombia, for instance, Sida's support to UN Women was valued for, and mobilised as advancing women's rights, including to participate in decision-making processes in the peacebuilding effort. The HRBA is interconnected, with a focus on women's rights, with the gender perspective in UN Women's strategic engagement in supporting a gender-responsive approach to the peace agreement and its implementation. Sida's support was considered as politically strategic in this respect in securing women's rights, advancing the protection of women's rights, and enabling women's participation, in dialogue with UN Women and Colombian rights holders' organisations. But these goals were co-constructed, and not led by Sweden. Sida's support contributed to ensuring that women's rights and women's participation in the peace process, however, were not side-stepped.

#### 4.6.1 Key points

Sida is valued for its human rights orientation, which contributes to the political momentum behind the work of multilaterals and other co-operation partners to better fulfil their mandates regarding both advancing human rights and applying a HRBA.

At the same time, there is little evidence to suggest that Sweden has directly changed the perceptions or application of a HRBA among multilateral organisations at country level.

## 5 Conclusions

The evaluation has, through the six EQs, addressed relevance, effectiveness and impact as well as systematised knowledge and learning from Sida's application of the HRBA, identifying lessons learnt on what has worked well, less well, and why. This section sets out the Evaluation Team's conclusions drawn from the analysis of the evidence presented throughout this report.

1. Among co-operation partners, Sweden is **recognised as a standard-bearer for human rights** in general and gender equality in particular. This includes an appreciation of Sweden's consistent focus on the importance of international human rights standards, empowerment of rights-holders and accountability of duty-bearers, and targeting of groups in vulnerable situations. Sida is recognised for its strong steer in addressing human rights challenges through multiple entry points.
2. The **gender equality approach** features prominently in most interventions due to Sida's and wider embassy staff's systematic inclusion of gender by Sida in interaction and dialogue with co-operation partners and other stakeholders. Co-operation partners as well as Sida staff systematically address gender equality through their activities, including formulation of indicators and reporting.
3. Sida's **multidimensional poverty analysis (MDPA)** has clear links to a HRBA, but does not necessarily result in identification of the human rights claims of rights-holders and the human rights obligations of duty-bearers. Nor do MDPAs necessarily draw on the recommendations of international human rights bodies and mechanisms when analysing development dynamics at country level. Across the four case study countries, the link between the HRBA and MDPAs did not feature prominently in discussions about the HRBA.
4. While there is policy-level agreement among many donor agencies and Sida's co-operation partners on what the key components of a HRBA are, there is **variation among Sida staff, embassy staff and co-operation partners in how a HRBA is understood**. Among Sida staff and co-operation partners, there was no clear distinction drawn between applying the HRBA as a method and putting the advancement of human rights at the centre of overall work. Often, embassy staff and co-operation partners in particular referred to the two activities interchangeably.
5. Sida is widely perceived as **enacting the principles and spirit of the HRBA in its own ways of working**, engaging with its co-operation partners in what was

considered to be participatory and consultative processes, and integrating transparency and accountability in programming. However, it may be argued that staff apply this in a varied way based on **individual skills and knowledge** of a HRBA rather than agency-wide capacities and commitment. Reference to **P.L.A.N.E.T.** is neither automatic nor prevalent in Sida and cooperation partner staff's understanding of HRBA. Sida staff could make more frequent and effective use of international human rights law, including treaty body comments and recommendations from UN special rapporteurs and the UPR process.

6. The evaluation highlights an **embedded approach** to the application of a HRBA, where it underpins overall strategy and the rationale for development cooperation, and is part of programming – manifested in different ways – **rather than a separate area of attention**. This embedded approach has resulted in **varied application of a HRBA**, perceived to be dependent on the orientation of the individual, organisation or programme, and on context. Sida staff are familiar with the formal attributes of a HRBA, as per Sida guidance. At the individual level, mechanical adherence to a HRBA could result in a tokenistic ‘box-ticking’ exercise, rather than identifying opportunity structures to address the power imbalances between rights-holders and duty-bearers. However, there are missed opportunities for strengthening a HRBA in the absence of more formal mechanisms, particularly among staff, co-operation partners and interventions that are less oriented towards a HRBA.
7. Of the four principles, **participation** is the most prominent and often also the entry point for working with (for instance) transparency and accountability, between which there is often a blurred line. Non-discrimination (sometimes phrased as *inclusion*) is most frequently applied in relation to gender and, to some extent, on issues of disabilities and ethnicity.
8. There is little evidence to suggest that Sweden has directly changed the **perceptions or application of the HRBA** among multilateral organisations at country level. Sida is, however, valued for its human rights orientation, which contributes to the political momentum behind the work of multilateral organisations and other co-operation partners to better fulfil their mandates regarding both advancing human rights and applying a HRBA.
9. **Impact** was reported on a range of results related to human rights and the application of a HRBA. In general, participation most prominently contributed to reported effects. The principles of non-discrimination, accountability and transparency were associated more with performance and less with the process components of the HRBA. Overall, it is the HRBA in aggregate – including the four principles, the focus on addressing the power imbalances between rights-holders and duty-bearers, and the objective of advancing human rights norms and standards – that was found to contribute to results. Separating out the process (principles) and performance (human rights standards) components of the HRBA

to explain results was found not to be helpful, nor to reflect the context-responsive variation in how the HRBA was applied, and with what effect.

10. It is **not evident that results can be clearly distinguished** between what constitutes the application of sound programming principles (especially on accountability and transparency) and what can specifically be connected to the application of the HRBA.
11. **Among rights-holders, reported results** of Sida and co-operation partners applying the HRBA included: changes in awareness, capacities and skills (advocacy, analysis); access to and direct participation in decision-making processes (budget consultation, review of legislation, discussion with companies); access to basic services; and ability to organise and work collectively. Among rights-holder organisations and networks, these included changes in internal operating structures and management capacity, membership and representation, as well as gender equality and enhanced women's participation. In Colombia and Cambodia, the work of Sida and co-operation partners was seen as helping to prevent human rights violations and provide public support to vulnerable groups and organisations.
12. **Among duty-bearers, reported results** included changes in mindsets and attitudes, and in capacities, skills and behaviours (quality of court reports, professional conduct regarding confidentiality). Where the emphasis has been on the principles of transparency and accountability, they included institutional changes in practices, and in legal, policy and institutional reform, (establishment of gender working groups, training curricula, structured assessment procedures, improved accountability and transparency procedures in public administration systems; and improved state capacity to deliver on commitments to address legacies of conflict, and on GBV). Duty-bearers have also undertaken to broaden participation in access to decision-making.
13. There was little evidence of systematic differences in the application of the HRBA across **sectors**. Rather, the Evaluation Team observed greater variation across **individuals, organisations and interventions** within and across countries, and based on **context-specific political economy conditions**. Sector-specific characteristics were important in terms of signalling relevant aspects of the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers that needed to be addressed. However, these characteristics are the result of wider features of the formal legal and regulatory conditions in a given country, the specific configuration of actors involved in specific human rights matters, as well as the nature of the prevailing political settlement and informal rules that dictate state–society relations.
14. Arguably, the most important effect of Sweden's application of a HRBA is that it has **strengthened and clarified Sweden's commitment** to promoting and protecting human rights through international development cooperation, and thus

provided Sida with the basis for a principled, long-term support to actors that promote development towards a more open rather than authoritarian society. Strategic cooperation between Sida and MFA staff can maximise leverage on issues of human rights.

15. Sida's **adaptive capacity** and working with context was seen by co-operation partners as valuable and relevant given the political nature of human rights realities, and how they affect all development and governance change processes. In addition, Sida's relative modesty in terms of claiming visibility for its contribution, valuing the importance of long-term agreements, and providing core support with a high degree of local ownership and locally driven change processes means that the HRBA reflects local appropriations by co-operation partners of its component pieces. This practice of facilitating ownership and bottom-up problem identification renders Sida's HRBA more relevant to context.
16. **Political skills and close engagement with context** were reported as important. This includes Sida staff having: a deep understanding of the overall political context; an interest in and knowledge of human rights issues; an ability to maintain dialogue with a diverse set of stakeholders; close interaction with co-operation partner organisations and institutions; a capacity to find synergies and tackle human rights problems from different angles and with different tools; and ultimately a general commitment – upheld by Sida and the embassy leadership – to the promotion and protection of human rights as an overarching goal.
17. **Sida's deliberate use of open dialogue, formal and informal channels of influence, and hands-on engagement** with co-operation partners is perceived to be influential and to increase awareness of the value of a HRBA. Furthermore, choosing co-operation partners with potential for strengthening human rights through a HRBA, alongside close and long-term working, provides a solid platform for reinforcing the HRBA and strengthening human rights in general.
18. **Nudging of co-operation partners** into perceiving and accepting a HRBA (if they had not done so at the beginning of the partnership) appeared an efficient way of influencing and inducing change. This gradual acceptance of a HRBA also means that a **sequence of agreements** increases its acceptance and application, meaning that long-term engagement renders a better result in terms of the HRBA.
19. **Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems** are not designed to adequately capture information on the HRBA. This means that there are limited opportunities for documenting results of applying the HRBA, as well as generating lessons on the HRBA in practice. MEL systems must capture the specific evidence to allow knowledge generation on the HRBA.
20. **Sida does not systematically gather lessons on the HRBA** at a strategy or sector level. While there are examples where lessons are documented and adaptations

made at project level, these are directly linked to achieving project results, rather than framed around the HRBA components.

21. **There has been no recent review of capacity development needs** – at the individual and organisational levels – for applying a HRBA effectively across the work of Sida and co-operation partners, either generally or with a view to ensuring that the HRBA is informed by context-specific political economy analysis and locally defined human rights issues, and across different sectors. Moreover, capacity development on its own is insufficient to achieve change; it must be coupled with political priority and opportunity.
22. The **nature of the prevailing political settlement and elite bargain** will determine what is politically possible in terms of the HRBA. Its application may be limited not only by the question of capacity needs, but also by limited political buy-in from relevant stakeholders or active resistance to either supporting the realisation of formal human rights commitments, or to enacting the norms and principles underpinning the HRBA. At the same time, the country case studies show that human rights can be promoted in targeted areas and in contexts of limited democratic space.

# 6 Recommendations

If Sida wishes to remain a global leader in championing human rights through the application of a HRBA, it will need to invest further in this role. Sida's gains to date cannot be taken for granted as other perspectives continue to gain prominence in Sweden's international development policy, and the risk of the HRBA becoming a box-ticking exercise remains high.

Many of the recommendations presented in this section relate to and reinforce one another; strengthening individual awareness and capacities within a clear institutional framework that prioritises a HRBA will help to enable individual and joint emphasis on human rights principles and outcomes in practice. The recommendations are organised thematically. Within each theme, recommended actions are separated out as measures for the short, medium and long term. While most recommendations can be actioned in the short term, they must be sustained in the long term, as a HRBA (both as a lens and a way of working) is an ongoing endeavour that requires continuous inputs.

## 6.1 INVEST IN PRIORITISING AND UNDERSTANDING THE HRBA AND P.L.A.N.E.T.

### Short term

- Invest resources in re-energising Sida's application of the HRBA, to focus on all six components of P.L.A.N.E.T. as an integrated perspective. This investment requires a financial commitment by Sida to human rights work for the medium, short and long term and in response to the findings of this evaluation.
- Invest in strengthening internal Sida processes to communicate and clarify what the application of a HRBA in its totality involves, using P.L.A.N.E.T. and the HRBA as a method that is applied differently in different contexts.
- In guidance, training and evaluation terms of reference, Sida staff should use P.L.A.N.E.T. consistently as the overarching framework for Sida's approach to a HRBA.
- At head office and embassy level, Sida advisors and programme officers should pay additional attention to ways in which accountability and inclusion of specific rights-holder groups other than and including women could be further addressed, and how to better leverage international human rights law.

### Medium term

- Sida head office, working with the Human Rights lead, should invest organisational and human resources in raising the visibility of the HRBA, and specifically of P.L.A.N.E.T. at head office and embassy levels, and in engagements with co-operation partners. This includes revisiting and highlighting the rationale and added value of the HRBA – the ‘what’ and ‘why’.
- Integrate into P.L.A.N.E.T. guidance on how the application of the HRBA needs to be holistic and locally grounded, with flexibility in how the principles are applied and adapted, and the links to human rights norms invoked within what is politically possible in context; identify what this involves in terms of knowledge of the HRBA among Sida staff, and capabilities of adapting to context, and to context-specific features of the sector problem in question.
- Revise existing thematic guidelines to integrate more holistically the implications of both P.L.A.N.E.T. and adaptive ways of working to connect up the need for the HRBA to be responsive to the political economy of context and of the thematic areas in-country, and to locally driven agendas of change. The emphasis is on ‘ways of working’ that are responsive to context and locally driven and not on pre-set assumptions about what a HRBA looks like in different countries.
- Sida head office should further strengthen guidance for MDPAs to ensure that when analysing development dynamics at country level, the MDPA focuses on identifying the human rights claims of rights-holders and the human rights obligations of duty-bearers, and uses the recommendations of internal human rights bodies and mechanisms.

### Long term

- Review general and thematic guidance and toolkits periodically to integrate and reflect on the following:
  - evolving international human rights law and reporting mechanisms
  - evolving relevant policy platforms, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sustaining Peace Agenda, and evolving UN Security Council resolutions on rights issues
  - evolving reforms to the international organisational architecture (including the UN system, the EU, the OECD, and their organisational approach to the HRBA)
  - shared learning from other donors, international NGOs and co-operation partners’ work with a HRBA.

This requires Sida medium and long-term financial and human resourcing commitments.

## 6.2 ADAPTING APPROACHES TO PARTNERSHIPS AND CONTRIBUTION MANAGEMENT

### Short term

- Engage in Sida-wide discussions and workshops, including head office and embassy staff, to explore how what actions Sida should take to ensure that the HRBA is integrated and promoted through partnerships and contribution management.
- At intervention and embassy levels (and, as appropriate, other sub-groups like strategic priorities or sectors), hold explicit conversations about how Sida, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and co-operation partners understand a HRBA and what they see as its specific implications for their work. These conversations should take place at the beginning of an intervention or strategy period and be repeated annually to involve new staff and allow for discussions of changes in the external context.

### Medium term

- Sida head office should review the Trac system to integrate triggers that ensure that questions linked to the HRBA (as reflected in P.L.A.N.E.T.) are registered throughout the design, approval and implementation processes and in follow-up dialogue, and documenting practice and lessons.
- At embassy level, these triggers should feature at the start of any dialogue with co-operation partners on Sida-funded interventions to ensure that the HRBA is integral to design and implementation. This includes gauging partner interest and understanding of the HRBA, and what constitutes a locally grounded approach to the HRBA in activities.

## 6.3 DOCUMENTING EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNT

### Short term

- Revise Sida's tools for monitoring application of the HRBA in the light of international resources on best practices on MEL. Resources and toolboxes should give concrete examples of what a HRBA is (and what it is not) and suggest indicators for monitoring of progress in its implementation. In developing capacity of key staff, establish systematic mechanisms for capturing lessons on application of the HRBA – for instance, through inclusion in annual strategy reports, thematic studies, and ToR for reviews and evaluations of interventions.

- Establish a specific platform to collate and share experiences and lessons learnt as part of the HRBA tools to allow for systematic knowledge generation on the application of a HRBA.

### Medium term

- Sida should invest in an evidence base that makes the case for why the HRBA matters for development, and how to apply it effectively.
  - On the instrumental case (why it matters): Invest in documenting examples of how applying the HRBA has contributed to governance and development outcomes.
  - On the evidence and learning of how to apply a HRBA: Invest in documenting lessons from ways of working in the application of the HRBA that are responsive and adapted to the political economy context. This means applying a ‘best fit’ approach, rather than a ‘best practice’ approach, drawing on pre-established assumptions about what the application of the HRBA should look like.
- Sida should create complements to the text centered way of building the case for HRBA, possibly by developing brief animated video clips suitable for a global audience.

### Long term

- Develop a long-term evidence strategy on how and why to apply a HRBA, which serves as a data resource for Sida and other target groups.

## 6.4 DEVELOPING CAPACITY FOR APPLICATION OF THE HRBA

### Short term

- At head office and embassy level, continue investments, training and socialisation in areas where Sida is perceived to be strong (championing human rights and gender equality, consultative approach, flexible ways of working, consideration of context). As noted, these are ongoing efforts rather than one-off activities.
- At the embassy level, this could be done through:
  - orientation sessions for international staff where long-serving national staff could provide an overview of the evolution of the human rights context and specific examples of how the embassy has applied a HRBA
  - assessing specific capacity needs among different individuals and organisations working in the country

- convening periodic workshops for Sida staff and Foreign Ministry staff
  - convening periodic workshops for co-operation partners working with similar duty-bearers, rights-holders and/or problem areas to facilitate multi-directional knowledge exchange and learning
  - providing tailored advice and ongoing coaching (by staff at national, regional or HQ levels).
- At head office level, this could be done through:
    - assessing specific capacity needs among different individuals and organisations working in Stockholm and at co-operation partner HQ (e.g. Geneva, Brussels, Rome)
    - specifying Sida's role, including Sida-specific and joint training modules and sessions, secondments, multi-directional knowledge exchange and learning platforms
    - conducting capacity development through peer exchanges approaches for different target groups
    - convening discussions about a HRBA during managers' week.

### **Medium term**

- Invest in (and reward) training on flexible and adaptive ways of working in the application of the HRBA that are responsive to locally grounded agendas. This will enable staff to identify:
  - risks of harmful effects
  - politically informed support to leveraging the HRBA principles, advancing the empowerment of rights-holders and human rights standards within what is politically possible at national and sub-national levels.
- Invest in training on how the application of the HRBA needs to be locally grounded, and what this involves in terms of knowledge of the HRBA among Sida staff, and capabilities of adapting this to the context and/or context-specific features of the sector problem in question.

### **Long term**

- Invest in ensuring that Sida's organisational culture fully acknowledges that the normative agenda of supporting human rights and the application of a HRBA have redistributive implications, and are clearly political. Accordingly, this requires a politically informed approach to the application of the HRBA, and related capacity development that integrates the following components:
  - how to use contextual knowledge to inform the application of the HRBA

- political skills as part of capacity development on application of the HRBA.

# Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Case No. 17/001435

Date: 2019-01-17

## **Terms of reference for the evaluation of the application and effects of a Human Rights Based Approach: lessons learnt from Swedish development cooperation**

### **What works well, less well and why?**

## **1 BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Information about Sida**

Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is a government authority. The objective of Swedish development cooperation is to create opportunities for people living in poverty and under oppression to improve their living conditions.

As other Swedish government agencies, Sida works independently within the framework established by the Swedish government and Parliament. They decide on the financial limits, the countries with which Sweden (and thus, Sida) will cooperate, and the focus and content of that cooperation.

Sida has three main assignments:

- Assist the Swedish government with expert support, analysis and other documentation necessary for the government's design of strategies and policies for Swedish international development cooperation.
- Implement the strategies and manage interventions, (including monitoring and evaluation of results). Currently, forty-four (44) active strategies govern Swedish development cooperation: Twenty-eight (28) country strategies, eleven (11) global thematic strategies and five (5) regional strategies.
- Participate in Sweden's advocacy work and in the dialogue with other countries, donors and recipient countries, as well as with international organisations and other actors.

For additional information, please visit Sida's website, [www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se)

### **1.2 Information about Sida's Evaluation Unit**

This evaluation is commissioned by Sida's Evaluation Unit (UTV). The Government Ordinance for Sida<sup>87</sup> states that Sida should make use of knowledge produced by

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<sup>87</sup> Instruktion för Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Sida), decided 2010-07-22, latest revision 2016-07-01 (see <http://rkrattsbaser.gov.se/sfst?bet=2010:1080>).

internally initiated, as well as external evaluations in its implementation of development cooperation. Furthermore, Sida should assist actors that conduct monitoring and evaluation within Sida’s areas of activity, as well as ensure that agreements it enters regulate monitoring, evaluation and audit. UTV coordinates this task.

The core tasks of the unit are to:

- Procure, manage and provide quality assurance of Sida’s Framework Agreement for Evaluation Services.
- Coordinate evaluation planning at Sida.
- Propose, initiate and manage strategic evaluations which are of overall relevance to Sida. This evaluation is a strategic evaluation.
- In partnership with intended users commission, provide quality assurance of, publish and disseminate strategic evaluations.
- Conduct internal evaluations.
- Provide methodological support and advice to units which commission decentralised evaluations.
- Facilitate publication of decentralised evaluations.
- Contribute to building a culture of learning and evaluation at Sida.

The unit is placed at the Department for Operational Support. To ensure independence from operational and policy units and departments, UTV formally reports to the Director General.

## 2 THE ASSIGNMENT

### 2.1 Background

#### 2.1.1 A Human Rights Based Approach in Swedish development cooperation

All Swedish development cooperation shall be characterized by a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA).<sup>88</sup> The Swedish HRBA is based on the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the human rights conventions subsequently adopted. It encompasses the central elements of democracy and human rights, gender equality, rights of the child and focuses on discriminated and marginalised individuals and groups.<sup>89</sup>

A HRBA requires that *Human Rights (HR) standards and principles* guide all development cooperation. HR standards constitute the desirable outcomes, and HR principles constitute the criteria for a high-quality process to reach these outcomes. Hence, a HRBA emphasises that the processes by which the stated goals are realised, are just as important as the outcomes.

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<sup>88</sup> The Swedish policies generally refer to “Rättighetsperspektivet” (the Rights Perspective), which corresponds to the internationally accepted term a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) often used by Sida, and based on the UN Statement of Common Understanding on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation and Programming (UNDG 2003).

<sup>89</sup> Shared Responsibility: Sweden’s Policy for Global Development, Govt. Bill 2002/03:122

In 1998, the Swedish Parliament adopted a written communication from the Government regarding the promotion of a HRBA in development cooperation,<sup>90</sup> implying that a ‘human rights dimension’ should be integrated into development interventions.

In 2000, an initiative was taken by Sida to raise the importance of using a HRBA in general, including in Swedish development cooperation.<sup>91</sup> With the national Policy for Global Development (PGD) in 2002,<sup>92</sup> the approach was however further and formally established. The PGD stated that Sweden’s policy for global development should be based on a human rights perspective and the perspectives of people living in poverty, and that a HRBA was to be integrated in all development cooperation interventions.

It however took some time before the PGD was integrated into other policy frameworks and guidelines and turned into a way of working at Sida. Although initiatives to this end had started at Sida already in 2000, Sida’s staff and co-operation partners needed time to understand and embrace the importance of integrating the HRBA into Sida funded projects and programmes, and to allow for the approach to be well integrated within Sida’s operational practices.<sup>93</sup>

In 2010, the Government revised its Ordinance for Sida,<sup>94</sup> stating that a human rights perspective and poor people’s perspectives on development should be applied in all development cooperation. This was re-emphasised in 2015 when the government again revised the Ordinance for Sida.<sup>95</sup> In 2013, the use of HRBA in Swedish development cooperation was further supported by the Aid Policy Framework for development cooperation and humanitarian aid,<sup>96</sup> and in 2016 the Policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance again established that a HRBA is fundamental to development.<sup>97</sup>

The point of departure of a HRBA is international human rights law which lays down obligations that States are bound to respect. By becoming parties to international treaties, States assume obligations and duties under international law to respect, to protect and to fulfil human rights. The obligation to respect means that States must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights. The obligation to protect requires States to protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses. The obligation to fulfil means that States must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights.

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<sup>90</sup> Government of Sweden Skr. 1997/98:76

<sup>91</sup> WORKING TOGETHER The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation, Stockholm Workshop 16–19 October 2000 (see <http://www.hrca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2008/05/part1.pdf>)

<sup>92</sup> Shared Responsibility: Sweden’s Policy for Global Development, Govt. Bill 2002/03:122

<sup>93</sup> Integrating the Rights Perspective in Programming – lessons learnt from Swedish-Kenyan development cooperation, SADEV report 2008:2

<sup>94</sup> Instruktion för Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Sida), decided 2010-07-22

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Aid Policy Framework – the direction of Swedish aid, Government communication 2013/14:131

<sup>97</sup> Policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, Government communication 2016/17:60

As mentioned above, HRBA consists of HR standards and principles. There are four overlapping and mutually reinforcing principles to be integrated in the development process for the practical realisation of the HR standards:

- Non-discrimination – ensuring all individuals equality in dignity and rights.
- Participation – ensuring individuals participation in decision making processes that concern them.
- Openness and transparency – ensuring individuals the right and access to information.
- Accountability – enabling individuals to hold decision-makers responsible and accountable for their work.

Again, it is important to acknowledge that a HRBA is both about *performance* (HR standards/outcomes) - what is to be achieved (reduced poverty, democracy and an improved human rights situation), as well as about *process* (HR principles) – how development cooperation is implemented and the quality by which the outcomes are achieved (where the four principles above form the measurement to ensure non-discrimination, participation, openness and transparency and accountability).

HRBA is moreover about positive impact on the rights-holder's ability to claim human rights and the duty-bearer's capacity to respect, protect and fulfil these rights, as well as avoiding possible negative effect on human rights (risk of doing harm of reinforcing human rights violations). In all development programming it thus becomes important to:

- Identify the human rights to be targeted by a specific intervention,
- Identify the rights-holders, both direct and indirect, assessing their situation and means to empower them to address their situation and claim their rights,
- Identify the duty-bearers – the state and its representatives responsible for protecting, respecting and fulfilling human rights – and their capacity and political will to live up to obligations as well as to find avenues to develop their capacity.

### **2.1.2 A Human Rights Based Approach in practice at Sida**

Sida's operations are governed by development cooperation strategies decided by the Swedish government (currently totalling 44 strategies). These strategies apply to a country, a region, or are global and linked to certain thematic areas or approaches. For more information on the Swedish strategies for development cooperation and information on where and what areas Sweden is engaged in, please see [www.regeringen.se](http://www.regeringen.se) and [www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se).

At the strategy level, a HRBA is included throughout the planning, implementation and follow-up of strategies. A HRBA is included in Sida's multidimensional poverty analysis. For more information on the analysis and integration of multidimensional poverty throughout Sida's operations, please see Sida's Poverty Tool box including the conceptual framework "Dimensions of poverty" at [www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se).

At the portfolio level, where strategic operational choices and priorities are being made, and on the intervention level (project/programme level) a HRBA is applied by

Sida head office and Embassies of Sweden handling development cooperation through Sida's contribution management system. The approach is applicable to all Sida funded interventions and in all thematic areas/sectors. Thus, Sweden's development co-operation partners are expected to apply a HRBA to all project/programmes throughout the duration of their implementation, i.e. planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Sida has developed methodological materials and tools, including a checklist to apply a HRBA<sup>98</sup> and help texts in Sida's contribution management system TRAC. A framework agreement on democratic governance and human rights, including HRBA, for call-off assignments, is available (a new framework agreement is planned to be procured in 2019). A help desk providing advice and hands-on support on issues related to HRBA is available for staff at Sida head office and at Embassies of Sweden working with development cooperation in Africa. A help desk on HRBA for Sida at large, is planned for 2019.

## **2.2 Evaluation rationale**

Sida is a leading donor when it comes to working with a HRBA in development cooperation and is committed to applying a HRBA in all development cooperation that it engages in. Sida is often consulted by other donors and international organisations regarding working methods, results and lessons learnt. Over the years, Sida has commissioned several evaluations regarding the implementation of HRBA related to certain countries and sub-topics. However, there has up to now not been any comprehensive effort to evaluate Sida's application of a HRBA overall. Some examples of previous evaluations on country or strategy level are listed in Annex A.

This evaluation is commissioned as a response to Sida's need to understand how a HRBA is being applied, how staff and co-operation partners understand and perceive the approach, what works well, less well and why. Sida needs to understand if the application of a HRBA has led to a changed way of working by co-operation partners and if such an approach has contributed to enhanced respect for and protection and fulfilment of human rights, including gender equality, thereby creating preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression in a world where human rights are increasingly contested.

## **2.3 Evaluation object and scope**

The object of the evaluation is the integration of a HRBA in development cooperation by Sida, Embassies of Sweden involved in development cooperation, and Swedish co-operation partners. The HRBA should be assessed both based on the process (how development cooperation has been implemented) and its performance in terms of reduced poverty and an improved human rights situation.

Sida's Theory of Change for applying a HRBA to all development cooperation is that if co-operation partners strengthen (i.e. change) their ways of working based on

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<sup>98</sup> See [www.sida.se/hrba](http://www.sida.se/hrba)

the four principles of this approach (including empowerment of rights holders and capacity development of duty bearers), the initiatives supported by Sweden will contribute to sustainable results in terms of enhancement of respect for and promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights, including gender equality, which in turn contributes to leaving no one behind. Such a development would also be in line with the Agenda 2030. The evaluation will include a limited number of case study countries as well as the implementation of HRBA at Sida head office level, including dialogue and advocacy for a HRBA on a country level with multilateral organisations. The case study countries will be selected during the inception phase based on a pre-determined set of criteria (see section 2.6).

Timewise, the evaluation will cover the period 2010 to 2018. The timeframe is tentative, and the evaluator should elaborate and suggest an appropriate timeframe for the evaluation in the inception report.

#### **2.4 Evaluation purpose: Intended use and intended users**

The purpose of the evaluation is to systematise knowledge and learning and to generate lessons on what have worked well, less well and why, by understanding how and to what extent a HRBA is applied in Swedish development cooperation initiatives managed by Sida, Embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners and if/to what extent the approach has contributed to enhancement of respect for and promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights, including gender equality.

The evaluation will be used as an input to further develop and sharpening the application of a HRBA as part of the Multi-Dimensional Poverty Analysis (MDPA) across strategy and contribution cycles as well as to the development of user-friendly working methods and tools. It will serve as an input to the dialogue between Sida and its co-operation partners and with other donors on effects from working with a HRBA with the aim of strengthening and developing partners' application of the approach<sup>99</sup>13.

The primary intended users of the evaluation are:

- Sida head office staff:
  - Policy specialists and advisors for Human Rights and Democracy
  - Sida's thematic networks
  - Support functions at Sida (the Department for Management Support, the Department for Human Resource and Communication)
- Staff of Embassies of Sweden involved in development cooperation, particularly in the case study countries.
- Co-operation partners in the case study countries.

Secondary intended users are:

- Sida's senior level management.

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<sup>99</sup> Sida's support to development is mainly implemented by global, regional, national and local co-operation partners.

- Other donors with whom Sweden cooperates in the case study countries and beyond.
- The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The evaluation is to be designed, conducted and reported to meet the needs of the intended users and tenderers shall elaborate in the tender how this will be ensured throughout the evaluation process.

## 2.5 Evaluation criteria and questions

The objective of this evaluation is to evaluate the *relevance, effectiveness* and *impact* of the application of a HRBA and its four principles in Sida funded development cooperation and formulate recommendations on how to develop and sharpen the application of the approach.

The evaluation questions are:

- To what extent have Sida, Embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners applied a HRBA throughout the design, planning, implementation and follow-up of Swedish development cooperation in the case study countries? What has worked well, less well and why?
- To what extent is the Swedish application of a HRBA in line with the priorities set by national policy frameworks?
- What is the overall impact of the application of a HRBA by Sida, Embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners in terms of direct or indirect, negative and positive results (both based on the process of applying a HRBA and the performance in terms of effects on the outcome level) in the relevant thematic sectors/areas?
- How do co-operation partners perceive the HRBA? Are there differences in the definition of the concept between different stakeholders? Has the work of Sida and Embassies of Sweden led to changes in the perception of HRBA?
- Have lessons learnt from what works well and less well been collected and if so, to what extent have these lessons been used to develop and adjust the application of a HRBA by Sida/Embassies of Sweden and by co-operation partners? Are there any signs of changed ways of working?
- What is the perception of HRBA at the multilateral organisations with which Sida and/or Embassies of Sweden are engaged in the case study countries? Are there any signs of changes in the perception and application of HRBA? If so, can this change in any way be traced back to the work/advocacy of Sida and/or Embassies of Sweden (in the global dialogue or at the country level)?

Questions are expected to be further developed in the tender by the Evaluation Team and further developed during the inception phase of the evaluation.

## 2.6 Evaluation approach and methods for data collection and analysis

The evaluation is intended to be *participatory* with a strong emphasis on learning from the evaluation process itself. The evaluation should use an evaluation approach/methodology that reflects that the evaluation process itself, and the

interactions and exchange of experiences among the stakeholders, is an important outcome of the evaluation. A *gender responsive* approach/methodology as well as methods for data collection and data analysis techniques should be used.

Sida's approach to evaluation is *utilization-focused*, which means that the evaluator should facilitate the entire evaluation process with careful consideration of how everything that is done will affect the use of the evaluation. It is therefore expected that the tenderer, in their tender, present i) how intended users are to participate in and contribute to the evaluation process and ii) approach/methodology and methods for data collection that create space for reflection, discussion and learning between the intended users of the evaluation.

The evaluators are expected to propose *innovative methods* to capture effects of working with a HRBA, taking into account limited data availability and weak causal linkages/vague sphere of influences, between the application of an approach and societal effects.

The answers to the evaluation questions shall be based on primary data, such as experiences and perceptions of informants at Sida, Embassies of Sweden, co-operation partners including duty-bearers and rights holders, and on secondary sources such as relevant documentation and validations by experts and other informants. The evaluation should use appropriate selection criteria for informants and data.

The evaluator shall describe and justify an appropriate evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection in the tender. The evaluator shall identify limitations and constraints with the chosen approach/methodology and methods and to the extent possible, present mitigation measures to address them. The evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully developed and presented in the inception report.

The evaluator shall take into consideration appropriate measures for collecting data in cases where sensitive or confidential issues are addressed and avoid presenting information that may be harmful to some stakeholder groups.

The evaluators are expected to elaborate and discuss the *Theories of Changes* on strategy/portfolio level underpinning the application of HRBA for each of the case study countries.

It is envisaged that the following principal phases and elements will be included in the evaluation:

The inception phase:

- A full day *start up meeting* with the evaluators and the Steering group of the evaluation.
- An initial *desk study* including a documentary review of the background to the HRBA discourse and lessons learnt, how other donors are working with a HRBA, assessing Swedish cooperation strategies and strategy reports and where relevant, a selection of partners' reports and other documentation deemed relevant.
- *Key informant interviews* with staff at Sida head office and Embassies of Sweden and if relevant, other stakeholders.

- Elaboration of an *inception report* which builds on the desk study and the interviews, and which specifies the evaluation questions, approach/methodology and methods for data collection and elaborates on a suitable scope and timeframe for the evaluation. The inception report shall include a gross list of a maximum of 7 proposed case study countries selected on a list of pre-defined criteria (see below). Based on the gross list, the Steering group and the evaluators will discuss and select 3 - 4 case study countries taking into account the interest and engagement of respective Embassy of Sweden and its co-operation partners to take part in the evaluation. The Steering group will then select the final case study countries.

The case study countries should be selected based on the following criteria:

1. The level of strategic engagement and effort to work with a HRBA at the Embassy and country level, based on country strategy implementation. The Embassies of Sweden in the proposed case study countries must have engaged in a strategic effort to strengthen the application of a HRBA.
2. Based on the level of strategic effort at the country level, and the selected gross list of countries (see criterion 1 above), a second criterion should be applied – The extent of support channelled to the countries through Swedish global and regional strategies. Some support to the proposed case study countries should be channelled through Swedish global and/or regional strategies.
3. In addition, some support through the country strategies to the proposed case study countries should be channelled via multilateral organisations.
4. Finally, the aspect of geographical and other contextual spread should be regarded in the selection process. The case study countries must represent different contexts where Sida is engaged in development cooperation.

With this selection approach the evaluation will not do a random sampling of countries but rather focus on countries in which Sweden have had multi-faceted presence and support, and where there have been strategic efforts to strengthen the HRBA approach.

- Based on the draft inception report, *a one-day workshop/pre-inception meeting* with the evaluators and the Steering group and if deemed relevant, other stakeholders.
- *Inception meeting* with the Steering group and Reference group.
- *A final inception report* will be submitted and approved by Sida.

The implementation and reporting phase:

- Data collection, analysis and report writing including longer field visits to the case study countries and visits to head offices of Sida and global/regional co-operation partners. This phase will include documentary analysis and a stakeholder mapping for each context that should form the basis for the selection of key informants. Furthermore, individual and group interviews with staff at Sida head office and Embassies of Sweden and co-operation partners, observations and triangulation of findings. *A debriefing meeting* should be held with

relevant stakeholders in each case study country at the end of the field visit.

- *A recommendations co-creation workshop* in Stockholm.
- *Draft final report meeting* in Stockholm.
- *A final evaluation report* will be submitted and approved by Sida.

The dissemination phase:

- Elaboration of an *evaluation brief and information slides*.
- *A dissemination seminar* in Stockholm.

A tentative communication plan is annexed to this Terms of Reference (Annex B), as an overall guidance to the participatory and communicative nature of this evaluation. It is expected that the Evaluation Team further develops and complete this communication plan during the inception phase of the evaluation.

## 2.7 Organisation of evaluation management

To facilitate interaction between intended users, a Steering group and a Reference group have been appointed by Sida. The Steering group consists of evaluation specialists from Sida's Evaluation Unit (UTV) and key staff in policy and operations for Human Rights and Democracy. It is chaired by UTV. The Steering group is decisive and approves the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, evaluate tenders, participate in the start-up meeting, in the pre- inception workshop and the inception meeting, approves the inception report, participate in the recommendations co-creation workshop and the draft final report meeting and approves the final report.

The Reference group consists of *representatives* from Sida's network hubs and relevant Sida head office departments, from global co-operation partners as well as Embassies of Sweden and their co-operation partners in the selected case study countries. The Reference group will participate and provide comments in the inception meeting, in the draft final report meeting and in the recommendation co-creation workshop (the two latter to take place at the same occasion).

## 2.8 Evaluation quality

All Sida's evaluations shall conform to OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. The evaluators shall use the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation. The evaluators shall specify how quality assurance will be handled by them during the evaluation process.

The supplier shall ensure that any of its employees, agents and subcontractors, as well as any informant to an evaluation, whose personal data are transferred to Sida, promptly receive and take note of the information provided in Sida's Privacy Policy: <https://www.sida.se/English/About-us/about-the-website/privacy-notice/>.

The supplier shall promptly inform any of its informants if their names and organisational affiliation will be included and published in the final report of an evaluation, which will be made available in Sida's publication database and in Open Aid, a web-based information service about Swedish international development cooperation.

## 2.9 Time schedule and deliverables

A detailed time and work plan must be presented in the tender (including number of working hours/days per team member) and further detailed in the inception report. The evaluation shall be carried out **April 2019 – June 2020**. The timing of field visits, surveys and interviews need to be settled by the evaluator in dialogue with the main stakeholders during the inception phase.

The table below lists key deliverables for the evaluation process. Deadlines for final inception report and final report must be kept in the tender, but alternative deadlines for other deliverables may be suggested by the consultant and negotiated during the inception phase.

Deliverables	Participants	Deadlines
1. Start-up meeting in Stockholm	Evaluators and Steering Group	April 2019
2. Draft inception report	Evaluators	Early September 2019
3. Pre-inception meeting/approval of case study countries in Stockholm	Evaluators and Steering group	Mid-September 2019
4. Inception meeting in Stockholm and VC	Evaluators, Steering Group, Reference Group	Late September 2019
5. Final inception report	Evaluators	October 2019
6. Case studies, field visits and debriefing workshops	UTV will participate in the start-up of the case study countries	October - November 2019
7. Draft evaluation report excluding recommendations	Evaluators	January 2020
8. Draft final report meeting and Recommendations co-creation workshop in Stockholm and VC	Evaluators, Steering Group, Reference Group	February 2020
9. Comments on draft report	Steering Group, Reference Group	End of February 2020
10. Final evaluation report	Evaluators	March 2020
11. Elaboration of evaluation brief and information slides	Evaluators	March 2020

12. Dissemination seminar in Stockholm	Evaluators and intended users	March - April 2020
13. Dissemination activities (to be elaborated in the Communication Plan by the evaluators during the inception phase. The Plan will be continuously updated during the evaluation process as new opportunities for communication and dissemination are identified.)	Evaluators	April - June 2020

**The inception report** will form the basis for the continued evaluation process and shall be approved by Sida before the evaluation proceeds to implementation. The inception report should be written in English and cover evaluability issues and interpretations of evaluation questions, present the evaluation approach/methodology, methods for data collection and analysis as well as the full evaluation design. A clear distinction between the evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection shall be made. A specific time and work plan, including number of hours/working days for each team member, for the remainder of the evaluation should be presented. The time plan shall allow space for reflection and learning between the intended users of the evaluation.

**The recommendations co-creation workshop in Stockholm** shall be held in English at Sida head office and be arranged and led by the evaluators for approximately one day. The aim of the workshop is for users and evaluators to jointly reflect on and elaborate recommendations.

**The country case study reports** shall be written in English and be professionally designed, laid-out, edited and proof read. The reports should have a clear structure and follow the report format in the Sida Evaluation Report Template (to be provided by Sida). The reports should be attached as annexes to the final report.

**The final report** shall be written in English and be professionally designed, laid-out, edited and proof read. The final report should have clear structure and follow the report format in the Sida Evaluation Report Template. The executive summary should be maximum 3 pages. The evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection used shall be clearly described and explained in detail and a clear distinction between the two shall be made. All limitations to the approach/methodology and methods shall be made explicit and the consequences of these limitations discussed. Findings shall flow logically from the data, showing a clear line of evidence to support the conclusions. Conclusions should be substantiated by findings and analysis. Recommendations and lessons learnt should flow logically from conclusions. Recommendations should be specific, directed to relevant

stakeholders and categorised as a short-term, medium-term and long-term. The report should be no more than 40 pages excluding annexes (including Terms of Reference and Inception Report). The evaluator shall adhere to the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation.

The evaluator shall, upon approval of the final report, insert the report into the Sida Evaluation Report Template and submit it to Nordic Morning (in pdf-format) for publication and release in the Sida publication data base.

**The evaluation brief** shall be written in English and be professionally designed, laid-out, edited and proof read. The brief should have clear structure and follow the format in the Sida Evaluation Brief Template (to be provided by Sida), and be approved by Sida

### **2.10 Budget and other resources**

The maximum budget amount available for the evaluation is SEK 3 500 000, including fees and reimbursable costs.

A detailed budget (based on an estimate of time required per part of the assignment indicated in section 2.6 and 2.9) including expenses, must be submitted as part of the tender response for the Assignment.

Participants invited to meetings, workshops and seminars are expected to carry their own costs.

Two contact persons at Sida's Evaluation Unit will be provided for the evaluation. The contact persons should be consulted if any problems arise during the evaluation process.

Contact details to intended users will be provided by the contact persons.

The evaluator will be required to arrange the logistics (booking of interviews, preparing visits etc.) including any necessary security arrangements.

Representatives from Sida's Evaluation Unit should be given the opportunity to take part in field visits.

## **3 ANNEXES**

Annex A: List of key documentation Annex B: Evaluation Communication Plan

### **Annex A List of key documentation**

All evaluations published by Sida can be found at [www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se)

Strategies for Swedish development cooperation can be found at [www.regeringen.se](http://www.regeringen.se)

#### Recommended reading

Shared Responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development, Govt. Bill 2002/03:122 Government of Sweden Skr. 1997/98:76

WORKING TOGETHER The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation, Stockholm Workshop 16–19 October 2000 <http://www.hrca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2008/05/part1.pdf>

Instruktion för Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Sida), decided 2010-07-22

Aid Policy Framework – the direction of Swedish aid, Government communication 2013/14:131

Policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, Government communication 2016/17:60

Good to read

Evaluation of the Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations 2010-2014 Final Synthesis Report

Integrating the Rights Perspective in Programming – lessons learnt from Swedish-Kenyan development cooperation, SADEV report 2008:2 <https://openaid.se/sv/sadev-evaluations/>

Joint Country Evaluation of the Strategy for Swedish Development Cooperation with Tanzania 2006–2010 <https://openaid.se/sv/activity/se-0-se-6-5117001005-tza-15152/>

Evaluation of Sida's Support to Tostan (2010-2016)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, Frequently Asked Questions on a Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation, <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FAQen.pdf>

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, A Human Rights-Based Approach to Data <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/GuidanceNoteonApproachtoData.pdf>

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, Human Rights Indicators

[http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Human\\_rights\\_indicators\\_en.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Human_rights_indicators_en.pdf)

UN Practitioners' Portal on Human Rights Based Approaches to Programming <https://hrbportal.org/faq/what-is-a-human-rights-based-approach>

GSDRC, Applied Knowledge Services <https://gsdrc.org/category/approaches/rights-based-approaches/>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark <http://um.dk/en/about-us/e-learning/introduction-human-rights-based-approach/>

The Danish Institute for Human Rights <https://www.humanrights.dk/our-work/human-rights-based-approach>

Norad <https://norad.no/en/toolspublications/publications/2009/handbook-in-human-rights-assessment--state-obligations-awareness--empowerment/>

World Bank/OECD “Integrating Human Rights into Development: Donor Approaches, Experiences and Challenges”, Third Ed. 2016

The EU Commission's Staff Working Document: "tool-box-a Rights-Based Approach, encompassing all human rights for EU development cooperation" [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sectors/rights-based-approach-development-cooperation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sectors/rights-based-approach-development-cooperation_en)

Germany, BMZ (2013), Guidelines on Incorporating Human Rights Standards and Principles, Including Gender, in Programme Proposals for Bilateral German Technical and Financial Cooperation (PDF, 621 KB), Bonn/Berlin.

Germany, BMZ (2011), Human rights in German Development Policy: Strategy, BMZ Strategy Paper No. 4, Bonn/Berlin.

Germany, BMZ “Promising Practices: On the human rights-based approach in German development cooperation”; <https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/en/publications/dc-promising-practices/>

## Annex B Evaluation Communication Plan

<b>Tentative Communication Plan for the Evaluation of the application and effects of a Human Rights Based Approach</b>				
<b>When</b> <i>Evaluation process phase</i>	<b>What</b> <i>Deliverable/product</i>	<b>How</b> <i>Communication means</i>	<b>Target group</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Inception	Draft Inception Report	Meeting/ Discussion	Intended users through the Steering and Reference groups	Evaluators
Data collection/ analysis/ report writing	Debriefing presentations	Debriefing workshops in case study countries	Embassies in case study countries	Evaluators
	Workshop presentation	Recommendations co-creation workshop in Stockholm	Primary intended users	Evaluators
	Draft Evaluation Report	Draft evaluation workshop in Stockholm	Intended users through the Steering and Reference groups	Evaluators
Dissemination and publication	Evaluation Brief and information slides	Evaluation brief and Power Point presentation	Sida HQ staff, embassies, MFA, co-operation partners, other donors and the general public	Evaluators/ UTV
	Final Evaluation Report	Sida’s online publication database	Sida HQ staff, embassies, MFA, co-operation partners, other donors and the general public	Evaluators/ UTV
	Final Evaluation Report	Internal seminar at Sida in Stockholm	Sida HQ staff, embassies (via Skype)	UTV/Evaluators

	Final Evaluation Report	Open webcasted seminar/panel discussion	Sida HQ staff, embassies, MFA, cooperation partners, other donors	UTV/Evaluators/ Policy advisors for Human Rights and Democracy
	Lessons, conclusions	Webinar	Sida HQ staff, embassies, MFA, cooperation partners, other donors	Evaluators

**Communication purpose:** To inform about the evaluation process and results as well as to strengthen learning both internally at Sida and externally. The plan should be further elaborated and completed by the evaluators during the Inception phase and continuously updated during the evaluation process as new opportunities for communication and dissemination are identified.

**Target groups:**

- Primary intended users
- Sida head office staff and management:
- Policy specialists and advisors for Human Rights and Democracy
  - Sida's thematic networks
  - Support functions at Sida (the Department for Management Support, the Department for Human Resource and Communication)
  - Staff of Embassies of Sweden involved in development cooperation, especially in the case study countries
  - Co-operation partners in the case study countries
    - Secondary intended users:
  - Donors with which Sweden cooperates in the country case countries
  - Relevant donors who are engaged in and contribute to relevant global arenas and processes
  - The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida's senior management levels in the continued advocacy for the importance of HRBA
    - The general public

## Annex 2 – List of people consulted

Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Ackeem Evans	Peace Corps Volunteer	Belsh Municipality	CSO	Albania
Albana Zeqaj (Kulari)	Director, Project Development for Foreign and Local Investments	Fier Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Alessandro Angius	Program Manager/CS & vulnerable groups	EUD Tirana	Other donor	Albania
Alma Nathanaili	Project Manager	Creative Business Solutions (Sustainable Tourism)	Private sector	Albania
Anila Aliaj	Institutional / Organizational Development and Gender Advisor, CNVP Albania	CNVP Albania	CSO	Albania
Anila Gryksje	Specialist in the sector of Development and Cooperation	Elbasan Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Anila Shehu	Project Coordinator	STAR program	Other	Albania
Bajram Kullolli	Forest Engineer, former expert at Directorate of Forest Management	Prrenjas Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Besnik Alku	Fund Manager	ALCDF (Sustainable Tourism)	CSO	Albania
Brian J. Williams	UN Resident Coordinator	UN	Multilateral organisation	Albania
Damjan Zdravev	Representative	Civil Rights Defenders (CRD)	CSO	Albania
Edlira Muhedini	Team leader	STAR program	Other	Albania
Edlira Papavangjeli	Program Manager / UNDP Gender Equality Programme	UNDP	Multilateral organisation	Albania

## ANNEX 2 – LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Edvin Pacara	Programme Officer / Environment, Climate and Energy	EUD Tirana	Other donor	Albania
Elda Bagaviki	National Program Officer / Local government and democracy	Embassy of Switzerland	Other donor	Albania
Elda Pengu	Human Rights officer	Progradec Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Eleni Jajcari	Representative of Une Gruaja (Me the Woman)	Une Gruaja (Me the Woman), Progradec Municipality	CSO	Albania
Elga Mitre	Senior Political Officer	Embassy of the Netherlands	Other donor	Albania
Elida Metaj	Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant	-	Private sector	Albania
Elsa Håstad	Ambassador	Embassy of Sweden, Tirana	Sida/Embassy	Albania
Elsona Agolli	Population Development and Gender Analyst	UNFPA	Multilateral organisation	Albania
Endri Gjoshi	Municipal Project Coordination Office (EU Integration Unit)	Belsh Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Eni Mjeshtri	Program Manager	Center for Labour Rights	CSO	Albania
Enkelejda Peshkepia	Deputy Mayor	Fier Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Eranda Ymerali	Vice Chief Executive Officer	The Headhunter (Sustainable Tourism)	Private sector	Albania
Ermelinda Xhaja	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden, Tirana	Sida/Embassy	Albania
Erol Akdag	Project Operation Officer / Political section	EUD Tirana	Other donor	Albania
Estela Bulku	Head of Programmes	UN Women	Multilateral organisation	Albania
Etleva Sheshi	Gender Expert,	Ombudsman institution	National and local government	Albania

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Fatmir Brazhda	Regional Forestry Federation	Prrenjas Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Hassan Delio	Forest engineer,	Board member of ALP Nature (umbrella organisation), Elbasan Municipality	CSO	Albania
Hassan Drazhi	Chief of sector of Coordination and Development, Elbasan Municipality	Elbasan Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Ina Murthi	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden, Tirana	Sida/Embassy	Albania
Ines Leskaj	Executive Director	Albanian Women's Empowerment Network (AWEN)	CSO	Albania
Irena Shtraza	Program Manager	AWEN	CSO	Albania
Ivana Capollari	Director of Human Resources	Progradec Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Jacov Borduri	Chief of sector for Pasture and Forestry Management , Elbasan Municipality	Elbasan Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Jan-Åke Kjellberg	Senior Law Enforcement Advisor/Min of Justice	Juvenile Justice / Swedish Police	Other	Albania
Janaq Male	Country Director	CNVP Albania	CSO	Albania
Kaltra Toska	Project Officer, New Epoch	New Epoch, Fier Municipality	CSO	Albania
Kristina Voko	Executive Director	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN)	CSO	Albania
Linda Gjermani	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden, Tirana	Sida/Embassy	Albania

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Marko Pecarevic	Program Manager/Protected Areas & Governance	WWF Adria Western Balkan	CSO	Albania
Megi Recic	Project Assistant	CRD	CSO	Albania
Mirela Arqimandriti	Executive Director	Gender Alliance	CSO	Albania
Mirian Bllaci	Program Manager	Cultural Heritage Without Borders (CHWB)	CSO	Albania
Ndririm Qose	Director of the Economic Aid Coordination (social service)	Belsh Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Nevila Jahaj	Director, New Epoch	New Epoch, Fier Municipality	CSO	Albania
Nevilla Como	Donor Coordination Consultant	-	Private sector	Albania
Petra Burcher	Head of Development Cooperation / Deputy Head of Mission	Embassy of Sweden, Tirana	Sida/Embassy	Albania
Plejada Gugashi	Program Manager	OPC	CSO	Albania
Rezarta Katuci	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden Albania	Sida/Embassy	Albania
Sabina Yemeri	Consultant	ESA Consultants	Private sector	Albania
Sheza Tomcini	Senior Advisor Institutional & organisational Development, CNVP Albania	CNVP Albania	CSO	Albania
Sihana Nebui	Head of Democratization Department	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)	Other donor	Albania
Sofia Kaloshi	Directorate of Good Governance	Prime Minister's Office	National and local government	Albania
Teuta Korreshi	Deputy Mayor	Lushnja Municipality	National and local government	Albania

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Thimaq Lako	Community Forestry Consultant	-	Private sector	Albania
Tomas Nyström	Councillor	Embassy of Sweden, Tirana	Sida/Embassy	Albania
Valbona Ylli	Community Forestry Consultant	-	Private sector	Albania
Vladimir Malkaj	Program Specialist / Governance and Rule of Law	UNDP	Multilateral organisation	Albania
Xhek Nezha	Representative Qukes Administrative Unit	Prrenjas Municipality	National and local government	Albania
Ylli Hoxha	Forest & Pasture Management Unit	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	National and local government	Albania
Zhaneta Shatri	Programme Manager	USAID (Sustainable Tourism)	Other donor	Albania
Zhuljeta Harasani	National Coordinator for Albania	ILO	Multilateral organisation	Albania
Rehana Khan	Senior Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden Bangladesh	Sida/Embassy	Bangladesh
Guido Meruvia Schween	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden Bolivia	Sida/Embassy	Bolivia
Almaz Teferra	Researcher	Human Rights Watch	CSO	Cambodia
Amir Hashemi-Nik	Program Advisor	Diakonia	CSO	Cambodia
An Sann	Arbitrator from the list of employers	Arbitration Council	CSO	Cambodia
Annette Dahlström	Counsellor, Development Cooperation	Embassy of Sweden, Representation, New York, UN	Sida/Embassy	Cambodia
Björn Häggmark	Ambassador	Embassy of Sweden, Cambodia	Sida/Embassy	Cambodia
Bo Chanveasna	Deputy director of Department of Labour Dispute	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training	National and local government	Cambodia

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Camilla Ottosson	First Secretary/Democracy and Human Rights	Embassy of Sweden, Cambodia	Sida/Embassy	Cambodia
Chea Sopheak	Coordinator	Cambodian Labour Confederation	CSO	Cambodia
Chhum Samoeung	Officer	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training	National and local government	Cambodia
Christer Horn af Åminne	Country Manager Cambodia & Vietnam	H&M	Private Sector	Cambodia
Claudia de la Fuente	Human Rights Officer and Chief, Right to Participation Unit	OHCHR	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Deeba Remheden	Sustainability Manager Cambodia & Vietnam	H&M	Private Sector	Cambodia
Doung Veasna	Legal Officer	Cambodian Labour Confederation	CSO	Cambodia
Eang Vuthy	Director	Equitable Cambodia	CSO	Cambodia
Fabienne Luco	Independent consultant	-	Private Sector	Cambodia
Im Norin	Program Manager	Transparency International Cambodia	CSO	Cambodia
Javier Castillo Alverez	Attaché Aid Effectiveness, Budget Support and Public Finance Management	EU Delegation	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Judy Oeung	Political Officer/Program Officer for Human Rights & Democracy	Embassy of Sweden, Cambodia	Sida/Embassy	Cambodia
Johanna Palmberg	Counsellor/Local Governance and Climate Change	Embassy of Sweden, Cambodia	Sida/Embassy	Cambodia
Keat Bophal	Human Rights Officer	OHCHR	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Keo Chettra	Director	National Institute of Statistics	National and local government	Cambodia
Kjell Tambour	Senior Advisor	Statistics Sweden	Other	Cambodia

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Koy Neam	Head of Legal Office	Arbitration Council Foundation	CSO	Cambodia
Kristof Smits	Donor Relations Officer	OHCHR	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Lam Soheat	Executive Director	Advocacy and Policy Institute	CSO	Cambodia
Long Panhavuth	Lawyer	PAN & Associates	Private Sector	Cambodia
Ly Tayseng	Arbitrator from the list of unions	Arbitration Council	CSO	Cambodia
Magnus Saemundsson	First Secretary/Education Specialist	Embassy of Sweden, Cambodia	Sida/Embassy	Cambodia
Maia Diokno	Independent Consultant	-	Private Sector	Cambodia
Makara Vorn	Media Development Expert	UNESCO	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Max Howlett	Director, Tax and Corporate Services (former Board Member of the Arbitration Council Foundation)	KPMG	Private Sector	Cambodia
May Titthara	Executive Director	CamboJA	CSO	Cambodia
Meas Sophorn	Under-Secretary of State	Ministry of Information	National and local government	Cambodia
Moeun Tola	Director	Centre for the Alliance of Labour and Human Rights	CSO	Cambodia
Muth Channtha	Chief of Cabinet of Kem Sokha	Cambodia National Rescue Party	Other	Cambodia
Neang Sovathana	Head of Training and Communication	Arbitration Council Foundation	CSO	Cambodia
Nimith Men	Director	Arbitration Council Foundation	CSO	Cambodia
Nop Vy	Executive Director	Cambodian Center for Independent Media	CSO	Cambodia

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Position/ department</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Type of organisation</b>	<b>Country</b>
Ou Makara	Governance and Rule of Law Team leader	USAID	Other donor	Cambodia
Phun Sopheak	Deputy Director	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training	National and local government	Cambodia
Pradeep Wagle	Representative	OHCHR	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Sam Sophal	Human Rights Officer	OHCHR	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Samuel Hurtig	Counsellor/Deputy Head of Mission/ Head of Development Cooperation.	Embassy of Sweden, Cambodia	Sida/Embassy	Cambodia
Sann Seveyvutha	Officer	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training	National and local government	Cambodia
Sara Park	Program Manager	Better Factory Cambodia	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Sardar Umar Alam	Head of Office and UNESCO Representative to Cambodia	UNESCO	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Sen Chengchanrith	Consultant	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training	National and local government	Cambodia
Soun Yuthyia	Advocacy Director	Cambodian Center for Human Rights	CSO	Cambodia
Sovann Vannaroth	Under-Secretary of State	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training	National and local government	Cambodia
Sriharsha Masabathula	Strategic Analyst–SDG Integration Office of the Country Representative	UNESCO	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Thiounn Neva	Country Director	Diakonia	CSO	Cambodia
Touch Visal	Head of Finance unit	Arbitration Council Foundation	CSO	Cambodia
Tun Sophorn	Country Coordinator	ILO	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Wenjing Man	Analyst–Media Development Unit	UNESCO	Multilateral organisation	Cambodia
Agueda Plata Gomez	Coordinadora Region, Magdalena Medio de la Comision de la Verdad	Comision de la Verdad – Casa de la verdad, de Barrancabermeja	National and local government	Colombia
Alba Inés Zapata	Directora General	Corporacion Juntos Construyedo Futuro	CSO	Colombia
Álvaro Tabora	Coordinador	Corporacion Juntos Construyedo Futuro	CSO	Colombia
Ana Guezmes Garcia	Representative	UN Women	Multilateral organisation	Colombia
Ana Pedrozo	Representative	Red de Mujeres de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia
Andres Navas	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden Colombia	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Angelica Romero	Encargada de Proyectos Diakonia	Sisma	CSO	Colombia
Anna Niño	Confluencia de Mujeres	Espacio de Trabajadores y trabajadoras de Derechos Humanos	CSO	Colombia
Carlos Galvis	Database Manager	CINEP	CSO	Colombia
Catalina Hoyos	Sustainable Development Officer	Embassy of Sweden in Bogota	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Cesar Grajales	Director	Diakonia	CSO	Colombia
Diana Espinosa	Programme Officer	UN Women	Multilateral organisation	Colombia
Dominique Tapias del Ponte	Director	Fundacion NEME	Private sector	Colombia
Elizabeth Sandoval	Representative	Red de Mujeres de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Erik Norman	Deputy Head of Cooperation	Embassy of Sweden in Bogota	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Erika Ambrosio	SISMA Manager	Sisma	CSO	Colombia
Estefania Jaramillo	Program Officer	CINEP	CSO	Colombia
Ewa Werner Dahlin	Ambassador	Embassy of Sweden in Bogota	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Goran Paulsson	Head of Cooperation	Embassy of Sweden in Bogota	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Gustavo Adolfo Perez	Human Right Officer	Colombia diversa	CSO	Colombia
Jackeline Rojas	Comité de Solidaridad con los Presos Políticos CSPP	Espacio de Trabajadores y trabajadoras de Derechos Humanos	CSO	Colombia
Jaime Peña	colectivo 16 de mayo	Espacio de Trabajadores y trabajadoras de Derechos Humanos	CSO	Colombia
José Antonio Páez	Jurídico	Corporación Programa de Desarrollo y Paz de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia
Juan Carlos Monge	Deputy Representative for Programms UNOHCHR	UNHCR	Multilateral organisation	Colombia
Juliana Buenaventura	Human Rights Officer	Embassy of Sweden in Bogota	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Leidy Caro	Representative	Red de Mujeres de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia
Lilian Santos Martínez	Representative	Red de Mujeres de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Luis Guillermo Guerrero Guevara	Director General	CINEP	CSO	Colombia
Luz Almanza	ASFADES	Espacio de Trabajadores y trabajadoras de Derechos Humanos	CSO	Colombia
Luz Estela Martelo.	Gender Officer	Embassy of Sweden in Bogota	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Marcela Sanchez	Directora	Colombia diversa	CSO	Colombia
Maria Camila Moreno	Directora	ICTJ - Centro Internacional para la Justicia Transicional	CSO	Colombia
Maria de los Ángeles Pacheco	Representative	Red de Mujeres de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia
Maria Eugenia Ramirez y	Representative	Cumbre Mujeres y Paz	CSO	Colombia
Maria Prada	Coordinator	Office for International Cooperation, Comision de la Verdad (Truth Comission)	National and local government	Colombia
Marina Gallego	Delegadas Cumbre Mujeres y Paz	Cumbre Mujeres y Paz	CSO	Colombia
Marta Victoria Lecompte	Gerente Gestion Humana empresa COFRE e IMAL	COFRE E IMAL	Private sector	Colombia
Matilde Ceravolo	Jefa Adjunta de Cooperación / Deputy Head of Cooperation Union Europea	European Union	Multilateral organisation	Colombia
Michelle Cartier	Program Officer	Office for International Cooperation, Comision de la	National and local government	Colombia

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
		Verdad (Truth Comission)		
Milosz Kusz	Coordinador Equipo Promocion y Defensa del Espacio Civico UNOHCHR	UNHCR	Multilateral organisation	Colombia
Neider Munevar	Program Manager	Diakonia	CSO	Colombia
Nora Machado	Representative	Red de Mujeres de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia
Orlando Cueto	Congreso de los Pueblos	Espacio de Trabajadores y trabajadoras de Derechos Humanos	CSO	Colombia
Patricia Conde	Procesos sociales y gobernabilidad	Corporación Programa de Desarrollo y Paz de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia
Ramón Rangel	Pastoral Social de los Trabajadores	Espacio de Trabajadores y trabajadoras de Derechos Humanos	CSO	Colombia
Rocio Campos	MOVICE	Espacio de Trabajadores y trabajadoras de Derechos Humanos	CSO	Colombia
Santiago Camargo	Coordinador del Observatorio de Paz Integral del	Corporación Programa de Desarrollo y Paz de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia
Sebastian Alonso	Controller Embassy of Sweden	Embassy of Sweden in Bogota	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Sisaela Duran	Encargada de la Casa de la Verdad de Aguachica	Comision de la Verdad – Casa de la verdad, de	National and local government	Colombia

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
		Barrancabermeja		
Tatiana Useche	Program Manager	Fundacion NEME	Private sector	Colombia
Tove Wennergren	Second Secretary	Embassy of Sweden in Bogota	Sida/Embassy	Colombia
Ubencel Duque Rojas	Director	Corporación Programa de Desarrollo y Paz de Magdalena Medio	CSO	Colombia
Aase Fosshaug	Project Representative, Expert-Bilateral Affairs	Swedish Prison and Probation Service (SPPS), Sweden	National and local government	Kenya
Amos Okuthe	Inspector of Prisons, SPPS team member	Kenya Prisons Service	National and local government	Kenya
Amra Turcinhodzic	Controller	Embassy of Sweden, Kenya	Sida/Embassy	Kenya
Anna Jardfelt	Ambassador	Embassy of Sweden, Kenya	Sida/Embassy	Kenya
Anna Tufvesson	Senior Programme Manager Environment and Climate Change	Embassy of Sweden, Kenya	Sida/Embassy	Kenya
Ann-Christin Henriksson	Correctional Expert/Senior Advisor	Swedish Prison and Probation Service (SPPS), Office for International Affairs, Nairobi	National and local government	Kenya
Betty Okero	Chief Executive Officer	CSO Network for Nyanza and Western Province	CSO	Kenya
Carolyne Atieno	Probation Officer, SPPS team member	Probation and Aftercare Service	National and local government	Kenya
Cholate Simantu	Communication and Media Officer	Action Network for the Disabled	CSO	Kenya

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Damaris Seina	Kenya Programme Coordinator	Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI)	CSO	Kenya
Dennis Mungo	Human Rights Coordinator	Kenya Prisons Service	National and local government	Kenya
Duncan Onyango	Director	Kisumu Progressive Youth	CSO	Kenya
Farida Asindua	Disability Rights Expert	Action Network for the Disabled	CSO	Kenya
George Ndichu	Sub-county Team Lead	Department of Health Services, Naivasha Sub-county	National and local government	Kenya
George Njane	Chief Probation Officer	Probation and Aftercare Service	National and local government	Kenya
George Wasonga	Chief Executive Officer	Civil Society Urban Development Platform	CSO	Kenya
Grace Maingi	Executive Director	Uraia	CSO	Kenya
Helena Vikstrom	Senior Program Manager, Democracy and Human Rights	Embassy of Sweden, Kenya	Sida/Embassy	Kenya
Henna Hallden	Political Officer	Embassy of Sweden, Kenya	Sida/Embassy	Kenya
IDLO 1- no info		International Development Law Organization (IDLO)	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
IDLO 2 - no info		IDLO	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
IDLO 3 - no info		IDLO	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
Isaac Kiema Muema	National Programme Coordinator	ILO	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
James Kibaki	Advocacy Officer	Action Network for the Disabled	CSO	Kenya

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
James Nakola	Village Elder	Oloirowua	Community member/rights holder	Kenya
Jimjod Mokuu	Adult Education Director	Nakuru County	National and local government	Kenya
Johannes Eile	Director of International Programmes	Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI)	CSO	Kenya
Josephine Mwangi	Programme Officer, Civil Society, Gender and Child Rights	Embassy of Sweden, Kenya	Sida/Embassy	Kenya
Josephine Mwendu	Disability Champion	Action Network for the Disabled	CSO	Kenya
Josh Ounsted	Director, Regional Office in Nairobi	Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI)	CSO	Kenya
Jukka Ilomaki	Chief Technical Advisor	Water Sector Trust Fund	National and local government	Kenya
Lawrence Lankev Karani	Community Mobiliser	Rapland	Community member/rights holder	Kenya
Lisa Marie Ouedraogo-Wasi	Social Protection Specialist	UNICEF	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
Lucy Githaiga	Country Manager	Diakonia	CSO	Kenya
Martha Mathenge	Programme Officer - Peacebuilding Portfolio	UNDP	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
Mary Kisongoi	Opinion Leader	Oloirowua	Community member/rights holder	Kenya
Mary Njoroge	Programme Manager - Devolution Project	UNDP	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
Mercy Koini	PPDP Community Engagement Lead	Forum Syd	CSO	Kenya
Michael Hjelmaker	Deputy Head of Mission/Head of Political and Trade Section	Embassy of Sweden, Kenya	Sida/Embassy	Kenya
Nancy Nteere	Director	Action Network for the Disabled	CSO	Kenya

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Nyambura Ngugi	Programme Specialist, Strategic Planning & UN Coordination	UN Women	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
Paula Kermfors	Senior Programme Manager, Market Development & Employment	Embassy of Sweden Kenya	Sida/Embassy	Kenya
Peter Kilonzo	Disability Champion	Action Network for the Disabled	CSO	Kenya
Priscilla Kinyari	Manager, Rural Investment Programmes	Water Sector Trust Fund	National and local government	Kenya
Purity Kagwiria	Executive Director	Akili Dada	CSO	Kenya
Rebecca Supeyo	Corporate and Community Affairs Manager	Akiira Geothermal Ltd	Private sector	Kenya
Robert Gakubia	CEO	Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB)	National and local government	Kenya
Sophia Lenguya	Community Mobiliser	Rapland	Community member/rights holder	Kenya
Stephen Onacha	Resource Development Director	Akiira Geothermal Ltd	Private sector	Kenya
Thomas Nyang'au	Manager, Urban Investments	Water Sector Trust Fund	National and local government	Kenya
Titus Kuria	PPDP Programme Officer, M&E	Forum Syd	CSO	Kenya
Vincent Ouma	Programmes Manager	Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network (KEWASNET)	CSO	Kenya
Wambua Kituku	Programme Manager, Amkeni	UNDP	Multilateral organisation	Kenya
Zakaria Kamasia	Village Elder	Rapland	Community member/rights holder	Kenya
Anna Tengnäs	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden Mali	Sida/Embassy	Mali

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Daniela Vidaicu	National Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden Moldova	Sida/Embassy	Moldova
Jesus Alfredo	National Program Officer	Embassy of Sweden Mozambique	Sida/Embassy	Mozambique
Nilla Ingstorp	First Secretary	Embassy of Sweden Mozambique	Sida/Embassy	Mozambique
Johan Hallenborg	Minister Counsellor & Head Section Office to Myanmar	Embassy of Sweden Myanmar	Sida/Embassy	Myanmar
Natalija Bratuljevic	Principal	NB Consulting	Private sector	Serbia
Ana Gren	Senior Programme Specialist Unit for Global Social Development Department for International Organisations and Policy Support	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Anders Emanuel	Policy specialist Democracy & human rights	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Anders Rönquist	Head of Multilateral Coordination Unit, former Head of Development Cooperation, Kenya	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Andreas Dolk	International Director	WeEffect	CSO	Sweden
Andreas Johansson	Senior Advisor	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Anna Rosendahl	Department for International Organisations and Policy Support, Unit for Global Social Development	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Anna Schnell	Independent Consultant	-	Private sector	Sweden
Anne Ljung	Unit for Humanitarian Assistance, Department for Asia, Middle East and Humanitarian Assistance	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden

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Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Annica Holmberg	Independent Consultant	-	Private sector	Sweden
Annika Andersson	Advisor for Democracy and Human Rights	Diakonia	CSO	Sweden
Annika Nilsson	Consultant	NIDS	Private sector	Sweden
Birgitta Weibahr	Lead Policy Specialist, Human Rights and Democracy	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Cathy Krüger	Project Manager	Statistics Sweden	Other	Sweden
Charlotte Ståhl	Department for International Organisations and Policy Support, Unit for Democracy and Human Rights	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Claudia Arenas	Head of Impact and Quality Assurance	Forum Syd	CSO	Sweden
David Wiking	Founder	We-ness	Private sector	Sweden
Elisabeth Folkunger	Former Senior Programme Manager Water and Humanitarian Assistance, Nairobi	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Eva-Lotta Gustafsson	Department for Partnerships and Innovations, Unit for Civil Society	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Helena Bjuremalm	Deputy Head of INTEM/DEMO	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Ingrun Åslund	Department for Partnerships and Innovations, Unit for Capacity Development	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Jackson Obare	Manager, East and Southern Africa Hub	Forum Syd	CSO	Sweden
Johan Schmidt	Regional Programme Manager Western Balkans	Olof Palme International Center	CSO	Sweden
Katarina Westman	Department for Partnerships and Innovations, Unit for Capacity Development	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden

## ANNEX 2 – LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Lina Hjalmarsson		Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Lisa Fredriksson	Former Head of Cooperation Albania	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Louise Bernsjö	Prgramme Specialist Democracy and Human Rights, INTEM/Demo	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Maria Osbeck	Senior Advisor Environment and Climate, Europe & Latin America Unit	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Maria Stridsman	Deputy Head of the Partnership and Innovation Department	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Maria van Berlekom	Head of Unit, Unit for Global Cooperation and Environment	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Michael Otto	Senior Advisor	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Minna Orneus	Senior Policy Specialist Water and Sanitation, Department for International Organisations and Policy Support	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Nicklas Svensson	Principal	Stockholm Policy Group	Private sector	Sweden
Noak Löfgren	Communications Officer, Openaid.se	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Robert Nygard		Embassy of Sweden Albania	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Sofia Orrebrink	Senior Gender Advisor	Sida	Sida/Embassy	Sweden
Stina Karlton	Former Sida staff	-	Other	Sweden
Veronica Wikner	Project Manager	Statistics Sweden	Other	Sweden
Claire Henneville-Wedholm	First Secretary, Programme Officer for Democracy and Human Rights	Embassy of Sweden Tanzania	Sida/Embassy	Tanzania
Anders Frankenberg	Counsellor and Head of Development Cooperation Section in Yangon	Embassy of Sweden Thailand	Sida/Embassy	Thailand

## ANNEX 2 – LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

Name	Position/ department	Organisation	Type of organisation	Country
Malin Stawe	Counsellor	Embassy of Sweden Turkey	Sida/Embassy	Turkey
Cecilia Brumér	Deputy Head	Embassy of Sweden Zambia	Sida/Embassy	Zambia

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# Annex 4 – Interview guides

## A. Key Informant Interview Guide – implementing organisations

### Introduction

Thank you for taking time to speak with me today. We are conducting an evaluation of the application and effects of Sida’s human rights based approach. We are looking at interventions in four different countries - Albania, Cambodia, Colombia and Kenya. In [country name], we are speaking with people involved in several interventions, including [intervention/programme name], as well as Embassy and Sida staff here and in Stockholm.

The information you provide will be combined with information from other people and relevant documents to understand [intervention name] and your interactions with other organisations. The aim of the overall evaluation is to better understand what strategies have worked more and less well to integrate HRBA in what contexts and why.

- Can we include your statements in the evaluation report? We won’t use your name or your organisation’s name, and would just refer to your position and type of organisation (i.e. program manager, legal aid organisation, location).
- Can we include your name in the list of key informants?

### Concept of HRBA

1. In your own words, how would you describe/define the concept of the HRBA?
2. To what extent have your interactions with Sida affected your perception/interpretation and application of a HRBA?

### Application and ways of working

3. From your perspective, what are the key components of your intervention? To what extent does HRBA feature, if at all? [probe for each component: participation, accountability, transparency, non-discrimination; explicit and implicit; probe regarding involvement of different subgroups of people, including women and girls]
4. In the initial dialogue and proposal development process, to what extent was HRBA explicitly discussed? Among who? In what ways?
5. In the implementation process, in what specific ways have HR principles featured in practice? How were these adapted to the context and the sector?
6. How has your approach changed over time, if at all? What prompted these changes?
7. To what extent have your interactions with Sida affected your ways of working?
8. What are the key lessons from your experience in applying HRBA?

9. What factors have enabled your ability to apply HRBA? [probe regarding organisational factors (including skills, incentives and knowledge of context), broader contextual factors; probe for each component: participation, accountability, transparency, non-discrimination]
10. What factors have hindered your ability to apply HRBA? [probe regarding organisational factors, broader contextual factors; probe for each component: participation, accountability, transparency, non-discrimination]
11. How do you navigate these external factors in your work?

### **Perceived effects**

12. What have been the effects or outcomes of the ways in which you work?
  - probe regarding process, interaction among different groups
  - probe regarding the specific outcomes of that intervention
    - on advancing HR standards
    - on advancing other outcomes

### **Closing questions**

13. What have I not asked that is important for us to consider?
14. What other documents and organisations/people do you recommend we consult?

## **B. Key Informant Interview Guide – Sida & Embassy staff**

### **Introduction**

Thank you for taking time to speak with me today. We are conducting an evaluation of the application and effects of Sida’s human rights based approach. We are looking at interventions in four different countries - Albania, Cambodia, Colombia and Kenya, we are speaking with people involved in several interventions, including [intervention/programme name], as well as Embassy and Sida staff here and in Stockholm.

The information you provide will be combined with information from other people and relevant documents to understand [intervention name] and your interactions with other organisations. The aim of the overall evaluation is to better understand what strategies have works more and less well to integrate HRBA in what contexts and why.

- Can we include your statements in the evaluation report? We won’t use your name or your organisation’s name, and would just refer to your position and type of organisation (i.e. program manager, legal aid organisation, location).
- Can we include your name in the list of key informants?

### **Concept of HRBA**

1. In your own words, how would you describe/define the concept of HRBA?
2. How has the discourse about HRBA changed over time, if at all? [probe for each component: participation, accountability, transparency, non-discrimination]
3. To what extent, do you think Sida/Sweden’s approach to HRBA has influenced other actors, if at all? Who? How?

**Application and ways of working**

4. In the strategy development process, to what extent and how is HRBA taken into account?
5. In the initial project/programme development and assessment process, to what extent is HRBA explicitly discussed and considered? Among who? In what ways?
6. In the follow-up and evaluation of interventions, to what extent and how is HRBA applied?
7. To what extent is HRBA applied and promoted in the dialogue?
8. Talk me through an example how you have promoted or seen HRBA applied in a specific sector or intervention [probe for each component: participation, accountability, transparency, non-discrimination; explicit and implicit].
9. How do HRBA approaches vary among interventions?
  - a. How do HR principles feature in the formal theory of change in the programme/project?
  - b. How have HR principles features in the implementation process in practice? How were these adapted to the context and the sector?
10. How has Sida/Sweden’s approach to integrating HRBA in practice changed over time, if at all? What prompted these changes?
11. What are the key lessons from your experience in supporting the integration of HRBA?
12. What factors have enabled this work? [probe regarding organisational factors, broader contextual factors; probe for each component: participation, accountability, transparency, non-discrimination]
13. What factors have hindered this work? [probe regarding organisational factors, broader contextual factors; probe for each component: participation, accountability, transparency, non-discrimination]
14. How do you navigate these external factors in your work?

**Perceived effects**

15. What have been the effects or outcomes of the ways in which you work?
  - probe regarding process, interaction among different groups
  - probe regarding the specific outcomes of that intervention
    - on advancing HR standards
    - on advancing other outcomes

**Closing questions**

16. What have I not asked that is important for us to consider?
17. What other documents and organisations/people do you recommend we consult?



# Evaluation of the application and effects of a Human Rights Based Approach to development – Volume I

This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations from an evaluation of the application and effects of a Human Rights Based Approach in Swedish development cooperation from 2010–2019 to find out what has worked well, less well, and why? The evaluation included four country case studies (Albania, Cambodia, Colombia and Kenya), and was based on document review and interviews with key stakeholders during the period May 2019 to May 2020. The case study reports are included in Volume II of this evaluation. The evaluation finds that there is often no clear distinction in purpose – whether by Sida, embassies of Sweden or co-operation partners in-country – between applying a HRBA and putting advancement of human rights at the centre of work. The evaluation also finds that an important effect of Sweden’s application of a HRBA is that it has strengthened and clarified the country’s commitment to promoting and protecting human rights through international development cooperation. The application of the HRBA, and the enactment in practice of the principles of this approach has been the basis for principled, long-term support to actors who share the goal of promoting development towards a more open society.



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Address: SE-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden.  
Visiting address: Valhallavägen 199.  
Phone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Fax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64.  
[www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se) [sida@sida.se](mailto:sida@sida.se)

