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SWEDISH
AGENCY FOR
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EVALUATION



Prepared by IBA-DEV.com

Support for Democracy and Human Rights FINAL

Cambodia
&
Vietnam



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SADEV EVALUATION OR REVIEW [CLICK HERE AND WRITE NUMBER]
Support for Democracy and Human Rights FINAL

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Acronyms

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADR	Alternate Dispute Resolution
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CDP	Cambodian Defenders Project
CEPEW	Centre for Education Promotion and Empowerment of Women
CC	Commune Councils
CDC	Council for the Development of Cambodia
CPP	Cambodian Peoples Party
CDRI	Cambodian Development Research Institute
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CRDB	Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board
CS Fund	Commune Sangkat Fund
CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
CSAGA	Center for Studies and Applied Science in Gender, Family, Women and Adolescents
COHCHR	Cambodian Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
CriPC	Criminal Procedures Code
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
D&D	Decentralization and De-concentration
D/HR	Democracy and Human Rights
DC-CAM	Documentation Center for Cambodia
DfID	Department for International Development (UK development agency)
ECCE	Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia
FCP	Forestry Co-operation Programme
GDCC	Government Donor Coordination Committee
GE	Gender Equality
GoV	Government of Vietnam
H-A-R	Harmonization, Alignment and Results
ISEE	Institute for Society, Economy and Environment
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JMI	Joint Monitoring Indicators

JPP	Justice Partnership Programme
LDF	Local Development Fund
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LPMD	Local Planning for Management and Development
LTC	Land Tenure Certificates
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
NCDD	National Committee for Decentralization and De-concentration
NGO	Non Government Organization
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PAR	Public Administrative Reform
PBA	Programme-based Approach
PD	Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness
PSDD	Project to Support Democratic Development through Decentralization and De-concentration
PSGR	Public Sector Governance Reform
RBM	Results Based Management
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SADEV	Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation
SEDP	Socio-economic Development Plan
SEK	Swedish Kroner
Sida	Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency
TC	Technical Cooperation
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

This evaluation for SADEV of Swedish supported democracy and human rights programming in Vietnam and Cambodia is intended to add input on programming in Asia to other evaluation materials being integrated into a report for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in February, 2012. The objective of that overall report is to “conduct an evaluation of the results of the development cooperation with a principal focus on democratic development and increased respect for human rights”.

Almost one quarter of all Democracy/Human Rights support from Sida between 1998 and 2010 was dispersed in Asia. Of the entire D/HR budget, Vietnam was the 8th largest recipient of Swedish D/HR support (952,185 Million SEK or 145,017 Million USD) and Cambodia was the 10th largest (846,960 Million SEK or 128,992 Million USD) recipient of D/HR support. Sweden has a long history of development cooperation particularly in Vietnam where the 45 year relationship began in 1967. The 33 year relationship with Cambodia began with humanitarian assistance in 1979. In both countries D/HR support has been provided since the early 1990's.

This evaluation of D/HR in Vietnam and Cambodia was originally intended to be a desk review to draw together lessons learned and policy recommendations from mapping selected democracy and human rights programming investments. It was intended to contribute to: learning with regard to democracy and human rights cooperation, providing input to future government policy development, and more broadly to Sweden's cooperation partners and stakeholders; and, reporting on Swedish government reporting on democracy and human rights. It is not intended to be a full analysis of the investments reviewed or of all projects and programs in D/HR in Vietnam and Cambodia over the past 15 years but rather it overviews key strengths and weaknesses of D/HR programming.

The most significant finding or lessons learned from this review of D/HR programming in Vietnam and Cambodia is to highlight the particularly successful and responsive partnership approach which was used by Sweden in Vietnam to build and maintain relationships over 40 years resulting in development of a 'special relationship' in which policy on sensitive subjects can be discussed. This was verified by all Vietnamese interviewed. The importance of this cannot be overstated since a wide variety of cross cultural research¹ has concluded that both Vietnam and Cambodia are strong relationship based cultures where trust being built is the key to success working together on joint ventures, partnerships and to the opportunity to enter into real policy dialogue. Western cultures, including Sweden, score as rules oriented cultures as opposed to relationship based cultures so it is a credit to Sweden that it developed deep relationships in the SE Asian context where relationships are arguably the most important in the world.

To demonstrate this, a major European research study² of 100,000 international managers created a continuum of cultural beliefs of managers. Sweden falls on the opposite side of

¹ Cross cultural research studies in particular by Trompenhaars and Hampden-Turner, Hofstede etc.

² Fons Trompenhaars *Riding The Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business* with Charles Hampden-Turner (1997): Dimensions – 1. Universalism vs Particularism (What is more important – rules or relationships?); 2. Individualism vs Collectivism (Do we function as individuals or as a group?); 3. Neutral vs Emotional (Do we display our emotions?); 4. Specific vs Diffuse (How separate we keep our private and working lives?); 5. Achievement vs Ascription (Do we have to prove ourselves to receive status or is it given to us?); 6.

many dimensions from Vietnam and Cambodia. For example, Sweden managers score following rules and adhering to contracts as more important than relationships whereas Vietnam and Cambodian managers score building and honouring relationships as more important than following rules or contracts.

In almost every interview in Vietnam, the evaluators were told about the ‘special relationship’ between Vietnam and Sweden which is also described similarly in many source reports. This relationship developed in Vietnam through Sweden supporting Vietnam over 45 years in the areas in which Vietnam needed help starting with support for infrastructure and then economic reform and capacity building. It was only after this relationship was built that Sweden could introduce democracy and human rights and sensitive subjects such as media and anti-corruption.

In Cambodia, this level of relationship has not evolved into a special relationship as yet. This is partly because the focus has not just been on the government but also a function of time. What Sweden has done in Cambodia is develop overall programming in D/HR which hits at all levels including RGC Decentralization and De-concentration (central, provincial and commune), Multilaterals working with the Cambodian Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, think tanks – Cambodian Development Resource Institute and a wide variety of national and local CSOs through Swedish Framework organizations (Forum-Syd and Diakonia). Again this approach is developing a wide variety of relationships which can be deepened to enable Sweden to build a closer relationship with the RGC in addition to its strong relationships with CSOs and other actors in Cambodia. To develop a special relationship, the Swedish program needs to focus on many parts of the RGC and ascertain what gaps Sweden can fill that will have the most mutual benefit. .

The report includes an At a Glance Chart which provides highlights from the Desk Review, key interviewees and from group interviews and identifies strengths and challenges in each area. They are grouped under the 7 strategic objectives: freedom of expression, political framework for democratic procedures, democratic administration, justice framework, democratic civil society, gender equality and human rights strengthening.

The key findings about the results of Swedish D/HR programming in the two countries which were triangulated from the above sources can be summarized as having essentially followed the 5 principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the principle in the Accra Agenda of adding importance to building more effective and inclusive partnerships for development which include CSOs and other actors. In summary, using the Paris Declaration principles, six conclusions of this evaluation are:

SWEDISH MODELS OF D/HR ODA IN VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA		
Conclusions -Paris Declaration/AAA	'Special Relationship' developed over long-term leading to D/HR focus (Vietnam)	Multi-Leveled support for D/HR through multiple stakeholders with CSO focus (Cambodia)
1. Ownership	Support for GOV ownership from the outset has led to D/HR programming and policy influence	Strong support for local ownership from outset on D/HR and especially for local CSOs and increasingly RGC
2.Alignment	Alignment with changing GOV priorities over 45 years (from infrastructure, health and humanitarian assistance to economic reform) helped build the 'special relationship' which has led to input on sensitive D/HR issues.	Development partners including Sweden tried to align their investments on D/HR with the RGC but were only partially successful due to lack of trust of RGC systems. PSDD put out substantial effort to support the NCDD Secretariat.
3.Harmonization	Sweden led efforts towards harmonization in D/HR since the 1990s. Most recently, Sweden played a strong role leading 9 anti-corruption dialogues. They turned the leadership over to the UK for the 10 th meeting. Sweden also linked both anti-corruption and justice work with other donors. Harmonization effort within media sector through Media Coordination initiative (which began in 2009).	Sweden has worked to harmonize with other donors in supporting a variety of D/HR investments. For example, Sweden supported the PSDD project working in a basket fund with DFID and UNDP which were entrusted with the administration of PSDD from its beginning.
4.Managing for Results	Early Swedish development support demonstrated significant results in poverty reduction. It is early to show similar results in sensitive D/HR areas i.e. access to justice, media and anti-corruption but acceptance and activities are positive indicators.	Through such important investments in D/HR as the 6 investments reviewed, Sweden includes support for development of monitoring and evaluation and MIS systems which should improve managing for results as well as reporting on results.
5.Mutual Accountability	Although it is not easy due to the sensitive nature of D/HR subjects such as anti-corruption, both parties work hard to be mutually accountable. Change is slow but the 'special relationship' helps a lot.	Inclusion of joint monitoring indicators for many areas including HR/D, gender equality etc. in the National Strategic Development Plan has improved the possibility to improve mutual accountability.
6.Expanding the Dialogue (AAA)	As the 'special relationship' has evolved, Sweden has been able to support evolution of independent civil society orgs working on D/HR issues such as Towards Transparency (TT) and others.	Through Forum-Syd and Diakonia (Swedish Framework Organizations) and their work with national and local level CSOs, Sweden has supported many D/HR issues including legal aid, land disputes, gender equality etc.

General Conclusions:

1. Coherence with Swedish Policies and D/HR Interventions in Vietnam and Cambodia (1998 and 2012)

With respect to the extent of coherence between Swedish policies and D/HR interventions in Vietnam and Cambodia between 1998 and 2012, the evaluation research indicates that there is substantial coherence. (Please see Chapter 3 on Findings for verification)

2. Coherence in programming in Vietnam and Cambodia with the Seven Broader Policy Objectives for Swedish D/HR (1998 and 2012)

As described in detail in Chapter 3 on Findings, there are challenges in each of the seven policy areas but overall, the preponderance of evidence from reports and evaluations reviewed and from interviews with 50 people in the two countries, is that the strengths and evidence of programming coherence is high in both Vietnam and Cambodia.

3. Extent to which context in Vietnam and Cambodia is reflected in D/HR support

In both countries, the programming has been well constructed to match the context. In Vietnam, as described in this report, Swedish support for primary concerns of Vietnam led to a 'special relationship' being built which allowed as progressive D/HR programming and policy input to the Government of Vietnam as possible for outsiders. In Cambodia, as described in this report, the context is different. Therefore the D/HR program is necessarily different. Cambodia has substantial civil society activity which has allowed Sweden to program through Swedish CSOs (Diakonia and Forum Syd) as well as to support organizations at many other levels including a research think tank (CDRI), an international HR organization (OHCHR), a local organization documenting human rights violations (DCCAM), and a government program (PSDD). Notwithstanding medium appetite by the RGC, this approach has responded well to the local context in Cambodia and led to some Swedish influence on D/HR.

4. Extent Swedish D/HR support has contributed to improved democracy and increased respect for human rights in Vietnam and Cambodia

Given the many challenges to democracy and human rights in both countries, as described in this report and many reports and evaluations and by interviewees, it is clear that Swedish support is viewed by local government officials, other donors, and CSOs as having made, and continuing to make, a significant contribution to improving the D/HR situation in both countries (but there remains a long way to go).

From this short evaluation, it does appear that Sweden's ODA in both Cambodia and Vietnam has been effectively absorbed by most of its partners and has not duplicated the support of other donors.

Lessons Learned/Recommendations

1. Building Relationships

Lesson Learned: Building a long term 'special relationship' based on mutual trust with another country, in this case Sweden with Vietnam, has the major benefit for the development partner of being able to enter into dialogue about sensitive issues in D/HR that can lead to change.

Recommendation: Sweden should continue to focus its efforts on institutionalization of gains made in D/HR with the GOV (and CSOs), and continue to leverage up those gains by transferring responsibilities to like-minded donors. At the same time, to ensure maximum benefit from the 'special relationship', all respondents and documents

reviewed see great benefit in Sweden maintaining a presence in sensitive D/HR areas i.e. access to justice, media, anti-corruption, and gender equality.

2. Multileveled Approach

Lesson Learned: Sweden's multileveled approach working with a variety of types of partners (wide range of CSOs, think tank, documentation center, multilateral HR agency and the government) is a good way to leverage up the impact of interventions in D/HR as viewed by interviewees, evaluation and reports.

Recommendation: Sweden should continue to use its present multileveled approach supporting a wide range of key investments (as described above). To this range of partners, major effort should be placed on supporting D/HR at the institutional level i.e. RGC at Ministerial level, development of Cambodia National Human Rights Body which follows Paris Principles, and increased support for linkages among government, CSOs and private sector. Cambodia, being Chair of ASEAN in 2012, offers an opportunity to leverage all of this.

3. Being a Catalyst and Facilitator

Lesson Learned: Sweden's role as a catalyst and facilitator, as demonstrated in both Vietnam and Cambodia, is appreciated by partners and allows Sweden to influence D/HR in both countries and, most certainly at the Senior Government level in Vietnam.

Recommendation: Build on Sweden's positive reputation in Vietnam (and to a lesser extent in Cambodia) and its long term implementation of partner-driven development principles, to increase D/HR role as a networker linking donors, governments and CSOs in each country and at ASEAN to promote D/HR.

4. Future D/HR Programming based on past experience

Lesson Learned: Future D/HR programming should use the lessons learned in Vietnam and in Cambodia – building deep relationships through long term commitment in Vietnam and developing a multileveled programming approach in Cambodia.

Recommendation: Sweden's future D/HR programming in other countries/regions should be influenced by lessons learned in Vietnam (placing serious effort on building a deep relationship and working with partner countries on a long term basis) and Cambodia (where multileveled partners carry out activities which complement each other, and contribute to achieving the same D/HR goals). This approach, linked with harmonization with other donors, should leverage up the value of Swedish funding.

Evaluation Criteria Ratings³

Evaluation Criteria	Explanation	Rating (1-6)
Relevance	Sida project results reviewed in both Vietnam and Cambodia are relevant to the Swedish mandate of supporting HR/D and gender equality. These projects support national priorities by providing their government and other stakeholders, i.e., CSOs with needed capacity building, technical assistance and programme support appropriate to their contexts and relevant to the stated needs of local partners and beneficiaries.	-
	The Vietnam Sweden <i>special relationship</i> placed Sweden in the role of trusted advisor, facilitator and catalyst in the key thematic areas of: Poverty Reduction, Anti-Corruption, and Capacity-Development (i.e., of Journalists, Media, Justice Sector Support, Local Participation in Governance, etc.). A good example of how this relationship has helped shape the dialogue is the Chia Se (Phase 1 and 2) poverty alleviation programme operating in three provinces which have some of the highest levels of poverty in Vietnam. The program, which builds on GoV approaches to poverty reduction, is designed to have an impact on national policies and initiatives and facilitate the GoV system at local levels (mainly commune and district) to apply the LDFs and LPMD tool for planning and management of all the government development resources at such levels. This program has been called innovative and has promoted the Paris Declaration Agenda's ownership criteria as well.	5
	In Cambodia , Swedish ODA is focused on a variety of target groups and not primarily on the Government as was the case in Vietnam. . Swedish ODA in the country has worked to live up to the Paris Declaration in projects dedicated to: Decentralization and De-concentration, Local Governance, Civil Society Empowerment, Human Rights training, Media training etc. and in Sweden's leadership in promoting particularly local ownership and harmonization among donors.	4
Effectiveness	Sweden's ODA was overwhelmingly perceived as effective in achieving its objectives by the stakeholders who were met during the evaluation missions to both countries and in reading the documentation. This finding was verified in other evaluations of Swedish ODA in both countries.	-
	In Vietnam , it is clear that the so-called special relationship and the trust it has generated between these two nations has been the platform on which Sweden's ODA has built its success, and the reason it has been so effective. Thanks to this trusting relationship over a long period of cooperation (45 years) many effective and innovative programmes have been made possible, such as Chia Se, Anti-Corruption and the Justice Initiative. Also Sweden remains the biggest donor in supporting and coordinating the media sector in Vietnam. All of these are very sensitive topics but not too problematic because of the trust built between the two countries: Vietnam and Sweden.	5

³ Of the OECD DAC 5 basic criteria for evaluating development cooperation (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability), the Vietnam and Cambodia evaluation primarily applied *relevance* and *effectiveness* criteria. The *efficiency* criteria was not applied as the intention was not to look at cost-benefit aspects of development interventions but rather to look at results more broadly in the area of D/HR. *Sustainability* is touched upon as are *gender equality and monitoring and evaluation*.

Evaluation Criteria	Explanation	Rating (1-6)
	<p>In Cambodia, multi-entry points are used to deliver Swedish ODA – i.e. government, multilaterals, civil society networks and human rights and gender training programmes. The projects together are a good development strategy but do require more facilitation to achieve integration. Examples of Sweden’s many partners in Cambodia are Forum Syd and DC-CAM. Forum Syd has worked in Cambodia since 1994 strengthening civil society efforts to improve democracy and legal rights with an emphasis on human rights. Form Syd works closely with the natural resources sector, mostly working to counter land-grabbing and violations of civil and political rights. According to the WB, 80% of all landowners in Cambodia lack legal property rights. DC-CAM supports justice after the genocide including gathering information on war crimes and supporting war crimes trials.</p>	4
Efficiency	N/A	-
Impact	N/A	-
Sustainability	<p>Sustainability was not meant to be central to this evaluation. There are a few key points that can be made in terms of Swedish ODA in Vietnam and Cambodia but with a stronger emphasis on Vietnam, where the issue of legacy and sustainability is most pressing.</p>	-
	<p>In Vietnam, continued efforts to transfer the extensive knowledge gained from years of development cooperation into local institutions is a priority, particularly since Sweden plans to change the nature of its development assistance to partner-driven initiatives. The GoV representatives indicated that it will be difficult to transfer their trust to other development partners which they don’t trust to the same degree. So it is important that this transition process (which has already begun) continues and is strengthened to ensure continuity and sustainability. Sweden has already stepped back from lead donor on a number of important projects: i.e., Anti-Corruption, Justice Sector Reform, and Reduction, to name a few and has encouraged the leadership of other donors, i.e., DfID for the Anti-Corruption Initiative and Denmark for the Access to Justice Initiative. In doing so however Sweden still champions these initiatives behind the scenes. There is an openness that would not have been possible without the approach taken by Sweden to build relationships over the long term and lay the groundwork for sustainability. It is truly a unique case study in the annals of international development work.</p>	5

Evaluation Criteria	Explanation	Rating (1-6)
	<p>In Cambodia, as well as working with and strengthening multiple partners, institutionalization is also necessary for sustainability. This is being achieved primarily through work with on the ground partnerships in Cambodia as opposed to a close relationship with the RGC.. In Cambodia it is important to try and forge a closer relationship with the central Government but this will take time. The programme in Cambodia has many promising elements from the PSDD decentralization and de-concentration program which works with the RGC at many levels including national, provincial, district/municipality and at local commune/sangat levels as well as working with a cadre of other donors to ensure better participation in governance at all levels of government. Working with the RGC to design the mechanism for accountability and transparency will help to transform governance in Cambodia. In addition work with Forum Syd and Diakonia is sustainable because they build the capacity of local CSOs which implement projects focused on election freedom, human rights, natural resources, climate change, legal aid, women's rights etc. These partners are the owners of these initiatives and receive support from Forum Syd and Diakonia through core support and technical assistance. Reports state that the cooperation between Sida, Forum Syd and Diakonia in Sida's on-going support to Cambodian Civil Society is working well, which is in line with Sweden's policies for global development. The ability of CSOs to defend the interests of their members seems to have developed as a result of improved contacts between communities facing similar problems, closer cooperation with national NGOs, and increased donor interest in the work of these groups.</p>	4
Gender Equality (and other Cross cutting issues)	<p>Sweden's programming is responsive to a wide range of cross cutting issues. Specifically re gender equality, there is little criticism of Sida's approach. Gender mainstreaming is used in all Sida programming. In fact, gender equality is an integral part of its definition of D/HR programming. Indeed the correct heading is: Democracy, Human Rights (D/HR) and Gender Equality.</p> <p>In Vietnam, the programme has a strong gender equality slant. Gender is mainstreamed in all projects reviewed. In local governance and justice initiatives, it is obvious the point is to involve women in governance (particularly vulnerable, ethnic minority, and rural women). Women are also encouraged to participate in governance at higher levels of government. Sida supports increased participation of women in political decision making through supporting the Centre for Education, Promotion and Empowerment of Women (CEPEW) which does advocacy work including public discussions on rights-based issues. However, much work remains to be done especially in rural areas and among certain ethnic groups with high incidences of violence against women.</p> <p>In Cambodia, Sida has supported Gender Equality and the relevant TWG (which has its own gender equality indicators). Thanks to the PSDD project, more women than ever before have been involved at the local commune level in politics. Many women are also part of women parliamentary strengthening initiatives.</p>	-
Monitoring & Evaluation	<p>The 2010 DAC Review applauds Sweden for moving forward with results based approaches to managing results. The fact is that some initiatives in both countries have good RBM indicators while others require more work. Thus M & E is somewhat uneven and requires further assistance.</p>	4

Rating scale: 6 = very high quality; 1 = very low quality. Below 4 is less than satisfactory

1 Purpose, Scope & Evaluation Methodology

Background

Between 1998 and 2010, the Swedish Government contributed 5,477,177 Million SEK (or 849,404 Million USD) to Democracy and Human Rights Support. Following a dialogue with representatives of Government Offices, SADEV decided to adopt a case study approach to evaluate Swedish D/HR cooperation.

The Swedish government has consistently treated human rights and democracy together. In fact, the two areas are largely seen as overlapping: i.e., human rights are included in the official definition of democracy, and democratic development is reflected in human rights. Several Swedish Government documents acknowledge this inter-dependence of democracy and human rights while acknowledging a difference between them⁴.

SADEV decided to carry out three case studies in three differing country contexts in three different regions of the world. In terms of biggest receivers of Swedish D/HR support between 1998 and 2010, they selected Guatemala (#4), Kenya (#9) and Serbia (#12). Asia was not included.

This evaluation report is intended to add content and findings from Asia where no case study or evaluation was originally identified even though Asia received 23% of worldwide support for Swedish D/HR. Of the overall D/HR budget, Vietnam was the 8th largest recipient of Swedish D/HR support (952,185 Million SEK or 145,017 Million USD) between 1998 and 2010 and Cambodia was the 10th largest (846,960 Million SEK or 128,992 Million USD) recipient of D/HR support.

The results of support in Asia are of interest due to the fact that almost ¼ of all D/HR support in the period between 1998 and 2010 was dispersed there. Asia also is the only region in the world that does not have a regional human rights mechanism although, as of 2008, when the ASEAN Charter was ratified by the ten countries of South East Asia (including Vietnam and Cambodia), sub regional Commissions have now been created. Selecting two countries in ASEAN is beneficial since ASEAN is becoming more powerful in terms of their markets and potential global influence with the combined force of 580 million people situated between two emerging super-powers: China and India.

Vietnam has been a focus country for Sweden for many years with a large number and variety of investments to which Swedish ODA has contributed. The analysis of results and challenges should be of substantial value in planning D/HR support in other contexts and circumstances.

Cambodia has more recently become targeted as a country where Swedish ODA will be significantly increased and is a country where the focus is on D/HR support. In fact, in 2010 alone, 82% of the support to Cambodia was allocated for Democracy, Human Rights and Gender Equality. Another reason to review Cambodian investments at this time is that Cambodia is due to take up the Chairmanship of ASEAN starting in January 2012 which may present opportunities for increased influence. (This point may be crucial since it may present

⁴ Examples: Change for Freedom. Policy for Democratic Development and Human Rights in Swedish Development Cooperation, 2010 2014; Freedom from Oppression. Government Communication on Swedish Democracy Support (2008); Human Rights in Swedish Foreign Policy, Govt Comm. 2007/08:109 (2008)

many opportunities for Sweden to influence Cambodia. For example, Myanmar has recently changed some of its behaviour partly to ensure that it will become ASEAN Chair in 2014).

1.1 SADEV and AusAID discussed the idea of cooperating on this evaluation in SE Asia. Purpose and Scope

The primary target groups and audiences for the overall evaluation of human rights and democratic development are: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida. Secondary target groups include the Swedish Parliament, Swedish cooperation partners in the case studies undertaken (Swedish, local and international organizations) and other donors including AusAID.

With respect to the purpose and scope of the work on Vietnam and Cambodia, this should be viewed in the wider context of ASEAN. In ASEAN, there have been, and continue to be, a multiplicity of democratic governance issues related to human rights and judicial capacity building. Many donors have carried out national and regional programs to address these issues but overall there has been relatively little attempt to coordinate programs or evaluate them in a sustained and substantive manner (with a few exceptions). In addition, relatively little attention has been paid to the ability of recipient institutions (Supreme Courts, Judicial Training Centers, CSO Forums, etc.) to absorb the multiplicity of donor supported programs.

This is complicated by the fact that in Cambodia and Vietnam, as in many ASEAN countries, democratic governance and human rights reform and development of the rule of law, is a matter of generational change rather than short term impact. The above raises two issues which have oriented this evaluation:

1. The first is a mapping of selected democratization and human rights programming and relates to programs carried out in both Cambodia and Vietnam by Swedish ODA over the past several years. The objective is to ascertain how recipient institutions have responded to, or effectively absorbed, what has been delivered in these Sida supported programs as well as to identify coherence of the programming, challenges and whether there are duplications in programming etc.
2. In cases of projects that have ended, the evaluation team will also take note of how these programs have been evaluated in the past reviewing what criteria were used and to what extent “success” was built into how the “outputs” were structured, etc.

The objective of this evaluation was to draw together **lessons-learned and policy recommendations** from carrying out the above. But, since virtually everyone with in-depth knowledge of the administration of democratic governance and human rights in most ASEAN countries acknowledges that change and reform is slow, incremental, and requires generational shifts in staffing and training of relevant actors, as well as fundamental changes in education, it was, as expected, difficult to meaningfully evaluate and measure overall impact of short programs on D/HR..

In addition, the Cambodia and Vietnam evaluation will contribute to:

- *Learning.* The evaluation is intended to contribute to learning with regard to D/HR cooperation, providing input to future government policy development, and more broadly to Sweden’s cooperation partners and stakeholders; and
- *Reporting.* The evaluation is intended to contribute to reporting to the Swedish government on democracy and human rights to the Swedish Parliament.

1.2 Evaluation Methodology and Questions

To provide a neutral and evidence-based assessment of Sida programming in Vietnam and Cambodia, the small two person evaluation team used an approach which helped them to become increasingly knowledgeable about the operating environment and the external and internal influencing factors affecting performance and reporting. A **highly consultative and iterative process** to data collection, analysis and feedback over a two month timeframe was used. The Concentric Circles Approach (Figure 1) used 5 (five) lines of evidence implemented in a quasi-sequential manner. This approach included data collection, analysis and reporting on each line of evidence. The goal was intended:

- To optimise the use of time and ensure that the evaluation report was completed in January, 2012;
- To collect primary and secondary data from selected Sida projects in Cambodia and Vietnam working with local organizations and local institutions;
- To provide SADEV with the opportunity to analyze the results from a variety of perspectives from two countries in Asia with an eye to facilitate learning from past programming and guiding future programming;
- To provide in-country MFA and Sida personnel, development partners, counterparts and other donors, the opportunity to provide their unique perspectives;
- To provide time and space for selected intended beneficiaries to make an impression on the evaluation team of outcomes and potential impacts achieved in D/HR through support provided by Sida;
- To ensure that the evaluation is based on an objective analysis of valid and reliable data generated from multiple data sources and lines of evidence; and,

Data Sources

SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FINAL

Documentary sources

In-country/agencies and key informants

In-country Sida partners, other donors and local counterparts

Sample of relevant gov't ministries and development cooperation in country.

Concentric Circles Approach

Lines of Evidence

1: Content analysis – multilateral reports, experts, Sida, MFA

2: Desk Review analysis of files, documents, reports and on-line information etc.

3: Sample of relevant interventions by Sida, sample of evaluations

4: Key informant interviews/ focus groups

5: Interviews w / in-country stakeholders and development partners

• To provide the ev

triangulate into findings,

lessons-learned and recommendations in their draft report to be presented in late January, 2012 (and finalized after input from SADEV).

1.3 Evaluation Guidelines and Methods

- 1) **Context Analysis:** The point of departure for the context analysis was the seven strategic policy objectives for Swedish D/HR from 1998 to the present. The analysis reviewed developments within D/HR in Vietnam and Cambodia covering the time-period selected (the 5-10 years up to 2010 when the global evaluation began). This was not intended to be a comprehensive description of all developments over time, but rather identification of broad trends in progress and challenges within the seven broad strategic areas. The analysis also considered the impact of events in the countries and developments, at critical points, which made a difference. Finally, gender sensitivity was central and therefore reviewing changes (or lack of changes) for women and men, girls and boys is also a focus. Both primary data (i.e., interviews and focus groups with i.e. MFA, Sida, other donors and cooperation partners), and secondary data (World Bank, Freedom House, Human Rights Watch etc.) were collected, reviewed and analyzed to the extent possible within the short time frame.
- 2) **Portfolio Desk Review:** Document/Literature Review (including review of previous relevant evaluations). A desk-study was carried out covering selected Swedish ODA investments in each country emphasizing the outcome level but including impact level where possible. Sources of this largely secondary data consisted of: country/strategy reports, evaluations and mid-term reviews by Sida and evaluations also by other donors. As part of the Desk Review, the consultants explored on-line sources including Sweden's www.openaid.se (Swedish aid on-line) as well as other forums such as www.forumsyd.org⁵. This line of enquiry was used to build the evaluation team's knowledge-base prior to engaging in primary data gathering in Vietnam and Cambodia.
- 3) **Analysis of Sample of Development Investments:** As a complement to the desk review, several development interventions from the democratic governance and human rights sector for each country were selected using preselected criteria so that those chosen are representative in terms of size and characteristics of the D/HR portfolio. The primary focus was reviewing outcome level results, i.e. has the particular intervention in question achieved its goal as stated in the project document? When possible, an attempt was made to assess the impact of the specific intervention on the overall D/HR situation in each country. In short, these cases provide "ground-truthing" for the results of the desk review. The sample interventions were selected to cover a majority of the seven strategic policy areas. One criterion was that the duration of the selected activities needed to be sufficiently long to permit meaningful discussion on results. While there was substantial outcome data in Vietnam, in Cambodia, which is a more recent recipient of Swedish ODA, it was more difficult to secure outcome level data so output level data was used. Primary data (i.e., interviews, focus groups with Sida staff, cooperation partners, and target beneficiaries) and secondary data, (including semi-annual, annual, and final reports, Sida and cooperation partner agreements, evaluations and reviews etc.) were collected, reviewed and/or analyzed.

The main proposed criteria for selecting interventions to be studied were:

⁵ Forum Syd is a Swedish Non-Governmental Organisation, which works with development cooperation on an International level. Forum Syd works with issues related to human rights and democratisation. The aim is to support and encourage organisations in the civil society to be strong and influential actors in development processes. Forum Syd's Democracy and Human Rights Programme in Cambodia has 10 partner organisations

- Interventions defined as D/HR interventions according to cooperation strategies in question;
- Some concrete lessons learned should be possible to extract from samples chosen;
- Interventions deemed likely to impact on change in the countries (given the main events taking place in the countries); and
- The combined sample interventions that reflect the diversity of the D/HR portfolio i.e. from a range of sub-sectors, a variety of aid channels (i.e. state-to-state, multilateral channels and civil society), and direct support versus joint funding mechanisms (such as joint donor basket-funds).

Interview data was collected using the eleven evaluative questions mirroring those found in the SADEV global evaluation (please see Appendix A for the evaluation questions). In addition sub-questions were added after the contextual analysis and desk review to better reflect the local context in Vietnam and Cambodia. These were used in the interviews and focus groups with the 50 respondents in both countries.

During the evaluation, the consulting team adhered to the following code of conduct:

- **Collaboration & Communication:** On-going communication with SADEV (and its local focal points) was maintained.
- **Utilization-Focused & Value-Added:** Approach used to ensure that the results are useful for the readers.
- **Balanced accountability:** This evaluation was guided by, and responsive to, SADEV and utilized results of other SADEV evaluations where possible.
- **Appropriate methods:** As discussed with SADEV, evaluation tools, methods and approaches appropriate to the resources and timeframe were used.
- **Gender Equality:** This Swedish ODA priority was integrated into evaluation interviews and review of documents to ensure that programmes were viewed through the gender equality lens – understanding that women and men, girls and boys may experience issues of social exclusion, discrimination, etc. differently.

2 Context of Swedish Development Cooperation - Vietnam & Cambodia

2.1 Vietnam

(Initial support laid base for Special Relationship between Sweden and Vietnam to become a reality)

All respondents interviewed for this evaluation, and most reports about development cooperation in Vietnam, focus on the fact that Sweden is the longest serving development partner in the country and has built a long term relationship. For 45 years since 1967 Sweden has laid the foundation for what has become the ‘special relationship’ between the two countries. Sweden supported Vietnam throughout several major conflicts including the Vietnam War as well as through Vietnam’s liberation of Cambodia in 1978 during the Khmer Rouge regime. Overall, Sweden was the largest donor until 1991 providing 64% of Vietnam’s total OECD DAC bilateral aid during the 1980’s.

Swedish development cooperation has always supported long term partnerships. What has changed is the focus over the years. Initially Sweden supported physical infrastructure, health, and humanitarian support. Several Vietnamese interviewed during this evaluation fondly mentioned Sweden’s role in building the early hospitals including the Children’s Hospital and what is generally regard as the best General Hospital in Vietnam. In addition, many also mentioned Sweden’s support for building the pulp and paper mill in Bai Bang north of Hanoi, which helped print text books for children returning to school after the long conflicts. These types of support demonstrated Sweden’s solidarity with Vietnam during its time of conflict.

Then in the 1980’s Sweden moved its focus to support capacity development and economic reform including the Doi Moi program which was launched in 1986. This program included sweeping reforms which were intended to transition the socialist economy into what has often been described as a ‘socialist-oriented market economy’. Again due to Sweden’s ‘special relationship’, Sweden was in a position to work with the Government in support of its economic reform throughout this period.

During this period and the early 1990’s Sweden supported increasingly participative development such as the Vietnam-Sweden Forestry Co-operation Programme (FCP). These increasingly participative programs were consistent with the move to supporting human rights and democracy programming. Programs such as the Mountain Rural Development Program, which began in 1996, laid the groundwork for projects which were reviewed such as the Chia Se Poverty Alleviation program.

In essence, the many evaluations of Swedish development programming conclude that Sweden has been a very solid well respected development partner for Vietnam for many years. This is substantiated by the fact that every document reviewed and every person we interviewed in Vietnam talked about the importance and depth of the ‘special relationship’ between the two countries.

In the late 1990's Sweden became involved in the sensitive areas of democracy and human rights including anti-corruption. It was only because Sweden was a trusted friend of Vietnam and had a solid long relationship that Sweden was able to work in these areas and have influence.

The 1999-2003 country strategy focused on promotion of democracy and poverty alleviation and led to a strong rights-based and pro poor perspective. The focus of Swedish aid in the 2000's was on public administrative reform and democratic governance which opened the way increasingly for discussion of programming in the more sensitive D/HR subjects. Specific projects in these areas will be discussed later in this report. Many of these initiatives are examples of partner driven co-operation which actually describes very well the Swedish style of work in Vietnam over the years.

A very useful overview of this period is included in Chapter 5 of the just completed (December, 2011) Evaluation of Vietnam–Sweden long term development⁶. In summary, it tracks the changes in Vietnam and presents several case studies which represent the directions that Sweden took. Overall, that study and other reports, verify the relative success of most of these projects and also again refer to the importance of the 'special relationship' which allowed Sweden to have a special place at the table in discussions of sensitive issues including D/HR.

It must be noted that Sweden was also a donor that fully supported the essence of the Paris Declaration (2005) which focused on country ownership, alignment with country priorities and harmonization among donors. This was also reflected in the D/HR programming carried out during this time period.

2.2 Cambodia **(Initial Support and Working Towards Human Rights and Democracy)**

In the post conflict era since the Khmer Rouge regime in the late 1970s, Cambodia has overcome many challenges including completely rebuilding the Cambodian state and its public service in the 1980s. At present the state has been rebuilt and is now more politically and economically stable. This new reality is demonstrated by multiparty elections, a free market economy, joining the WTO, and financial and structural reforms. Unfortunately these reforms are not supported by strong institutions but rather by weaker institutions which have difficulties implementing and enforcing reforms or benefitting the most disadvantaged parts of the population. There is weak public sector management capacity especially at the mid and lower levels of the public service both at the national and provincial levels. In addition, the situation in D/HR, has not improved at the same pace with issues particularly related to lack of land rights for poor people filling the headlines in Phnom Penh.

Nevertheless the economy has grown from 6% GDP from 1993 to 2003 to 11% between 2004 and 2007 and now averages about 5% per annum. In addition social indicators have improved except for gender inequalities and health indicators for maternal mortality.

Although governance overall ranks low, there is improved political stability in Cambodia (Kaufmann Study, 2007) although it is essentially a single party state. With respect specifically to human rights, early in 2006 several human rights leaders, journalists and human rights advocates were arrested. International and national condemnation followed leading to their release. Slowly the RGC has cooperated more with human rights advocates but not to the

⁶ GHD, Evaluation Study of Long-Term Development Cooperation between Vietnam and Sweden: Technical Report, December, 2011

point of supporting a Paris Principled Human Rights Commission or an open approach to the role of CSOs. This has led to the Government trying to implement a law to curb the role and power of CSOs. As noted above, the government has not supported needed land rights reforms either and are being sharply criticized at present early in 2012.

Notwithstanding all of this, improving governance has been recognized by the RGC as critical. Their RGC 2010 Rectangular Strategy, which guides socio-economic development, focuses on improving governance and addressing corruption although this and human rights are not the focus.

This recognition by the RGC has begun to open up the opportunity for donors and CSOs to influence the Government. Many new structures have been supported by the RGC including development of the Technical Working Groups which consist of representatives of the RGC, development partners and CSOs. The intention of these, which now number 19, is to provide a forum through which collaboration, consultation and cooperation at the sector level can take place. Some of these are working really well while others are not. The key determinant of success appears to be the capacity of local leadership in that area. Sweden is a key donor stakeholder in several of the TWGs.

Through these means and others, including a TWG on Partnership and Harmonization, Sweden has had an opportunity to dialogue with the government. Similarly, Sweden's partners in the CSOs and the CDRI think tank etc. also have opportunities to be involved.

Through its partnerships with Diakonia and Forum-Syd, Sweden supports a wide range of CSOs concerned with D/HR. At the same time, they support the Cambodian Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (COHCHR), the Documentation Centre of Cambodia (DC-CAM) which documents past human rights abuses of the Khmer Rouge period, the Cambodian Development Research Institute (CDRI) which is a think tank that works on D/HR issues and PSDD (Project to Support Democratic Development through Decentralization and De-concentration). This coordinated approach should enable Sweden and its partners to push issues forward together and influence the RGC to move forward on many D/HR initiatives. But at this time, most interviewees including those from Sweden and Cambodia, informed the evaluators that the relationships weren't sufficiently strong for influence to be felt in high places. But the groundwork is being laid.

3 Findings from Triangulation of Results

Introduction to Findings

This section presents the evaluation findings in terms of D/HR results, as measured by compliance with Sweden's policy on D/HR and the seven strategies: namely, 1. Strengthened freedom of expression, including independent media and access to information, 2. Democratic political procedures and institutions for decision-making, including electoral processes, political parties and parliaments, 3. A democratic, accountable and efficient public administration at all levels, including public financial management and anti-corruption, 4. A well-functioning legal sector ensuring rule of law and equal access to justice, 5. A vibrant and pluralistic democratic civil society, including non-governmental organizations and interest groups such as faith-based organizations, labour unions, as well as strengthening relations between civil society and the state, 6. Gender equality, including women's participation in political processes and human rights of women, and 7. General human rights strengthening, including strengthening of national HR-Commissions, HR-ombudsmen, HR-defenders promoting all human rights.

The review was undertaken mainly as a desk review, with interviews (both individual and group) to triangulate the results. Sweden's relationship with the two countries (Vietnam and Cambodia) has differed from many stand-points: i.e. one long-term development cooperation country, Vietnam, with which Sweden has a very unique 'special relationship' built over many decades and through the adversity of war, sanctions and hostilities and another more recent partner country, Cambodia, with which there is a more emergent relationship which is multi-dimension, i.e., not focused on government but on a variety of development partners, i.e., other donors, civil society, think tanks, networks, as well as government and multilateral partners.

Both countries can be considered post-conflict countries and/or reform cooperation countries. A considerable concentration of evaluation reports were found within each country as well as semi-annual and annual reports focused on activities and outputs.

From these reports and other documentation from the Swedish Embassies in both Vietnam and Cambodia (please see Appendix D), the desk review in this section was produced. A list of interviewees from each country included Swedish Embassy staff in both countries, members of government, CSOs, and other development partners is included in Appendix C.

In each country, after consultation with relevant Embassy staff, 11 investments were focused upon: i.e., 5 in Vietnam and 6 in Cambodia. As much as possible, these were chosen to comply with the overarching 7 strategies identified above and with the time-line of the global study, from 2000 to 2010.

As mentioned in the limitations, the review was conducted over a fairly short timeframe but yielded some very important factors about Swedish development aid over time in SE Asia which should be explored further. Finally, the evaluators were very much aware of the differences between the two countries Swedish ODA models and their unique characteristics. Both evaluators were lead evaluators in Cambodia for the Cambodian Paris Declaration 2 Evaluation (2010) and have spent the last several years living and working in SE Asia and

particularly in Cambodia and Vietnam (as well as other ASEAN countries). Thus, they were as well equipped as possible to deal with the short evaluation timeline.

11 Investments – 5 in Vietnam and 6 in Cambodia under 7 D/HR Strategies

The 5 investments chosen in Vietnam are: 1) Chia Se (Poverty Alleviation and Governance), 2) Access to Justice Initiative (providing a variety of approaches to improved access to justice from drafting of laws to legal aid and ADR. It was started by Sida, who remains very much involved, but is currently led by Denmark. It involves civil society as well as government participants), 3) Public Administrative Reform (the Quang Tri Pilot, whose findings have been replicated by Finland in 4 other provinces, i.e., QuangBinh, Ha Tinh, Nghe Anh, and Hue), 4) Anti-Corruption Initiative (whose first 9 of 10 dialogues were hosted by Sweden and the 10th by DfID) and which, as of early January, 2012, also includes CIDA as a partner, and 5) Media Support and Training of Professional Journalists.

Similarly in Cambodia, after consultation with the Embassy, 6 investments were chosen including: 1) PSDD (whose focus is on Decentralization and De-concentration of the government and involves all levels from the top down to the commune level. This programme is primarily supported by Sweden but has a variety of other donors involved including the UNDP); 2) Forum-Syd (whose Democracy and Human Rights Programme started in 1994 and has included a large number of Cambodian partner organizations. Most are working on a local basis in provinces throughout the country while others are working on national level advocacy campaigns. The common goal is to strengthen the access of poor and marginalized people to democratic influence, rights and natural resources. A central theme in the program is to strengthen the participation of discriminated groups in Cambodian society – for example minorities, youth and women – through increased knowledge and furthered understanding on how to claim their rights) 3) Diakonia (which is very similar in working style to Forum-Syd. Both are Framework Organizations delivering Swedish ODA in a variety of countries. Both organizations share resources including some staff members in Cambodia. Diakonia is a faith-based network of organizations), 4) Cambodian Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (COHCHR) is one of the first and only offices of OHCHR in SE Asia. It works with Sweden towards joint D/HR goals. Sweden accepts their annual reporting which saves them substantial time and is much appreciated. In recent years COHCHR has been under attack from the PM which is partly an indicator of the changing landscape in Cambodia), 5) Cambodian Development Resource Institute (CDRI) is a think tank devoted to improving academic institutions and research in a variety of social sciences in Cambodia) and 6) Documentation Centre of Cambodia (DC-CAM) seeks to be the memory of the Khmer Rouge period and to bring about peace and reconciliation).

Some Important Highlights of Findings from the AT-A-Glance Chart

The At-A-Glance Chart in this section is the main method of presenting the evaluation findings from the desk review and field interviews. These findings are presented under the Seven Strategies which have guided Swedish D/HR programming since 1998. The same chart also includes strengths and challenges of the 11 investments both in general and as they pertain to some of the seven strategies.

The examples included under the 7 strategies are not intended to be exhaustive or to cover all the investments but rather to provide a few representative examples of each from the documents and from comments made by the interviewees. (Names have not been used or comments attributed to specific people to protect their anonymity as promised). The final two columns include a brief summary of strengths and challenges for each of the 7 strategies. The

information on this At a glance chart contributed to the analysis which led to the conclusions (including the link with the Paris Declaration), lessons learned/recommendations and scoring on the specific evaluation criteria which are all included in the Section 4 Synthesis part of this report.

Highlights of Swedish ODA in Vietnam and Cambodia related to sample investments – The figure below presents examples of aggregate spending on ODA gleaned from relevant reports and evaluations (see Appendix E). Although many of these investments do not focus directly on D/HR, they collectively address relevant issues such as poverty reduction (which has an impact beyond civil and political rights), participation in governance, anti-corruption, access to justice, accountability and effective public administration at all levels and research that provides increased capacity. The numbers below are but a few relevant highlights.

Project	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Cambodia										
CDRI	7.92M SEK									
PSDD		3.49 M	5.32 M	7.89 M	12.32 M					
PSPAM	6.76 M	4.39 M	4.2M							
Overall Cambodia	16M	17.3 M	15.9 M	22.9 M	26.7 M					
Vietnam										
JPP						9M SEK				
Anti-corruption Initiative						200,000				
National Training Pg (NTP)						8 M. SEK 2010-13				
Chia Se (Phase 1 & 2)	206.4M SEK			30M SEK	40M SEK	3.5M SEK	1.5M SEK			
MTC	9M SEK									
GoV Vision							10.8M SEK			
Overall Vietnam	44 M	44M	37.1 M	21.8 M	16.6 M					