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Sida Country Report 2004

DR Congo



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1. Political, Economic and Poverty Analysis

For a political, economic and poverty analysis reference is made to Sida's Country Analysis of 2004.

2. Swedish Development Co-operation

Swedish support to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been focussed on peace promoting activities and humanitarian assistance, in particular in the eastern part of the country which are conflict prone areas. The support has been channelled through the UN, Swedish and international NGO:s. The Swedish support of 30 million to the UN appeal for 2004 was divided between UNICEF, FAO, OCHA och UNIFEM.

The International Red Cross receives funds through the yearly appeals.

Support through international NGOs is channeled via the Norwegian Refugee Council's activities for basic education and protection of internally displaced persons (IDP:s); Save the Children UK for rehabilitation of schools and education for war affected children; and Médecin sans Frontier (MSF) for health activities.

Support through Swedish NGOs has been channelled via PMU Interlife, Swedish Covenant Church, Diakonia and Trade Union organisations. Activities regard education, health, agriculture, environment, democracy and human rights.

Peace and reconciliation efforts are supported via The Life and Peace Institute, the Forum for Early Warning and Search for Common Ground.

The Swedish contribution during 2004 was 110 million Swedish Crowns in humanitarian aid, 9,3 million for NGOs and 10 million to the elections. Swedish Rescue Services received 0.35 million for logistical expertise.

In all, the Swedish support has contributed to ease the suffering of the population, protect vulnerable groups and promote dialogue between different actors. Aid has been delivered successfully even under difficult security concerns.

3. Strategic Assessment and Considerations

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has during its history suffered from bad governance and difficult conflicts. Lack of democratic institutions and democratic culture has contributed to discrimination and abuse of basic human rights. Natural resources has been illegally exploited and a large factor to the conflict in the region. The last conflict which started in 1998 has especially affected the eastern part of the country. Estimates are that some 3.5 million people have lost their lives from starvation or diseases as a consequence of the conflict. The conflict has also meant that there are some 4 million IDP:s in the country and 300 000 refugees in neighbouring countries.

A transitional Government is in place since June 2003. The transitional Government has a mandate to rule the country until elections are held, latest by June 2006. The UN Peace Keeping Operation (MONUC) means some stabilization in the country. The disarmament and demobilization process has started.

Strategic considerations:

The country strategy for DR Congo is valid for November 2004 – December 2008. Swedish support shall be focussed on humanitarian assistance; peaceful development, security and reconciliation; democratic governance; and economic growth, socio-economic development based on a sustainable development and preservation of the natural resource base.

Humanitarian support

The humanitarian needs continue to be large and Sweden foresees that humanitarian aid will continue during the next few years. The assistance will be targeted to immediate protection and material assistance to people. Early reconstruction may also be considered in social services, in particular health and education where official services do not function. Income generating activities can be considered for demobilized soldiers and returning refugees.

Elections

The security situation is still unstable. Preconditions for holding the elections as planned in June are small and it is likely that they are postponed. Demobilization and repatriation of soldiers should enable that the elections can take place later during the year without major security concerns.

The budget for the elections is estimated at 285 million US dollars and further 100 million US dollars for transport and administration. The budget is only partially secured. It is envisaged that Sweden should support the elections.

Peace and reconciliation

Support for peace and reconciliation will be sought both at local and national level. The "Truth Commission" may be considered for support. Continued support the demobilization and reintegration of soldiers may be considered through the MDRP-fund of the World Bank.

Transition

Provided a positive development in the peace process rehabilitation programmes may pave the way for long term development co-operation.

Support to the education sector could be considered within a reconstruction programme. Support to public institutions and civil organisations in the area of democracy and human rights should be prioritized

Civil society

Support to the civil society through Swedish NGOs should continue with a view to build capacity in their partner organisations.

4. Office and Administrative Issues

As from October 2004, the Swedish programme is managed by a Sida-representative in the Embassy. It may be considered to broaden the scope of the post if a more development oriented programme be come to effect.

Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.



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