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**Tender Notice: Evaluation of Swedish Aid in Sub-Saharan Africa ia CSOs**

The Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA) is a government committee mandated to evaluate and analyse the direction, governance, and implementation of Sweden’s official development assistance (ODA). EBA engages researchers and other experts to carry out studies of relevance for policymakers and practitioners.

**The EBA has decided to commission an evaluation of Swedish CSO-aid focused on democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa.**

## Purpose and questions

The purpose of the evaluation is to investigate to what extent and how Sweden’s official developmentassistance over time contributes to the objective of sustainably strengthening civil society’s capacity to work for democracy and human rights in Africa. The study should stimulate learning and use by establishing what has influenced success or failure and how Sweden can work more effectively to strengthen capacity in civil society.

The following four questions should be addressed:

1. To what extent has Swedish aid made a clear and long-term difference in relation to Sweden’s objective to strengthen the capacity of civil society to promote human rights and democracy in Africa?

2. To what extent has increased capacity been translated into impact on democracy or human rights, for example through greater accountability, political mobilisation, scrutiny of power, influence on local, regional or national decision-makers?

3. Which factors, circumstances or mechanisms explain the degree of goal fulfilment and success or failure (questions 1 and 2) and how can differences in goal fulfilment be understood or explained?

4. How can and should efforts to strengthen civil society’s capacity be developed or improved in the countries and sectors studied to work for democracy and human rights more effectively and sustainably?

Question 1 and 2 are the study’s fundamental and result-oriented summative questions. Both expected and unexpected results should be studied. The difference between question 1 and 2 is related to the time perspective and the size of the results. The focus on capacity can both be linked to specific formulations in the respective country strategy and to the authors’ own interpretation of the concept of capacity, which the evaluators are expected to define before operationalisation. Question 3 is explanatory and should form a basis for learning and for the causal analysis (for questions 1 and 2). Question 4 is formative, learning-oriented and future-focused.

The authors may marginally rework or modify the questions during the initial phase of the evaluation. The team is also given great freedom to propose and argue for their preferred evaluation design.

# Conduct of the study

The team of authors is asked to formulate a study proposal based on the four overarching questions. A detailed description of the study’s approach, design and method is to be presented in the tender. It is up to those submitting proposals to choose the evaluation design and method themselves. The work is to be of high scientific quality and clear justification must be provided for the design and method choices in the proposal.

The evaluation is to include two to four countries in Sub-Saharan Africa where Sweden has had a large proportion of CSO aid. The countries chosen may either differ clearly regarding conditions for civil society to operate and regarding the situation in view of human rights and the development of democracy *or* form a basis for comparisons across countries. Potential countries to study are Mozambique, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, DRC, Burkina Faso, Uganda, South Sudan and Zambia. The study is to examine interventions (broadly) classified by Sida as democracy and human rights, which were funded for at least 5 years and where capacity building was one aim or partial aim. The time period in focus is 2009–2021. The results of the contributions must not be known in advance and the added value of the Swedish assistance must be analysed in the light of the total funding of the organisation or intervention in question.

Delimitations, country focus and potential case studies are suggested by those submitting proposals based on an initial, simple portfolio analysis conducted as an initial step after signing the contract (the data for the portfolio analysis will be provided by the EBA). However, those submitting proposals must clearly and exhaustively describe principles and an intended *process* for selecting countries and case studies in the proposal itself. The fact that the portfolio is very large makes it particularly important to have a well thought-through and precise selection strategy.

Two to four case studies are to be conducted per country. One case study may very well correspond to several projects or grants to one and the same organisation or intervention over time.

Questions about causality and the impact of contributions relative to other factors and alternative explanations must be analysed carefully when answering questions 1–3. Scientific methodology must be used to ensure reliable conclusions and a high degree of transparency. Examples of evaluation design that can be considered are case-study based approaches, system-based approaches, theory-based approaches, such as Contribution Analysis, Process tracing, Outcome Harvesting, Diagnostic approach or various combinations (the design must be well-justified).

In their proposal, the investigators must also show how they will analyse the questions and contributions in relation to research-based knowledge on capacity-building and civil society organisations work in low and middle-income countries with a focus on Africa.

The evaluation is to have a learning purpose. In this regard it is particularly important to understand how underlying factors or mechanisms have affected the result and how and why good or less good results have arisen.

# Target group and intended users of the study

The main target groups of the study are the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida and civil society organisations in Sweden and the countries affected. The target groups will be invited to the study’s reference group to safeguard opportunities for process learning. Before the report is completed, the authors (with the support of the EBA) are expected to arrange a workshop in Stockholm with key target groups in which preliminary results will be discussed (the embassies involved will be given the opportunity to participate via video link).

The EBA works under what is termed “double independence”. This means that the EBA defines which questions and areas are to be studied, independently of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. At the same time, analysis, conclusions and recommendations in each study are the responsibility of the author.

Work on the study will be monitored by a reference group headed by one of the EBA’s members. The reference group will meet two to four times during the period of the study to discuss the design and focus of the study, its quality, conclusions and recommendations.

The study is to be reported in the form of a report in English (with an exhaustive Swedish summary) of a maximum 70 pages plus annexes and which in addition to an ordinary launch is to be used as the basis of learning seminars with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida and civil society. The report is to be able to be published in EBA’s main series of reports.

## Procurement process, budget and timetable

The procedure will be a restricted procedure in two stages.

#### First stage: Application to submit tenders

All suppliers have the right to apply to submit tenders (expression of interest). EBA will invite three (3) suppliers to submit tenders.

Applications to submit tenders shall be registered at the tender portal Kommers Annons eLite (www.kommersannons.se/elite). The application shall contain:

1. CV of the team leader/principal investigator
2. A list of the team leader/principal investigator’s most relevant publications (at most 10 studies from the last 10 years are to be listed)
3. Preliminary team (if more than one author. Described using at most 300 words.)
4. At most three sample studies conducted by members of the proposed team. At least one shall have been authored by the team leader/principal investigator.
5. A short account for how, according to the authors, respective study has contributed to new, reliable, knowledge (at most 300 words, i.e. 100 words per study).

Applicants are kindly asked not to submit any unsolicited material.

Selection of applicants to invite to submit tenders will be based on the submitted material assessed against sub-criteria 1-3 of criterion 2 (see the table at the end of this document). Since the proposed team is preliminary, main weight will be put on the team leader/principal investigator’s experience and competence.

Suppliers must submit a self-declaration in the form of a European Single Procurement Document (ESPD) by filling in the tender form at www.kommersannons.se/elite. Please make sure enough time is allocated for completing the ESPD form when submitting the expression of interest.

#### Second stage: Submission of complete tender/project proposal

Three qualified investigators/research teams will be invited to submit a complete evaluation proposal. A detailed description of the approach, method and design of the study must then be presented (see above). It is up to the tenderers themselves to choose the design and method of the evaluation and to suggest case study countries and case studies. The choice of case studies does not need to be determined when the tender is submitted but a clear description of the principles and starting points of the selection process must be provided. The work is to be of high scientific quality, and clear justification must be provided for the method and design choices in the proposal.

The project proposal is to be written in English and must not exceed 12 pages. In addition to that set out in the previous paragraph, the proposal must contain a presentation of the members of the evaluation team, a clear time-scale, allocation of time and tasks between the team’s members and the budget (stated in SEK, including price per hour for each team member). The following must be provided as annexes to the proposal: (I) CVs; (ii) At most three studies or evaluations carried out by members of the proposed team. At least one of these must be written by the principal investigator. This annex may be the same or different from the application to submit tenders; (iii) A brief account for how, according to the authors, respective study has contributed to new, reliable, knowledge (at most 300 words, i.e. 100 words per study, may be the same or different from the application to submit tenders).

The maximum cost of the evaluation is SEK 2,000,000 (ex VAT). The budget shall enable two to four meetings with the study’s reference group (to be appointed by the EBA following dialogue with the authors), a workshop in Stockholm and participation at the launch event. It is intended that these activities will be held in Stockholm, but one or two meetings may be conducted by video link.

In the second stage, tenderers shall give an account of all potential conflicts of interest pertaining to members in the evaluation team, as this may be grounds for excluding tenders.

An assessment group comprising members of the Expert Group and the secretariat will assess proposals received based on the relationship between price and quality. The allocation criteria consist of (i) the design of the proposal, (ii) the qualifications of the authors, and (iii) cost in line with the weightings as set out in the Annex.

#### Questions to the EBA during the procurement process

During the procurement process, the EBA is not permitted to discuss documentation, tenders, evaluation or any such questions with tenderers in a way that benefits one or more tenderers.

Any questions before the first stage may be submitted up to and including 8 August via the questions function of the procurement portal Kommers Annons eLite, [www.kommersannons.se/elite](http://www.kommersannons.se/elite). Questions will not be answered between 10 July and 1 August. Any questions before the second stage may be submitted up to and including 10 September. Questions and answers will be published anonymously and simultaneously to everyone registered for this procurement.

## Preliminary timetable

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| Last day to apply to submit tenders (first stage) | 15 August 2021 |
| Invitation to three suppliers to submit complete tenders | 23 August 2021 |
| Last day to submit tender (second stage) | 22 September |
| Decision by the EBA | 6 October 2021 |
| Contract signed between the EBA and the team of authors | October 2021 |
| Workshop on preliminary results for key target groups | August 2022 |
| Draft final report submitted | 23 October 2022 |
| Planned launch | January 2023 |

Applications/tenders are to be submitted via [www.kommersannons.se/elite](http://www.kommersannons.se/elite) in both the first and the second stage.

Tenders submitted must remain valid until 31 December 2021.

After the EBA’s selected supplier has been announced, all submitted proposals will become official documents, meaning that the Swedish principle of public access to official records applies. Sentences, sections or paragraphs in a document may be redacted in the public version if “good reasons” (thorough motivations in terms of causing economic damage to the company) can be provided and deemed valid. The tenderers are fully responsible for making their claims of confidentiality.