

Municipal Partnership Programmes – Evaluation

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Executive Summary

The Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) has commissioned this evaluation of the projects included in two Municipal Partnership Programmes, the North-South Programme (MPNS) and the programme for Eastern and Central Europe Programme (MPEC) during the years 2005-2008. The overall goal of the MPNS was to contribute to poverty reduction, whereas the overall goal of the MPEC was to promote sustainable development and closer integration and partnership in the Baltic area and its surroundings.

The evaluation consists of two parts:

- One part looking into the degree of effectiveness of the programme and granted projects during 2005-2008
- One part with a prospective analysis, which aims to provide suggestions on possible changes to the programme.

The questions guiding the evaluation were whether the cooperation has contributed to poverty alleviation (MPNS), systems change (MPEC), capacity development, enduring relationships and mutual benefits.

The evaluation gives weak evidence to the fulfilment of overall goals. At best it could be stated that it is probable that the cooperation has contributed to an impact in terms of poverty alleviation and systems change; to what extent and endurance remains unknown. There are indications of outcome in terms of capacity building, relationships and mutual benefits. Illustrations of how ideas, structures, methods and language have been exchanged between the partners are given. However, it is not possible to describe the volume and quality of the outcome – how many, how much etc. – more than in very general terms.

Change takes time. Change takes place in a complicated network. Many factors in the environment affect both impact and outcome of a contribution. There are always many actors on the scene, interacting in a multi-organisational context.

These aspects are well known. They should be well known also to those responsible for the two programmes: Those who have defined the overall goals and those who have managed the programme.

Measures to mitigate the difficulties in communicating intended results – i.e. the fulfilment of goals and objectives – are inter alia the definition of objectives in measurable terms. Also, guidance given to the participants, in this case cooperation partners, as to programme logic and policies are fruitful measures to increase the understanding of context and desired results to be reported. Experiences from other international partnership programmes support this. Such measures have largely been missing, which is verified by interviews and survey.

Notwithstanding, the case studies show many qualities in the partnership projects, which deserve to be acknowledged. These qualities could be generally characterised as process oriented, and should be included in a new partnership programme. They concern trust and dialogue, mutual understanding of context, and retrieval of good practices. They largely form the starting point for the following recommendations given to ICLD:

- Promote local democracy and local governance to fight poverty in the programme logic and in all contexts.
- Safeguard principles for successful results in the partnership cooperation, based on international experiences.
- Define programme objectives in terms that are possible to follow up and make achieved results visible.
- Clarify general demands on partnership applications.
- Concentrate on fewer thematic areas and countries.
- Offer partnership programmes of two kinds: One programme with thrust on professional cooperation and one programme geared towards more open cooperation between the partners.
- Strengthen application review procedures.
- Emphasise demands on applications and final results in the role of ICLD.
- Include Swedish Embassies in Programme.
- Support applying and granted partners.
- Enforce ICLD evaluation and learning procedures.

It should be emphasised that these recommendations are based on the evaluation of two programmes, which are now finalised. The evaluators are aware that ICLD are already underway to make changes in line with the recommendations.

Introduction

The municipal partnerships programmes have since start undergone a number of changes. Initially there was one programme for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and one programme covering the rest of the world. Today the programmes are merged into one and new cooperation countries have been added. Between 2005 and 2008 the municipal partnerships were managed by SALAR:s subsidiary SALA IDA (today SKL International). Altogether 397 projects have been granted funds in the two programmes. The municipal partnerships are developed on the basis of earlier twin town cooperation programmes.

The Evaluation¹

As the currently responsible agency for management of the programmes, the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) has commissioned this evaluation of the projects included in the programmes during the years 2005-2008. The evaluation looks at the programme logic and procedures and identifies activities that can symbolise different approaches to reach established goals. A discussion is held on the overall contribution to poverty reduction and system change through capacity development of the local level.

The evaluation consists of two parts:

- One part looking into the degree of effectiveness of the programme and granted projects during 2005-2008
- One part with a prospective analysis, which aims to provide suggestions on possible changes to the programme.

The evaluation has made use of previous reports of the history of the program. As the ICLD has conducted such descriptive reports, the evaluators did not put their time and effort into summarizing these but focused on what could be found in relation to implemented programmes during the time period in focus.

The two municipal partnership programmes had different goals. According to the Terms of Reference guiding the evaluation these goals were described as follows:

The overall goal of the North-South Programme (MPNS) was to contribute to poverty reduction, notably by:

- Facilitating the implementation of fruitful exchanges between Swedish municipal structures and counterparts in partner countries.
- Building long-term cooperation on concrete projects of benefit for municipalities in the partner countries as well as for Swedish ones.

The overall goal of the Eastern and Central Europe Programme (MPEC) was to promote sustainable development and closer integration and partnership in the Baltic area and its surroundings, according to the needs of partner countries and with the benefit of the Swedish resource base. Three principles guided the cooperation:

- It should promote systems change and integration in European structures of cooperation,

¹ The terms of reference in Swedish are enclosed.

- It should promote relations with Sweden and
- It should include a gender perspective in the cooperation.

The multiple goals of the programmes are discussed in the concluding chapters of this evaluation report.

The evaluation has been assigned to Gränsorganisationer AB/ Winai Development and carried out by Dr Peter Winai and Mr Jens Samuelsson Schjörlien.

The Method

The following questions have guided the evaluation²:

A) Contribution to poverty alleviation?

Has the programme MPNS contributed to fight against poverty? In what way and to what extent? Are there differences between the projects in terms of fulfilment of objectives?

B) Contribution to systems change?

Has the programme MPCE promoted systems change? In what way and to what extent? Are there differences between the projects in terms of fulfilment of objectives?

C) Capacity strengthening and development of capacity at local level?

Have the municipal partnership programmes contributed the strengthening of capacity at local level? In what way and to what extent? Which type of projects has contributed to the strengthening of local capacity? Which factors have promoted or hampered the strengthening?

The second forward-looking part of the evaluation is based on findings from the first part. Questions pointed out as interesting are:

D) Enduring relationships?

Has the partnership resulted enduring relationships between the two partners when funding from the programme has ceased? To what extent? How are differences expressed? Which types of projects survive without specific funding?

E) Mutual benefits?

To what extent has the partnership been of benefit to both sides? Differences between the projects? What projects are long lasting?

The evaluators have used established programme guidelines as framework documents for the evaluation. Relevant policy documents from Sida and SALA IDA have been used as references, but also comprehensive documents such as the Swedish Policy for Global Development, the Government's policy of democratic development and human rights in Swedish development cooperation 2010-2014, and the Policy for actor collaboration for global development, from December 2007. Previously conducted evaluations have also been consulted. Collection of information includes experiences from Sida, SKL International and ICLD's personnel as well as personnel from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

A survey has been sent to all addresses in the SKL International database, representing the implementing agencies. The survey has been distributed through specially fitted software to achieve maximum cost-effectiveness, still enabling adequate collection and analysis of relevant data. The analysis of the questionnaire is presented in this report.

The evaluation further relates to international assessments and experiences of similar programmes.

The selection of cases was designed to provide as broad and varied picture as possible of the cooperative form, in line with the principles of "theoretical sampling". One country was chosen to represent the North-South programme - South Africa, and one country was chosen to represent the East programme - Belarus. The evaluators made a deepened assessment in these two countries and selected municipalities that could provide as widely distributed experiences as possible. In South Africa, Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM) was chosen as a long-term partner with the Municipality of Gothenburg. The partnership provided

²

The evaluation questions are here reiterated in brief, the ToR in Swedish are appended in Annex 1.

examples of several projects implemented by different actors within the municipality administration of Gothenburg. In Belarus, the municipality of Baranovichi represents a variety of projects implemented with the Swedish municipalities of Halmstad, Nacka, Tyresö and Bräcke. These municipalities represent both smaller and larger entities as well as densely populated regions and more scarcely populated regions. The evaluators investigated the implementation of specific projects that had received grants during the periods of 2005-2008. Relevant municipalities, county councils, regional councils and local authorities with experience of these projects were interviewed. The evaluators also visited partners in the two chosen municipalities; NMBM and Baranovichi.

The evaluation was conducted through the following stages as stipulated by the ToR:

- Phase 1. A feasibility and work plan was presented and discussed in a workshop, with three representatives of the contractor, within two weeks of signing the contract. The methodology, including identification of relevant policy documents, planning of field studies and interviews, was mutually agreed.
- Phase 2. Contacts were made with concerned parties, documentation was identified and gathered, a questionnaire was prepared and field studies were planned.
- Phase 3. Interviews were conducted with relevant staff and field trips were made. Closing meetings were held with people in strategic cooperative municipalities.
- Phase 4. Analysis and assessments, including a forward-looking part concentrating on how the evaluation results can be used to alter the design of the programme and its guidelines. A seminar was held with representatives of the ICLD on September 27, to allow for discussions on the conclusions and recommendations.
- Phase 5. Preparation of final report with recommendations for presentation 10 October 2010.

The evaluators have strived to make a clear distinction of results in terms of inputs, activities, outputs, outcome, and when applicable, impact. The classification of goals and evaluation questions outlined in Table 1 explains how results have been verified at different levels of the performance chain.

Table 1

Results chain	Objective / Approach (evaluation question)	Compliance rate / indicators (Quantify / qualify)	Verification
Impact	Poverty reduction	- Access to municipal services	Field visits, interviews with local actors
Outcome	System Change / integration	Examples given	Field visits, interviews with local actors
	Partnership / capacity building	Examples given	Field visits, interviews with local actors
	Lasting relationships	Examples given	Interviews with municipalities in Sweden and in partner countries
	Reciprocity	Examples given	Interviews with municipalities in Sweden and in partner countries
Outputs	- Expressed delivery capacity		Review of documentation, among others Programme / project documents
Activities			
Inputs			

The fact that there were two different programmes with different objectives that ran in parallel has made it somewhat complicated to draw generic conclusions based on outcome and impact. In addition, the mandate of Sala Ida as the original responsible agency for managing the programme was subsequently changed as the agency was transformed into SKL International and the programmes were finally transferred to the ICLD.

For verification of the results, a combination of sources - "triangulation" – has been used to illuminate the likely long-term results - impact - as well as concrete results in the shorter term. The evaluation process is based on practical cooperation with the participating partners to identify and verify actual results. The more fundamental and long-term results are based on interviews with those who worked on the programmes. One of the three guidelines of the Municipal Partnership Programmes was that a gender perspective should govern the cooperation. The gender perspective has been addressed in the long and short term integrated in the evaluation questions.

Programme logic

A top down perspective

Millennium Development Goals

Decentralised cooperation is acknowledged as one of the main strategies for achieving the eighth Millennium Development Goal of global partnership. According to UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) there is a growing consensus that the conditions for sustainable development and poverty reduction are not only dependent on democratic governance, but that democracy must be built at the local level requiring the involvement of local authorities.

Sub-national levels of government have a potential to play a major role in consultations on national poverty reduction strategies if given the mandate or institutional and financial capacity to plan and deliver local development interventions such as social services and local infrastructure, local economic development initiatives and natural resource management. A more effective and accountable local infrastructure and social service delivery for the poor is also dependent on a dialogue among the state, citizens, their communities, civil society and the private sector.

UNCDF emphasises that donor-funded support programmes to local authorities should work within and support the national system of central-local government institutional and fiscal relations and reform. The support should be carried out with a view to establish an appropriate balance between centralised and decentralised decision-making and delivery of social services and pro-poor infrastructure.³

Policy for global development

The parliamentary committee preceding the Swedish policy for global development concluded its work with three objectives: A more just global development, sustainable handling of common global issues and improvements of the living conditions for the poor person. The committee acknowledged two motives for international development cooperation: Solidarity and an “enlightened self-interest”.

Part of the committee report dealt with good and democratic governance. It was stated that democratic forms of governance in many cultures are more developed at local level than at national level. These experiences should be cared for in societies undergoing more general democratic development.

International cooperation and support in-between municipalities can support local democracy as well as general democratic development.

Regarding more concrete cooperation to improve cities it was said that there are good examples of innovative solutions where cities together with its inhabitants and organisations take care of services like waste management, but also that there generally is a great need to develop competence in city planning and municipal management. There are needs to strengthen both municipal democracy and governance.

³ http://www.uncdf.org/english/local_development

The committee noted that there were many interesting examples of local development cooperation between “twin towns”. This cooperation should be further developed, according to the committee.

The Swedish Policy for Global Development

Swedish development policy rests on two pillars: The coherence policy - policy for global development - means that all policy areas are to work towards a common goal, aiming at an equitable and sustainable global development. The Swedish development cooperation aims at creating conditions that will enable poor people to improve their lives. These two pillars must work together and support one another in order to achieve results. In addition, there is a special reform policy for Eastern and Central Europe.⁴

The policy emphasises increased cooperation with actors in the whole society, including municipalities. Public actors at national, regional and local level should be increasingly involved in the policy for global development. The actor collaboration perspective has later been reinforced by established national policy⁵.

The need to promote a democratic structure and culture is emphasised. A democratic culture implies citizens with knowledge about their rights and opportunities to use them, equity, tolerance and respect for all individuals and groups, and accountability of those in power and balance of power between democratic institutions. The concept *good governance* is considered to be an important part of democracy. However, it is dealt with at superficial level only and issues of governance and steering of and inside public institutions is not looked into.

Sida policy documents and position papers

The overall objective – to create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their lives – was interpreted by Sida as identical to fight against poverty. The focus on poverty was thus further enforced.

In different reports Sida has earlier⁶ articulated certain statements regarding good governance. Effective governance is considered central to development and fight against poverty and sustainable solutions require democracy. Democratic governance requires the influence of poor people. Among the conclusions are the following:

- Genuine political processes should be paid attention. Catchwords are “dignity”, “accountability”, “transparency” and “political will”.
- Models have to be adapted to practice – beware of the application of standard system!
- Change takes time
- Democracy and Human Rights go hand in hand.

Conclusions and recommendations regarding good governance are that

- Implementation of national reforms should preferably be decentralised;
- A strategy for democratic governance should include decentralisation, regional and local development, aiming at poverty reduction;
- Methods for cooperation to be applied in sector programme support, twinning and contract financed cooperation should be developed.

Largely the recommendations concern the need to improve awareness regarding how good

⁴ <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3102>

⁵ UD2007/46452/UP

⁶ Digging deeper; Sida, Division for Democratic Governance, 2003. Four Reports on Democratic Governance in International Development Cooperation, Summary.

governance can be improved in different ways: through increased insight and competence. However, there is still very little guidance when it comes to concrete methods for how to strengthen good governance. In practice, this may cause ambiguity.

The partner countries targeted through the programmes have varied as political priorities have varied during the period in focus of the evaluation. Yet, there is very little argument for why certain countries are chosen. The country strategies provide guiding frameworks for what Sweden wants to achieve, although very few of the project proposals referred to country strategies.

Although many municipalities have stated the adherence to national policy documents, the bottom-up and the top-down perspective provide somewhat contradicting goals. On the one hand there is a challenge for municipal actors to deliver on objectives set at a policy level. On the other hand, policy staff does not always understand the starting point of the implementing actor. This is further discussed in the concluding chapters.

A municipal perspective

Looking at the effects of the Municipality Partnership Programmes it is crucial to consider the motives for a municipality to participate in partnerships and international development cooperation. The perspective of the municipalities is reflected in policies and presentations on web sites. Questions posted to selected municipalities provide answers that correspond.

Basically the municipalities give two types of motives for participation: Benefit for the own municipality and support to municipalities in other countries. The self-benefit motives dominate, although contribution to poverty reduction and enhancement of capacity in partner municipality received high marks in the survey included in the evaluation. The arguments for how international cooperation can contribute to the best for the community span from general statements to better articulated declarations.

On the general side, there is the motive on the Swedish side to develop and maintain international contacts. Some of the arguments aim at the municipality as a whole, entailing the desirable to increase understanding among its citizens as to how the situation of the community and its citizens is affected by the international environment. Generally, international awareness, competence and knowledge amongst citizens, business, organisations and civil servants are considered a good thing.

Some directly focus the capacity development of the municipality. The contacts with other countries contribute to development of the municipality's business and activities and also to competence building of the employees. It is considered beneficial to give the business an international dimension.

The municipality should also inform about itself internationally. Thus its opportunities should be known. Increased preparedness for international work in the future is good – it may imply positive development and increased growth for the municipality.

In some cases the “municipality's best” includes meeting with other cultures. The cooperation will contribute to increased understanding the day-to-day issues in international politics, the international system, other cultures and people.

The motive to help others develop is in many cases briefly described. It ranges from general helpfulness – perhaps combined with hope for returns – to solidarity: The municipality can contribute with transfer of knowledge and experience to developing countries and it can also support democratic movements and sustainable development.

The statements say little about a supposed logic in the operations, i.e. a link between the input provided and the desired objectives. A general impression is that it is an unchallenged truth that international contacts between municipalities are *per se* good.

Earlier evaluations of Swedish-run municipality programs⁷

Earlier evaluations of municipality partnerships give a picture of municipalities that are rather uninformed about the Swedish development cooperation policy and the demands from Sida. Few municipalities had contacts (2005) with Sida. The municipality representatives expressed a strong interest in more knowledge about Sida and development cooperation.

Swedish municipalities expressed a neutral or reluctant attitude towards “vänortsavtal” but were in general more open to international cooperation than earlier. There was a fear of getting too involved in long commitments. Short-term concrete projects based on mutual benefit were given priority. Generally, well-structured and delimited projects appear to have been more successful than “pure democratisation projects”.

Lessons learned from other partnership studies

The following is a result of a survey of reports from a number of twinning programmes and partnership arrangements. With somewhat different objectives of the studies, certain themes reappear among conclusions and recommendations put forward in the reports.⁸

Reciprocity

A mutually rewarding partnership should be based upon equity and reciprocal inputs from partners. Both parties should be on board. The adoption of a participatory approach that promotes ownership and empowerment is a key success factor.

Matching of demands and contributions

A variety of forms of learning (North – South; South – South; South - North) between different partners and stakeholders involved are possible in the cooperation and should be identified already at the start and continuously.

The needs of the Southern partner should be the starting point. Thus, themes and project activities should clearly respond to a demand of the Southern partner. Also, the themes chosen should be themes on which the “Northern” partner can contribute knowledge and experience. The needs of the Southern partner should be matched by the added value that the Northern

⁷ An evaluation carried out in 2005 by Agneta Rolfer, commissioned by Sida provides an account also of earlier evaluations of municipality cooperation: Swedish municipalities and twin cities cooperation.

⁸ Finland: Mid-Term Review of the North-South Local Government Cooperation Programme; Netherlands: Towards improved local governance through strengthened local government - Evaluation of the LOGO South Programme 2007-2010; Norway: Organisational Review of The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS); Germany: Municipal Development Cooperation (Experiences from NL, UK, DK, EU); UNPAN/Regione Toscana: Contribution of Decentralized Cooperation to Decentralization in Africa (please refer to Annex 3 for further data).

partner can provide.

The Northern local authority needs to realistically assess what it can offer; it should also play an active role, within a peer-to-peer perspective, not limited to channelling funds.

Structured commitment and ownership

Agreements should be structured around one or two main actions directly benefiting the affected communities. It should then be observed that the matching of needs and provided competence go hand in hand with commitment on both sides. When projects are formulated jointly, it will result in a high level of ownership on both sides

Where this is possible, an existing partnership should be used as a starting point. When cooperation is initiated between two municipalities it should start with small projects.

Linking

Themes taken up in the projects should reflect key priorities in municipal governance.

Municipal development partnerships should be embedded into programmes to promote municipalities or decentralisation programs, i.e. individual partnerships should be linked to higher governmental levels.

Result based management

A professional programme management should be established. Mandates and roles should be well defined. Early programme evaluation should be carried out to assess effectiveness and to optimise the promotional instrument.

Measurable results should be possible to show. Openness is needed in preparing agreements that need to include, among other measures, indicators of progress. Project and procedures management should be strict.

Dispersion and transmission

Programmes often point at positive multiplier effects, because of add-on activities by other stakeholders (knowledge generation). These should be identified.

Weak programmes

In weak partnerships, concepts appear weak at implementation level, despite quite elaborate systems to manage the operations as a whole.

Programmes and projects that are not successful are characterised by more on paper than on the ground.

In soft cases, concepts dilute into a friendship and awareness-raising profile on the Northern side, whereas the cooperation in the South municipality gets the shape of yet another donation.

Table 2 below reflects an effort to focus on the essential items in successful partnerships.

Table 2

Item	Key words	Success factor
Reciprocity	Reciprocal inputs Participatory approach	Promotes ownership and empowerment
Matching of demands and contributions	Assess demands and offers	Needs match competence
Structured commitment and ownership	Structure, commitment	Joint work with manageable projects
Linking	Identify key priorities at higher levels	Link practice to policy
Result based management	Agreed upon indicators, visible results	Targets set, monitored and met
Dispersion and transmission	Acknowledge spin-off	Identify and document best practices
Weak programs	Results not visible	(Lack of monitoring and indicators)

Procedures

Approximately 40 million SEK are distributed yearly corresponding to about 500 000 SEK per each granted application.

The programmes initially offered three application opportunities annually. Each approved project had to adequately report before there could be a second approval for a follow-up project. The time and efforts put into each application round were considerable. According to information provided by former SKL staff, an estimated 50% of the applications were denied in a first round. Much effort was put into supporting the agency that had submitted the application, with programme logic advice and result based management, targeting the sectors of interest for the programs. According to the answers given by respondents in the survey submitted by the evaluators, most applications were eventually granted funds in a final round⁹.

The project proposals were distributed among the staff at Sala-Ida/SKL-International in order for one desk officer to assess each application. The assessments were subsequently presented to a partnership forum for decision. The system was based on an assumption that highly qualified desk officers all hold the same understanding of the programme goals and how the individual applications relate to objectives within the two programmes, i.e. poverty reduction and system change. However, it was noted that different desk officers made different assessments and that the number of proposals recommended for approval varied from one desk officer to another. In practice, the programme goals and objectives have changed and there has been very little systematic guidance on how to assess the applications¹⁰. The weak systematic guidance has potentially put individual desk officers in unnecessarily difficult positions as they have had to make decisions based on own judgments and practice rather than on a shared logic.¹¹

After the agreement of the partnership council on the number of approved and denied proposals, the material was handed to Sida for a formal decision. This decision was usually delivered a couple of weeks later, but no fixed time limit existed. Feedback was provided to the municipalities and sometimes complementing information was requested.

Applications and related documents are kept in a paper archive at the SKL-international office in Stockholm. The evaluators have had access the archives and individual projects have been fairly easy to find, as long as the registration numbers have been known. Yet, the information retrieval procedures have shown to be time-consuming.

A common reflection among staff responsible for assessing applications is that the level of competence among Swedish municipalities, in terms of programme logic, methodology and project proposals, seems to have increased significantly since the programme was established in 2005. Partner organisations in other countries have also to an increasing extent been

⁹ see question 4-6 on page 12

¹⁰ Already the above-mentioned evaluation (Rolfner 2005) called for a more systematic approach.

¹¹ Presently, ICLD tests an approach in which all applications are read by all members of the partnership council, together with responsible staff. This implies a more time-consuming approach, but also better securing and quality assurance of the process.

involved in the drafting and presentation of programme documents and applications, and there are signs of improved professionalism in the presentations. Still, there are many variations. The more structured processes of public management and administration are mostly found in the larger municipalities. They often dedicate one fulltime staff resource to deal with the partnerships, which obviously provides better conditions. Desk officers with experience from assessing project proposals also report that those municipalities that submitted successful applications more often had established international strategies to guide the work of civil servants. In these cases a partnership projects were developed in a context and a political ambition was backing the application.

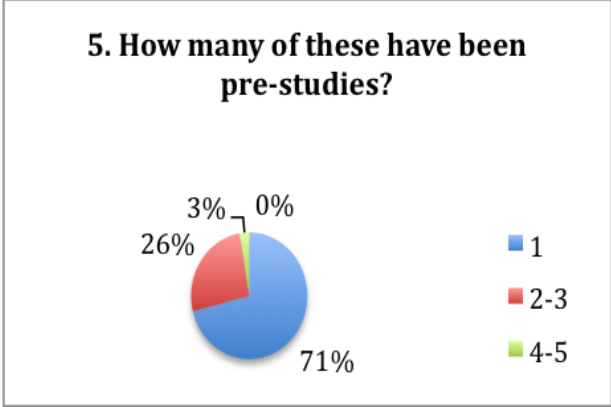
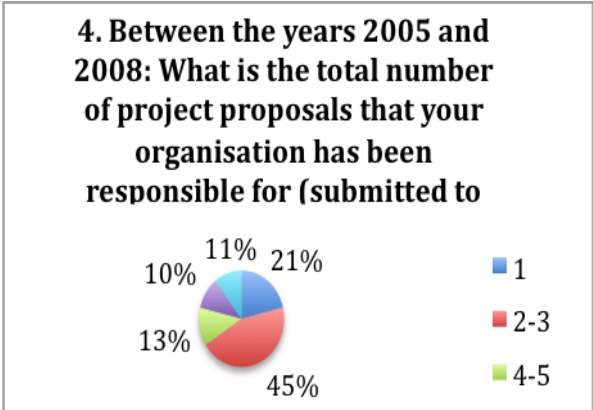
It has been reported that much time was allocated to advocacy work at the beginning of the programme (2005/06), in order to engage the municipalities in the partnership idea of. Much effort has been invested in supporting the municipalities to develop and improve their applications. A system of pre-application has been suggested, in which feedback would be given informally to allow for a strong final project proposal. This suggestion has been met with enthusiasm in some of the municipalities subject to the evaluation.

The number of applications has steadily increased since the beginning in 2005. The most common reason for a denied application is a failure to target the objective of the programme. Only 22% of the respondents to the survey stated to be fully aware of relevant monitoring and evaluation methods. On the other hand, the logical framework underpinning the assessment of applications, in relation to the overall objectives of poverty reduction and system change, is not adequately expressed at a system level. It has frequently been reported as complicated to find logic linkages between an objective on actor's collaboration and one on poverty reduction. Many municipalities have asked for more guidance on what type of end-results Sida - and the granting agencies - expect.

The programmes - results discussion

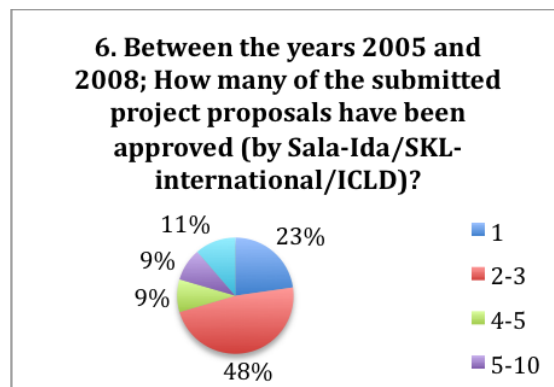
Survey

The survey was distributed to all 200 e-mail addresses that were provided by SKL-International. Out of these 200, an estimated number of 100 were targeting several projects within the same municipality. An additional number of 20-30 addresses bounced or replied with a “long-term leave of absence” message. 47 answers were produced, many of which were covering more than one project. The projects were evenly distributed between larger cities (200 000 citizens or more) and smaller municipalities (less than 200 000 citizens). 72% represented a municipal local authority, but there were also examples of counties, regional organisations and one enterprise. 20% of the respondents representing civil servants had international relations and municipality partnerships as the only responsibility.



About half of the respondents (53%) had already established partnerships when the application was submitted to Sala-Ida/SKL-international. 45 % had identified other sources of funding. 67 % of the respondents represented municipalities where a policy for international relations had been established.

One tenth of the respondents represented municipalities where more than ten projects had been implemented during 2005-2008 (see question 4 in graph above). Most respondents, however, were responsible for 1-3 projects (66%). The number of pre-studies conducted per municipality was low in the answers to the survey; 97% had only implemented 1-3 pre-studies during the period (question 5 – graph).



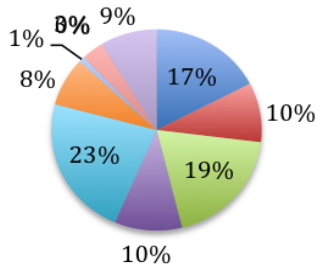
Comparing the number of granted project proposals to the number of submitted proposals provides only a marginal difference. A slightly higher percentage of the categories of 1-3 proposals compared to a slightly lower percentage in the categories of 4-10 approved proposals (question 6 – graph). It is tempting to draw the conclusion that projects are generally implemented, based on a long-term approach where most pre-studies lead to concrete projects. 84% have also claimed that the partnership will continue (which is confirmed by the case studies).

However, the evaluators are cautious in making such statements based on these figures alone. It has also been said - and verified by different sources - that the quality of proposals is not always up to standard and that approval alone is not a guarantee for a desired result.

Only half of the respondents (52%) claimed to have identified specific targets to measure projects goals. Despite this, a total of 61% claimed to have evaluated the projects. Out of these 61%, the portions that have managed to link activities to projects goals were 86% and a total of 85% claimed to have seen long-term effects of the partnership programs.

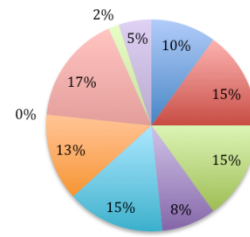
When asked to list the main target areas for the implemented projects, 17 % stated local governance (question 7 – graph). All respondents gave at least one answer to the question, for which multiple answers were possible.

7. What were the main target area/s for these projects (intentional)? (Multiple answers possible)



- Local governance (kommunalt styre och administration)
- Local social services (kommunala tjänster)
- Environment (miljö)
- Local economic development (lokal ek utveckling - bla handelsutbyte och turism)
- Social issues such as health and education (sociala frågor såsom utbildning och hälsofrågor)
- Culture (kultur)

9. In addition to the main area/s, were/are there other areas influenced (unintentional)?



- Local governance (Kommunalt styre och administration)
- Local social services (Kommunala tjänster)
- Environment (Miljö)
- Local economic development (Lokal ek utveckling - bla handelsutbyte och turism)
- Social issues such as health and education (sociala frågor såsom utbildning och hälsofrågor)
- Culture (Kultur)
- Sport

The principal targets stated were social issues such as health and education (23%). Other important targets were: environment (19%), local social services (10%) and local economic development (10%).

Other, unintentional, issues influenced by the municipality partnership projects were more evenly distributed among the respondents (question 9 – graph). 10% stated that local governance was indirectly stated by the project. Only 2 % stated EU-harmonisation to be a target influenced by the project.

Half of the respondents stated not to be familiar with the Policy for Global Development (46%) or that no training on Logical Framework Approach had been offered to them (50%), during the evaluation period. Only 13% claimed to be very familiar with PGD/PGU.

The full survey is presented in Annex 2.

Municipality Partnership Programme with a focus on Central and Eastern Europe

At the first occasion in 2005 Sala Ida/SKL International received 48 applications of which 43 were granted support. The second occasion in 2005 saw a number of 25 (20+5) applications of which 23 were granted funds

Table 3.

Applications	Received	Granted
2005	73	66
2006	62	52
2007	47	27
2008	All pre-studies rejected Major focus on Belarus as part of political initiative	4

The original goal of the programme was to promote sustainable development, closer integration and partnership in the Baltic area and its surroundings, primarily Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia and

Turkey. In 2007, Russia was phased out as a partner country due to political decisions on priorities for the development cooperation. No new projects have been granted funding in Russia after 1 January 2008.

Total projects in Russia as a percentage of the total number of projects that were granted funding during the years 2005-2008:

Table 4.

2005	74%
2006	58%
2007	53%
2008	0%

The purpose of Sida's support to the Municipality Programmes has been to broaden and deepen the collaboration and to support the democratic development in Central and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Turkey at the local and regional levels. The collaboration put emphasis on knowledge sharing, capacity development, institutional development and economic cooperation.

The objectives of the programme varied somewhat from one year to another. In 2005, 5 points represented the main objectives (Årsrapport 2005):

- 1) A fruitful and stimulating cooperation
- 2) A large number of actors involved within each party
- 3) Projects that lead to sustainable results
- 4) Projects that lead to mutual gains for both parties
- 5) Projects that lead to an overall goal of poverty reduction and support to EU-adaptation.

In 2008 these goals had been polished to (Slutrapport 2009):

- 1) Support those countries that meet challenges in the transformation of governance systems from communism to market economy, increase the possibilities of the

municipalities to realise an effective local governance and local democracy, and support sustainable development and poverty reduction through

- Distribution of Swedish experiences of local governance and local democracy and of local strong municipalities with a broad experience base
 - Support the development of one or several municipalities' crosscutting issues.
- 2) Support the development of new regional organisations through the promotion of interchanges between municipalities through
- Strengthening of the organisation, improved routines on administration, division of responsibilities on different political levels, the creation of arenas for cooperation and the strengthening of the local level vis-à-vis the national.

Projects were to be developed according to the needs of partner countries and with the benefit of the Swedish resource base with gender sensitivity as a main characteristic for the cooperation.

The Case of Belarus; City of Tyresö, Nacka, Halmstad and Bräcke – Baranovichi/Ivacevichi

Background

The cooperation between Baranovichi and the Swedish municipalities started out through a special Swedish Government initiative in 2004/5 to establish twinning programmes with Belarus. It was initially reinforced at national level; later the support was channelled through Sida and then transferred to Sala Ida/SKL-International.

Baranovichi is one example of a Belarusian municipality with many international partners. Mutual visits have been accomplished and cooperation agreements have been signed with the partners from both Sweden and other European countries. Up to the end of 2008, a few projects have been implemented primarily in the educational sphere.

Sala Ida/SKL-International has endorsed projects, during the evaluation period.

The following projects were carried out during the evaluation period:

1. ***Democracy and media in education (Halmstad)***
2. **“The best for the children” (Nacka)**
3. “The best for the children”, tripartite cooperation with Jelgava in Latvia (Nacka)
4. ***Pre-study on potential interchange between high schools (Tyresö)***
5. Pilot study on young law-breakers (Tyresö)
6. Pilot study (Regional Council in Kalmar)
7. Pilot study on partnership with Ivacevichi (Bräcke)

The majority of the supported initiatives were pre-studies as a result of the first initiative made at the national level. Four projects out of the six were sampled out for further evaluation. These are 1, 2, 4 and 5 marked with bold text. Number 3 was studied to the extent possible without visiting Jelgava. Number 6 was not studied due to difficulties in establishing contacts with the Swedish partner and number 7 was partly studied, however not with the Belarusian partner, as the timetable did not allow for a visit to Ivacevichi.

Democracy and media education (Halmstad)

The purpose of the democracy and media education project (Halmstad) was to establish a sustainable cooperation with exchange of knowledge and information between young people in Baranovichi and Halmstad, within the area of media and communication. A student of school no 14 in Baranovichi, who searched the Internet for a partner school in Sweden, initiated the project. At first, the exchange took place through mail and e-mail correspondence. When Sala Ida approached Swedish municipalities to start partnership

programmes with Belarus, the opportunity arose to apply for funds to cover visits in both countries.

The objectives stated for the project are:

- To create a ground for long-term exchange of experiences and knowledge between young people in Baranovichi and Halmstad;
- To increase the knowledge of the conditions in which young people live in each country;
- To spread the information about these conditions amongst the general population, particularly young people;
- Increase the knowledge about journalism, graphic design and photo amongst the students at the partner school.

Results

Output

Most of the output objectives have been fulfilled. The students who took part of the project jointly produced a school paper that was distributed in the respective municipality. Through the work of this paper, different techniques were taught and implemented. The project has included exchange of ideas, knowledge and procedures regarding information gathering and management in its different aspects. Students who took part of the project have confirmed the importance of the knowledge achieved in choosing what fields to study at university.

Also the fulfilment of the first objective to create a sustainable framework for exchange of experiences and knowledge can be argued at the level of outputs, i.e. in the short term of the years in focus (2005-2008). A 3-year contract of cooperation was signed and the projects have been implemented in a continuum. However, the cooperation is still dependent on external funding and the engagement of committed individuals and as the application rounds within the Municipality Partnership Programme have been postponed, this has influenced the collaboration in a negative way.

Outcome

Primary outcomes are the experiences of both students and staff. Students have carried their experiences and knowledge with them to higher studies and engaged in journalistic activities. Capacity development has taken place at both schools. Staffs have acquired insights and experiences of what it is like to work with a school in another country.

Close relations have emerged between the persons involved during the course of the project. The language barrier has been an obstacle, but interpreters have been used and students have shown increased interests in the English language. It is, however, not for certain that the partnership will continue on its own merits, as it is still dependent on external funding (from the MP).

Impact

The presentation of the media school project did not include definitions of any long-term impacts. It can be argued that increased knowledge and experience of the conditions in other countries in itself may lead to the establishment of new ideas and solution to universal challenges. This is, however, extremely difficult to measure and it is too far of a stretch to argue that this has been verified by the current evaluation. The absence of a logic framework approach to activities in relation to the overall goal of the Municipality Partnership Programme makes it impossible to link individual activities to a desired impact.

“The best for the children” (Nacka)

Two projects have been granted funding during the period in focus of this evaluation (2005/0037 and 2006/0116). Both these projects are in the following discussed jointly. The objective of the projects has been to support families and staff within the social service sector. The programme was initiated through a pre-study in 2004 as a result of the Sala-Ida special focus on Belarus. The programme contained several components of which the centre of rehabilitation for children with limited abilities is central. A tri-partite cooperation, which includes Jelgeva in Latvia, has also been developed. As no visits were made to Jelgeva, this cooperation as a whole is not part of the evaluation. Nevertheless, some experiences of the tri-partite programme are accounted for in this report as they strengthen the observations made.

The objectives stated for the projects are:

- To develop methods to support socio-economically vulnerable families with children
- To strengthen families with children through preventive measures
- To increase the capacity among the staff within the social sector in all three municipalities
- To form a strategy for support to socio-economically vulnerable families with children
- To develop an interchange of experiences between the nature schools as a part of the social strategy
- To increase the knowledge of the conditions for socio-economically vulnerable children within the three municipalities

Results

Output

Several trips had been conducted through the projects in which staff and students visited partner municipalities and studied the different activities at focus. Representatives from both municipalities accounted for concrete outputs from these trips. The manager of the Centre for children with limited abilities was eager to learn from other examples, as the policy of rehabilitation and training had only been a reality in Belarus since 2004. Now, education for these children was part of the national policy on education. The visits to Sweden had brought forward several changes in the approach and the activities were now conducted as experiments in Baranovichi, subject to evaluation by the state. Children with special needs took part in integrated classes where they could study together with other children from "the regular schools". The Centre had created a relaxation room where the children with special needs could go for recreation and rest, and a new mechanism of planning and visualising the day for the children had been implemented since the last visit to Sweden. The manager would like to see more exchanges of staff, preferably for a longer period of time so that staff from the two countries could work together and learn on a more daily basis.

The schools and the service centres that had taken part of the programme reported similar accounts. Gymnasium no 4 had established a special partnership with a school (Stavsborgsskolan) in Nacka. A special interest was the organisational set-up of education; i.e. the relationships between the teachers and the civil servants in the municipality. A pedagogic film had been produced between the three partner municipalities (Nacka, Baranovichi, Jelgeva). The film dealt with the challenges and the situation of children in the three countries and it is still used by the different schools in their education. The previously frequent contacts between the schools had halted when the contact person at Gymnasium no 4 had been promoted to become headmaster of another school, but he was now back as headmaster of

Gymnasium no 4 and with a lot of ideas for continued collaborations.

The Swedish component "Nattvandrararna"¹² had been applied in certain areas of Baranovichi. "Nattvandrararna" is an initiative where parents voluntarily patrol the streets at night as a preventive measure to reduce violence and crime among young people. However, it was difficult to attract parents to become volunteers in Baranovichi.

Another area of interest was the environmental work. Baranovichi had created some recycling stations based on a Swedish model and the municipality would like to develop the mechanisms to extract energy out of garbage. There was a lot of focus on energy saving in both countries.

Outcome

Several representatives expressed a desire to continue the cooperation. There were many areas where experience sharing would be beneficial for both parties. At the political level of the municipality, it was considered more important to continue the meetings at the technical level where the programmes were being implemented, rather than at the level of the decision-makers.

Few examples were given where there had been changes at the systematic level. Information sharing among different official authorities, i.e. police, schools, social service etc., had been systematised in a collaboration so that a child with socio-economic vulnerability would only need one contact point with the authorities, through the "Territorial Centre of social service of the population". The national youth organisation had started implementing a project-based approach to their activities, facilitating monitoring and follow-up. Several authorities expressed that partnerships should focus on the young generation "who must form society in their own way".

The evaluator got the impression that the friendly and non-hierarchical way of Swedish municipality authorities and political leaders was appreciated. Especially the "Mayor's"¹³ ... ways of approaching his staff, down to earth and on equal footing, without any loss of their respect for him". The office of the Chairman had glass doors so that everyone could see where and how he worked, which appeared somewhat peculiar to representatives of the partner.

These and other comments made during the interviews clearly indicate that individual representatives have been impressed by the visits. A few arrangements have been made where representatives of the social service sectors have worked with colleagues in the partner municipality. This kind of arrangement is highly appreciated and has become a common element in recent applications.

Impact

Given the assumption that all meetings between different cultures are positive and in the end lead to change, it could be argued that these examples given show indications that such results have been accomplished. However, the evaluators are not prepared to draw such distinct conclusions from these statements neither at the level of outcome nor at the level of impact. Neither do the reports from the Swedish municipality contain any discussion on what the specific activities could influence at these levels.

¹² English: Night watchmen or night wanderers.

¹³ Chairman of the municipal council

Pre-studies on interchange between high schools and on young law-breakers (Tyresö)

Also the municipality of Tyresö applied for two projects (2008/0094 and 2008/0101). Both projects were pre-studies, which included mutual visits to Baranovichi and Tyresö municipalities. The objective of the pre-studies was to identify areas for cooperation as a result of the Sala-Ida special focus on Belarus. Two focus areas were chosen:

“The exploring child”

The focus is based on a pedagogical method to support children’s own desire to collect information and acquire knowledge. The purpose was to develop this method and share experiences on areas such as:

- Mentoring artistic and cultural work inspired by different European traditions
- Discussions and exchange of ideas between colleagues within the educational sector
- Mentoring and development of reading and writing - learning processes
- Collaboration between schools and municipal social services

“Young law-breakers”

The focus is based on a model that was developed in Tyresö targeting young law-breakers in which the social services collaborate closely with the municipal court system. The purpose of the project was to share experiences from the work of this model and to mutually increase the competence and knowledge among the staff. The pre-study would also discuss and develop methods for how to measure results of the cooperation.

Results

Output

The results of the project were similar (and sometimes the same) as the once presented under the previous project (“the best for the children”). The Swedish municipality Nacka had also started its partnership with Baranovichi a few years earlier than Tyresö. It can be added that the learning process was an area of interest for many schools. Especially the methods to study foreign languages were assessed as important, considering Belarus contact needs with other countries. Pedagogic measures to support disabled children were implemented and cultural interchanges had been important also as a study of different solutions to the way society is structured. An example of the latter was the impressions of the Tyresö model for how to address the issue of young law-breakers. A few attempts have been made to adopt components of the model in Baranovichi. The collaboration between the local authorities had increased. A few call centres had been tried for children in need to talk to adults (based on the model of Swedish BRIS). Future performances and study trips could be considered to deepen the collaboration.

Outcome

As with the other cases the more subtle comments are perhaps the most significant type of influences that the mutual visits have produced. A visit to the Nobel Peace Museum in Stockholm led to an intense discussion on the freedom of speech. The importance of exposing the young generation to different ideas was highlighted. Nevertheless, there are not enough tangible examples to allow for conclusions of fulfilment of goals at the outcome level. Although not part of the mandate for this evaluation, one interesting feature to look into might be the recent project proposal submitted by Tyresö, which includes an attempt to connect the different components of the two programmes into an overall focus to improve administrative routines and procedures in the city as a whole.

Impact

As for the previously reported cases, the linkages between activities and results at the output and impact levels are weak. There are many examples of improved municipal services. The question is to what extent such improvements automatically lead to democracy? This question is elaborated below in the discussion on overall programme objectives.

Pilot study on partnership with Ivacevichi (Bräcke)

Representatives of Bräcke Municipality took part in the same visit to Baranovichi as the other Swedish municipalities. As Bräcke is a small municipality in a region characterised by forests and wildlife, there was a special interest to work with a municipality with similar conditions. The municipality of Ivacevichi, close to Baranovichi, was chosen as a partner and a project proposal was developed for how to collaborate around forestry; “from plants to planks (boards)”. No other visits have been made since the first common visit. The explanation given was that the Belarusian partner had not come back with responses to the proposal as agreed.

Bräcke had previously had a project in Mongolia with focus on poverty reduction and heating in schools. When the priorities for Swedish development cooperation were shifted, the project had to be terminated. This caused some disappointment in Bräcke, as there were many tangible results to poverty reduction in Mongolia. Belarus was not defined as a poor country and the issue of Human Rights was a much more difficult component to work with in a project, especially since the Belarusian partner claimed to live in a fully developed democratic country. No activities have been implemented since the first pre-study and the evaluators had no possibility to visit Ivacevichi. Consequently the discussion about results cannot be made. The Municipal Council in Bräcke had, however, committed to maintain the contacts in Belarus. The administration would continue to discuss with ICLD how to proceed.

Summary/Conclusions

The objectives of the MPCE have varied from year to year, which has made it even more difficult to identify a logical framework. The original objectives formulated in the programme documents from 2005 were, perhaps not surprisingly, fulfilled as they were set at a quite modest level. A fruitful and stimulating cooperation, with mutual gains for both parties, has emerged between Baranovichi and the Swedish partners, a large number of actors have been involved within each party and some sustainable results have been detected. Some examples can even be said to have contributed to the overall goal of poverty reduction and support to EU-adaptation, although the later must be seen through a very long-term perspective.

The objectives presented in later project documents are a bit more substantial. The objectives to increase the possibilities of the municipalities to realise effective local governance and to support sustainable development and poverty reduction have been targeted through the distribution of Swedish experiences of local governance and of local strong municipalities with a broad experience base. Support to the development of one or several municipalities' cross-cutting issues have also been a common feature. The question of local democracy, however, and the objective to support those countries that met challenges in the transformation of governance systems from communism to market economy, requires a more elaborated response.

It is no secret that the main objective of the Swedish country strategy for Belarus, established in 2007, is to strengthen people's awareness of and possibility to claim their rights and thereby create the conditions for a future development towards democracy and rights based

governance. A central focus is set at enabling Belarusian citizens and organisations to establish broad networks and relations with the surrounding world, primarily Sweden and the European Union.

It is probable that the projects have contributed to system change. However, it cannot be established to what extent. It has been difficult to follow the linkages from project input to outcome and impact in the projects that were studied. Perhaps it is not desirable to explicitly expose those linkages, considering that democracy and human rights are delicate matters to discuss openly in Belarus. Yet, a limited focus on the strengthening of the administration and municipal services risk to have an opposite effect to system change. There have been no visible results regarding the division of responsibilities on different political levels and the strengthening of the local level vis-à-vis the national. Neither have there been any visible results on the development of new regional organisations through the promotion of interchanges between municipalities, although tripartite programmes have helped to improve routines on administration and to create arenas for cooperation.

Generally, the projects appear to have been successful in a number of respects, with emphasis on output on the Belarusian side. On the Swedish side, many of the results are more subtle. That does not mean that they are absent. A general difficulty is that the results of the cooperation cannot easily be expressed in tangible results. Partly this is an intrinsic problem in the area of cultural exchange. Below is an attempt to account for some of the most concrete results detected by the evaluation.

Table 5.

Results chain	Objective	Result
Impact	Democracy	Possible, but not enough established links to determine
		<p>Access to municipal services improved</p> <p>Observations made by participants leading to shift of mind-set and change in long term. "Young people growing up with other influences may lead to other ways of organising things"</p> <p>Must be the right person to bring back the idea for a long-term systematic change to happen. Theory of Change.</p> <p>Note: Not enough deliberate results to determine that the programmes have had an effect on democracy.</p>
Outcome	System Change / integration	Probable in the long-term, but not enough established links to determine
		<p>Observations of local democratic structure and governance, made by participants of the project.</p> <p>Visits with NGOs left lasting impressions; "the engines of societal change"</p> <p>Systematic changes in how certain topics or projects are addressed.</p>
	Partnership / capacity building	Yes, concrete examples

		Many examples of how to treat children with difficult home environments. Social investigation improved. Foster parents professional. Strengthened students in their search for information Should have exchange programme for students – studying together universal subjects such as math
	Lasting relationships	Yes, at the moment
		Wish to strengthen partnerships Work exchange Renewed applications
	Reciprocity	Yes, to some extent
		Members of delegations from both municipalities testified that meetings have opened their eyes for people in other countries; "no longer our enemies" Students of both municipalities testified that meetings have opened their eyes for people in other countries; "they are not different"
Outputs and Activities	Contributed to the local levels strengthened its capacity?	Yes, concrete examples
		Delegation visited a partner municipality and achieved a sense of understanding for the realities for that partner Observation of learning processes important. How to improve language skills with help of pedagogic tools also outside of English classes School paper was made with the help of latest technology. About 10 students and their teachers have visited a partner municipality and achieved a sense of understanding for the realities of that partner.

Subtle examples from the case study illustrate that there might be linkages between activities and overall objectives. However, assumptions of why certain activities would lead to desired outcomes and impacts are not explicitly explained.

Municipal Partnership North-South 2005-2009

The Municipal Partnership North-South was introduced in 2005 as a new concept for cooperation between municipalities. New elements included an opportunity for municipalities to apply for funding for management and coordination as well as an increased emphasis on mutual benefits. In addition to managing the programme, SALAR/SKL International was trusted increased responsibility for information activities, building networks, matchmaking and support to the participating municipalities¹⁴.

The Municipal Partnership Programme North-South (MPNS) was phased out in 2009. The programme included 68 partnerships in 11 countries, including South Africa, which a specific regional programme within the MPNS. In total, 265 projects (MPNS Global 165 and MPNS

¹⁴ "However, due to scarcity of funds, Sida financed the proactive work to a lesser degree during 2008-2009. Ref. MPNS Final Report 2005-2009, SKL International.

South Africa 100) were completed in the programme by the 68 partnerships.

Programme goal and objectives

The overall goal of the Municipal Partnership North-South Programme was to contribute to poverty reduction in countries selected for municipal partnership cooperation. The countries were selected by Sida, based on principles not easily identified by the evaluators. Alongside with the goal of poverty reduction the programme included two objectives.

1. The programme would facilitate meetings and value-added cooperation between local government structures in Sweden and the selected countries,
2. The programme would contribute to the creation of long-term relations between local partners in Sweden and in the cooperating partner countries.

In the programme there was a strict geographical delimitation in terms of countries eligible for Sida-financed cooperation with Swedish actors. The primary aim with the delimitation was to concentrate on countries where a sufficient critical mass could be reached. The intention was to offer opportunities for broad and qualitative cooperation.¹⁵

Application Rounds

During the programme period SKL International administered 10 application rounds in total, 7 of which included MPNS South Africa. The tables below give an overview of the total number of applying, approved and finalised as well as cancelled projects for the application period November 2005 to August 2008.

Table 6.

	Applications	Granted	Finalised	Cancelled
MPNS Global	230	174	165	9
MPNS South Africa	128	104	100	4

In total, 358 applications were received during the programme period (for MPNS Global and South Africa). 278 applications were approved and 265 projects were implemented. During the period 13 projects were cancelled¹⁶. The last application rounds were administered in 2008. Thee Municipal Partnership programmes were subsequently transferred to ICLD.

Participating partnerships

The MPNS programme had three funding categories:

- Funding of an Inception phase, a maximum of SEK 200 000
- Funding of a Municipal Partnership/Management and Coordination subsidy, a maximum of SEK 250 000 per year
- Funding of Projects, a maximum of SEK 450 000

A partnership normally started with an inception in order to enable the participating municipalities to meet and establish common grounds and set priorities for the future cooperation. The inception phase allowed municipal/regional officials as well as politicians to visit the other participating municipality. The inception phase was intended to result in more detailed project proposals. The programme then financed the projects separately. To bridge the geographical gap, a management and coordination subsidy was made available. This

¹⁵ Most municipalities which have been involved in partnerships expressed an understanding for this intention, according to MPNS Final report, *ibid*.

¹⁶ Reasons given are that: ” the projects never started because of staff turn-over or due to changes in the will of the cooperating partners.” MPNS Final Report *ibid*.

subsidy was used to cover costs for meetings and associated travels for the municipal coordinators and the management and coordination committee members.

The split into three different funding categories can be discussed. Management of a project is normally included in the individual project; management of several projects could consequently be financed through the different project budgets.

The finalised projects were distributed as follows:

Table 7.

Project Categories	Global	South Africa	Total
Inception	30	6	36
Management and Coordination	51	22	73
Project	84	72	156
<i>TOTAL</i>	165	100	265

Of the 156 finalised projects, the three most dominating themes were Environment (39), Local governance & local government administration (28) and Education (21).

The Case of City of Gothenburg – Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM)

General

The cooperation between the two cities started in the mid-nineties. It was initially reinforced at national level; later the support was channelled through Sida and then transferred to SALA IDA/SKL International.

The cooperation has been continuous and included up to 2009 altogether about twenty projects in different areas. Common denominators for the two cities are the big ports and the automotive industry. The two cities have also found that there are experiences to share regarding segregation and empowerment.

The Partnership was and is led by a management committee consisting of representatives from the two municipalities. The NMBM part of the committee consists of both politicians and municipal staffs, whereas the Gothenburg part consists of municipal officers only.

Projects have been endorsed by the management committee and SALA IDA/SKL International, during the evaluation period. The programme is led by two programme coordinators, South African and Swedish respectively. The projects are complemented by a management component.

Projects carried out during the evaluation period were

1. **Peer Help Project**
2. **Community Culture**
3. Youth Clinics
4. Air Quality Management
5. **Waste Management**
6. **Inner City Planning**

Four projects out of the six have been sampled out for further evaluation. These are 1, 2, 5 and 6, marked with bold text.

Peer Help

The purpose of the Peer Help Project is to strengthen capacity for implementing and sustaining peer help programmes (PHP) at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) and the University of Gothenburg (GU). The project is a continuation of earlier peer help initiatives by the two universities¹⁷. A guiding vision is that everybody should have equal rights to education. Everybody should have a good learning environment, regardless of background.

The objectives stated are:

1. To further establish NMMU's and GU's respective roles in peer helping;
2. To establish GU as leader in the development of peer helping as an integrated, holistic support system for students by students, and
3. To consolidate PHP's by jointly identifying and developing core competences required.

Results

Output

Most of the output objectives have been fulfilled. The project has included exchange of ideas, knowledge and procedures regarding peer help in its different aspects. A number of training workshops also involving a wider community have been carried out. A number of open house arrangements and cultural events have been carried out in new teaching methods introduced and implemented.

Outcome

Primary outcomes are that students are actually given support. Staff at both universities has acquired deeper knowledge and insights to maintain PHP's in higher education. Capacity development has taken place at both universities.

During the project close relations have developed with the persons involved. Both parties have worked to sustain their PHP's and further establishing themselves as PHP leaders in their respective environments, through development of staff and education materials.

As an already advanced partner at the start of the exchange, the NMMU has taken the lead during the process, while the GU partner has been able to gradually upgrade its PHP's. The PHP has been consolidated an ability and maintenance of PHP's.

Impact

The PHP focuses on providing opportunities to young people to realise what they can do for themselves. The programme intends to contribute to self-realisation, empowerment, increased participation of the students in their education and growth, taking more responsibility for their academic and social environment.

Community Culture

The idea underpinning the partnership is that artistic and cultural expression can help strengthening people's self-image and knowledge in a number of areas. Art can serve as an engine to increase society's knowledge in anything from waste management to HIV/Aids, and

¹⁷ The universities in both countries are national bodies. It can thus be argued that support to university students is not a municipality business. Also, there are other funding opportunities for this type of projects. The response from both partners is that they apply a pragmatic approach; the students take part in a municipality context.

also create sources of income for people in poor areas.

The purpose stated is

- 1) To build a cultural centre for the population of Gelvandale, a township in Port Elisabeth
- 2) To increase the cultural activities at Frölunda Cultural House.

Results

Output

Most of the output objectives have been fulfilled.

Exchange of knowledge regarding the partner countries has been carried out in different ways: A number of open house arrangements and cultural events have been carried out in Gelvandale.

New teaching methods introduced and implemented.

Outcome

Some of the results presented can be classified as primary outcomes, being stages before a secondary impact in subsequent stages/phases affecting ultimate target groups. Such primary outcome(s) are:

The Gelvandale Cultural Centre has been officially inaugurated.

The puppet theatre has been introduced as a new means of expression in subjects as HIV/Aids, criminality and environment. A puppet theatre group has performed plays on these subjects.

Handicraft groups have been constituted, which generate income for the women of Gelvandale. The knowledge is intended to spread to new groups to help them earn an income. Jewellery and textiles are exposed and sold on local markets

Frölunda Kulturhus/Culture House has been developed, applying experiences from Gelvandale.

Secondary outcome(s) are that culture has generally been made more available in Gelvandale. The project has included exchange of ideas and knowledge regarding cultural centres, development of handicraft culture, through courses, handbooks and marketing knowledge. Thus, capacity development at local level has taken place.

During the project close relations have developed with the persons involved.

There is reciprocity when it comes to

- The cultural centres – exchange of ideas etc.
- The cultural exchange as such – inspiration on both sides.

Impact

The idea of the project is to strengthen people's self-image and knowledge and thus empower them to tackle their own situation. The project can point at income generated through the activities and also at some spin off effects in this respect.

Waste Management

The project purpose is benchmarking: to analyse and compare customer care systems within Waste Management Services between the two cities. Benchmarking is conducted by comparing processes and systems, identifying strengths and weaknesses and providing both parties with knowledge regarding the design and improvement of the systems.

Performance parameters for continuous measurement analysis and follow up of the Waste Management Services and Customer Care have been identified.

Focus of the project is to improve Customer Care Services to the residents of the two municipalities through the process of benchmarking. Among the components are the introduction of cooperatives for waste management and customer care in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality. The cooperation has existed since long before the Partnership arrangement was introduced.

Results

Output

Results are more tangible on the NMBM side than on the Gothenburg side, as output performance has been visibly improved in terms of cleaner environment into the communities etc.

Outcome

In NMBM Customer Care was introduced, and the small offices and cooperatives have quickly adopted successful waste management processes. The cooperatives have been a way to make solutions sustainable, measures have been put in place.

In Gothenburg the thrust has been on development of procedures and learning from the South African Partner. Investments in techniques have been made on top of the partnership contribution.

Generally, the two partners have achieved better and better administered waste handling and better communication procedures with customers.

Impact

The Waste Management Partnership has been a way to improve quality of life for the customers. This impact can indirectly be measured through the customer care follow up procedures.

On the South African side, the establishing of cooperatives for waste management has meant that individuals have been involved in concrete business, collecting regular income and thus improved to their situation. Cooperatives have contributed to poverty alleviation.

Inner City Planning

As the other projects studied, this project has its roots in a relationship that has existed since long.

The project focuses on co-operation, knowledge and information sharing with regard to inner city planning and development. During the period evaluated the project has dealt with strategic issues with regard to mechanisms for private sector mobilisation for inner city development, unlocking potential for housing development and management and evaluation of existing infrastructure regarding its impact on the inner city.

Results

Output

Various themes regarding inner city planning have been discussed with the project teams and conclusions have been drawn from comparisons.

Outcome

Visible results from the cooperation are difficult to see, as the outcome has been mainly the

sharing of knowledge and ideas. However, lessons learned and recommendations for the future have been compiled and presented in a joint report from the project cooperation.

Impact

The ultimate objective of city planning is benefit to the society. Although difficult to establish in a shorter-term perspective, the intended impact is a better city to live in for the inhabitants of the two municipalities and for companies to work in, including maximised opportunities in the inner city areas.

Summary/Conclusions

Generally, the partnership between the Municipalities of Nelson Mandela Bay and Gothenburg appears to have been successful in a number of respects. The most obvious and manifest result pointed at is the Cultural Centre of Gelvandale, constituted during the period of cooperation. The partnership has been instrumental in the development, to what degree cannot be assessed. On the Swedish – Gothenburg – side, many of the results are subtler. That does not mean that they are absent. A general difficulty is that the results of the cooperation cannot easily be expressed in tangible results. Partly this is an intrinsic problem in the area of cultural exchange.

Table 8. Case of NMBM-Gothenburg Partnership 2005-2009

Results chain	Objective / Approach (evaluation question)	Compliance rate / indicators
Impact	Poverty reduction	It is probable that the programme will contribute to poverty reduction.
		Through the empowerment of children, women (cultural project), students (PHP) and community members (waste management cooperatives); Inner city planning aiming at sustainable living for citizens.
Outcome	System Change ¹⁸ / integration	
	Partnership / capacity building	Certain concrete examples
		PHP's sustained; Establishment of Cultural Centre, puppet theatre and handicraft groups; Establishment of development units and mechanisms for city planning
	Lasting relationships	Yes, with reservations
		Competition with other priorities for both parties; Withdrawal of funding will most probably decrease legitimacy
	Reciprocity	Yes
		Benefits as expressed by both parties
Outputs and Activities	Expressed delivery capacity	Yes
		Expressed in terms of workshops, training activities etc. in all projects

¹⁸ Commented on in conclusion (not objective in North-South Programme).

Conclusions

The MPNS final report gives a comprehensive account on the results of that programme, whereas the MPCE final report is briefer. The summary tables enclosed to the two reports provide an exposition of the results at partnership and project level. Observations made in the tables cover a broad range from intentions to activities carried out in the projects. Results in terms of outcomes are mentioned in a number of cases. It is assessed that the cases studied in this evaluation provide relevant examples of the partnership programmes in terms of content and procedures.

The series of articles about the municipality partnership programs, presented by the Swedish newspaper “Svenska Dagbladet” in 2009, has been studied in detail and taken into account when producing the final report. The articles paint a rather gloomy picture when it comes to lasting results of the projects. The consultants have no reason to question the information given in the articles. However, the journalists did not dig very deep into the projects, nor did they apply any systematic methodological approach, and it is thus not possible to draw systematic conclusions from their examples alone. The examples of projects with limited results of “a school paper” or “a study trip” may very well be cases with insufficient outputs. They could also be examples of projects where the questions asked were too limited to really get to the more complicated level of output and impact. Some of the examples studied by the evaluators could reinforce another explanation, namely that the level of understanding the objective of the programmes was insufficient. Either way, it can be concluded that the programme logic and the conceptions underpinning the programme have not been sufficiently implemented nor communicated. The individual projects studied in this assignment show fulfilment of objectives in varying degree.

A) Contributed to poverty reduction?

i)

It can be argued as probable that many of the projects *will* contribute – and in some instances already have contributed - to poverty reduction.

ii)

It can be argued as probable that many of the projects are in the process of contributing to poverty reduction, mainly through empowerment and attention to the situation of poor people in planning and implementation. To what extent, volume and depth is not possible to establish. The projects provide good examples from which experiences can be extracted.

iii)

The projects in the case study are representative also in the variety of themes covered in the programme. Three of the four projects studied in depth focus the empowerment of individuals, whereas the fourth project – inner city planning – focuses long term welfare for the citizens.

B) Promoted system changes

i)

Based on the examples studied in Belarus, it is not probable that the programme Eastern and Central Europe Municipal Partnership has promoted the systematic changes.

ii)

Some examples of improved administrative routines and collaboration within the civil administration can be highlighted, but it is unlikely that these results can have any major impact on the system as a whole.

iii)

However, there is a potential in developing the different projects at the level of the municipality and with the support of ICLD and Sida/MFA.

C) Strengthening / capacity developed the local level?

i)

The municipal partnership programmes have most certainly contributed to strengthened capacity at local level.

ii)

Increased efficiency in the system and strengthened skills among the staff are a few examples. Based on e.g. the conversations held in Baranovichi, the civil servants and staff at local implementing agencies seem to be eager to adopt new ideas on how to structure and implement the mandates of their organisations.

iii)

Those projects that have included a mutual exchange of staff working at the partner municipality seem to have acquired most capacity development. To what extent this capacity development lead to the fulfilment of outcome objectives is not as clear.

D) Resulted in lasting relationships?

i)

The municipal partnership programmes have resulted in a number of so far lasting relationships between municipalities in Sweden and in partner countries to the extent that these partners have signed agreements and memorandums of understanding. However, a durable relationship, in the understanding that the cooperation between the municipalities in question continues even after the funding of cooperation had ended, is not to be achieved with certainty.

ii)

Most projects are dependent on external funding. Attempts have in some cases been made to acquire EU-funds, with varying degree of success, although such funds cannot cover 100% of

the costs. The transformation of the programme and the shift of implementing agencies have led to cancelled rounds of application. The results of the postponements have, as expressed by the projects been cancelled projects and loss of capacity in both Swedish as well as partner municipalities.

iii)

Programmes and projects with higher probability to sustain appear to be characterised by some kind of institutionalisation, in terms of agreements and/or formalised arrangements.

E) Been mutual?

i)

Swedish actors have stated their own objectives to be increased awareness of the surrounding world among the citizens, increased knowledge among staff etc. Many results have been reported for these objectives.

ii)

Poverty reduction and system change on the other hand basically target the municipality to the Swedish partner. However, the NMBN/Gothenburg cases of culture development and peer help illustrate benefit also on the Swedish side in terms of empowerment and fight against segregation. Generally, there is an inherent contradiction in the objectives of reciprocity and of poverty reduction and system change in the partner municipality.

iii)

Competition with other tasks may hamper fulfilment of project activities. The higher the pressure from other prioritised tasks, the more difficult it will be to carry out project intentions.

A general feature in the projects is that impacts are not easily established. A main problem with the result account is the difficulties to aggregate results at a level above the individual project. One important reason is that observations of results appear not to have been made in categories possible to retrieve, systematise and reduce to more generalised findings. Initiatives have been taken in a broad range covering very varied themes. A common denominator of these themes is that they all include responsibilities of Swedish local/regional authorities. The programme has thus been based on the perception that Swedish Municipalities and County Councils are highly competent in the relevant fields. Generally, the implemented projects aimed at initiating change processes¹⁹. They were not focused on achieving short-term or more immediate results on the ground, apart from knowledge exchange through workshops etc. Furthermore, the intention and ambition was to share and reflect upon experiences from local governance and from meeting the public demand for local governance, service delivery and development, rather than imposing the Swedish tradition of local governance. Thus, while the activities carried out have been concrete, the expected effects tend not to be visible in the short-term. During the programme period no programme evaluation has been carried out. The main reason given is that the agreement between SALAR and Sida did not demand such an evaluation. As stated above – and as illustrated by the case studies - it is probable that many of the partnerships have produced a positive outcome and that some of them will contribute to

¹⁹ As stated in the MPNS final report. Ibid.

an impact in terms of democratic governance. However, results in terms of outcome and impact of the two programmes are very difficult to evaluate with any degree of certainty. Main reasons for the difficulties to evaluate results are that

- Objectives are not expressed in terms of results that are possible to follow up and evaluate
- Results have thus not been possible to follow up systematically.

Another line of explanation to the difficulties to substantiate results of the programmes is that the policy context of the programmes is still not well known among many of the Swedish partners. According to an evaluation of municipality partnerships in 2005 (As mentioned in above Section Programme Logic) the municipalities expressed both that they were little informed about the Swedish development cooperation policy and the demands from Sida, and that they were interested in learning more. It is remarkable that this remains as a state of the arts. Few actors find that they are familiar with the Policy for Global Development, as verified by the responses to the survey carried out in this evaluation.

A programme management with responsibility to monitor achievement of overall goals of democracy, system change and poverty reduction is by definition in a position to support the implementing agencies in formulating objectives. For whatever reason, this position has not been taken advantage of. Consequently, there are missed opportunities in the strategic guidance of individual partnerships towards a more comprehensive approach on democratisation and poverty reduction within the framework of Swedish development cooperation in targeted partner countries

To conclude:

At a principal level, the impact objectives of the two programmes are expressed in very general terms. To achieve these objectives guidance would have been necessary e.g. in terms of indicators of achievement and results in a policy context. Such guidance has been missing. Assumptions of why certain activities would lead to desired outcomes and impacts are not explicitly explained. Failure to understand the linkages and the potential that lie within, can lead to missed opportunities – at best. A worst-case scenario would be partnership programmes that strengthen an administration technically, while ignoring the needs for systematic change. The granting agency should exercise a much larger role in supporting the municipalities in their understanding of the overall objective; lessons learned from system change and democracy building.

Many of the Swedish partners – in particular municipalities – have shown not to be well informed about the Swedish policy for international cooperation. They have expressed more knowledge and dialogue with the responsible actors. The quality in applications is uneven and sometimes poor, due to lack of knowledge regarding requirements for taking part in the programmes. This lack of knowledge has contributed to a time consuming process when evaluating the applications. Furthermore, the knowledge among the Swedish partners in planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects is uneven and sometimes poor. Thus continuous monitoring and assessment activities have been difficult to carry out. The responsibility for poor monitoring, poor results, and in many cases results close to impossible to evaluate, largely falls on programme management.

The most important results found in the case studies are associated with learning and development of good practices in the projects. The logical framework expressing the

overarching objectives of the two programmes represents a very blunt tackle that does not catch these more process-oriented results. This is an important value to be taken care of; see under recommendations below.

Recommendations

The lessons learnt from this evaluation, together with experiences from evaluations of partnerships in an international context, strongly support two lines of arguments to be taken into account when choosing the way forward:

- Local democracy is a necessary component in the work to fulfil the Millennium Goals, foremost poverty eradication.
- Municipality partnerships have to adhere to certain principles regarding mutual needs, project management and monitoring.

Promote local democracy and local governance to fight poverty in the programme logic

Decentralised cooperation is acknowledged as one of the main strategies for achieving the eighth Millennium Development Goal²⁰. This goal, among other targets, aims at promoting commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction through partnerships and collaboration. It is a means for creating mutually rewarding and enduring North-South cooperation, promoting sustainable development.

It is strongly recommended that the municipal partnership programme apply a bottom-up approach through institutional, social and grass roots arrangements between municipalities and other local institutions. If based on common interests and needs rather than the opinions of the different parties in conflict, decentralised cooperation also can play an essential role in promoting conflict resolution and peace building.

Safeguard principles for successful results in the partnership cooperation, based on international experiences

There are clearly certain principles to adhere to, to increase the probability of a successful partnership.²¹ These first and foremost include the safeguarding of reciprocity, the matching of demands and offerings and well-structured commitment on both sides. Furthermore, application of result-based management in its widened sense is particularly important to secure in a context where the meaning of “good results” of a project has to be agreed upon by the cooperating partners.

Define programme objectives in terms that are possible to follow up and make achieved results visible

To be accepted for grants, all projects should in principle have clearly formulated objectives in terms that are possible to follow up at satisfactory level. However, it is observed that many of the projects have difficulties in showing results in terms of outcome. As pointed out, this is

²⁰ See e.g. Contribution of Decentralized Cooperation to Decentralization in Africa, *ibid.*

²¹ See section *Lessons learned from other partnership studies.*

partly explained by objectives that are to openly formulated, in other words not offering useful indicators for follow-up and evaluation. Notwithstanding, it is also noted that there may be difficulties to show a specific outcome corresponding to programme objectives. Complicating factors are time elapsed, other on-going development work, the nature of cooperation which may be “soft-ware oriented”, containing long-term changes in values and attitudes etc. Another problem is that knowledge regarding programme logic and development cooperation policy is low, as pointed out by many of the participants in the previous partnership programmes.

Over-arching goals as poverty alleviation and system changes are evidently desirable to achieve, but the road towards the achievement of these goals is not always evident. This problem can be approached in several ways. One approach is to define programme objectives in terms that make “under-way” results visible and acknowledge qualitative results showing that projects are moving in a beneficial and constructive direction. It is recommended that measures be elaborated on by ICLD, but they would possibly concern the understanding of context, inclusion of strategic actors/beneficiaries, application of adequate monitoring systems and linking to other projects, development of procedures and good governance as well as to a more general local development strategy. Examples of more “intertwined” results are given in the case studies. A waste management development project could deliver good business results, empowerment and better social security for the actors, integration in the local community, understanding the value of good governance etc. Other ways of approaching the problem of closing the gap between over-arching goals and monitoring of measurable results are mentioned below.

Concentrate on fewer thematic areas and countries

ICLD should consider a concentration to a few thematic areas or rather perspectives. These could e.g. concentrate to

- a) Democratic governance at local level
- b) Local environment

By emphasising “perspective” the concrete content of the individual cooperation can be left flexible; the determining factor would be the connection to the perspective. The thematic areas should be linked to Swedish country strategies in the different countries respectively.

Offer partnership programmes of two kinds

It is suggested that two different programmes be offered to the municipal actors.

- (A) One programme with thrust on professional cooperation. In this programme, demands should be high in terms of preparations, professional input, structure and management of the granted projects. To be accepted for grants from Programme A, projects applications should provide reliable and relevant information *inter alia* regarding context, connection with Swedish development cooperation policy, partners, links to programmes at higher level including country strategies, and intended results related to these programmes and strategies.
- (B) One programme geared towards more open cooperation between the partners. This programme will have lower demands on results. This programme will be geared towards municipalities and other actors which are new to development cooperation and which have an interest in trying partnerships. To be accepted for grants from

Programme B the demands on project applications can be set lower, in terms of measurable results. Participation in Programme B could be an entrance to Programme A. Also, a tripartite cooperation could be considered, in which actors from Programme A would support actors from Programme B.

There is much to gain in forming more long-term relationships with the municipalities that are well underway in implementing their projects. The goal should then be to establish framework partnerships covering longer periods (e.g. ten years) with actors from programme A (similar to the ones Sida has established with non-governmental organisations). The role of ICLD should in these cases be more of a guiding partner, with focus on democracy and poverty reduction and supporting international theory and policy, methodology development etc.

Strengthen application review procedures

In line with the above, the information required in the application should be formalised as to intended results, context and monitoring of the project, in order to facilitate evaluation of the application. Redundant and repeated information should be put at a minimum level. Every application should principally be reviewed by at least two persons, in order to ascertain quality, reliability and transparency in the evaluation process. As before, the prepared evaluation of the application should be presented to a committee, making the final grant decision.

Emphasise demands on applications and final results in the role of ICLD

It is suggested that the forms and format for monitoring of the projects from ICLD be changed towards emphasis on the final results. The role of ICLD would then to apply high demands on application documents and scrutiny of achieved results of projects carried out. Monitoring of the on-going process, carried out activities and delivered outputs would not be a responsibility of ICLD.

Include Swedish Embassies in Programme

The Swedish Embassies concerned should be continuously up-dated and well informed about the on-going programmes, in order to be able to coordinate with other development cooperation, as well as facilitating contacts with Sweden, including visa applications etc.

Support applying and granted partners

Support to applicants and granted partners could be provided by ICLD in two areas

a) Programme logic

The need from the participants in the municipalities should be met with training and information measures from ICLD. The evaluators leave to ICLD regarding concrete measures; possibly a combination of training workshops and easily downloaded information would be included.

b) Monitoring and evaluation procedures

A general demand on granted partnerships should be basic knowledge in result-based management. ICLD should consider offering partnership participants an RBM certificate.

Enforce ICLD evaluation and learning

ICLD *evaluation procedures* regarding individual partnerships and *learning* procedures regarding successful partnerships should reflect programme objectives and be linked together. There is a potential when it comes to acquire information regarding “best practices” in project management and capacity building in the partnerships. In the evaluation procedures, questions regarding e.g. applied methods in projects etc.

Annex 1 Terms of Reference

Utvärdering av Programmet Kommunalt Partnerskap

Det finns externa krav från riksdag, regering och Sida att utveckla förmågan att redovisa effekterna av utvecklingssamarbetet och att sprida erfarenheterna av vilka insatser som fungerar bäst under olika omständigheter. Programmen *Kommunalt Partnerskap Nord-Syd* och *Kommunalt Partnerskap Öst- och Centraleuropa* var Sidafinansierade samarbetsformer som genom resultatnriktade projekt skulle bidra till kommunal och regional verksamhet i prioriterade samarbetsländer. Enligt Sidas avtal med SKL/SALA IDA skall programmen Kommunalt Partnerskap Nord-Syd och Kommunalt Partnerskap Öst- och Centraleuropa utvärderas efter slutgenomförande och rapportering till Sida. Slutrapporteringen av programmen skedde i slutet av 2009 och i början av 2010.

Syfte

Det övergripande syftet med föreliggande ToR är att formulera utgångspunkterna för en systematisk och tematiskt inriktad utvärdering av programmen Kommunalt Partnerskap Nord-Syd och Kommunalt Partnerskap Öst- och Centraleuropa och de projekt som ingått i programmen under åren 2005-2008. Utvärderingen skall ta fasta på hur väl de olika projekten uppnått programmets mål, särskilt belysa projektens hållbarhet, ömsesidighet och programmets utvecklingspotential. Utvärderingen skall vidare säga något om huruvida de kommunala partnerskapen generellt bidragit till fattigdomsbekämpning genom att stärka/kapacitetsutveckla den lokala nivån. Utvärderingen skall utöver detta säga något om programmets potential att bidra till att främja utvecklingen av såväl lokal demokrati som en effektiv, öppen och väl fungerande förvaltning på regional och lokal nivå. (Policy för demokratisk utveckling och mänskliga rättigheter inom svenskt utvecklingssamarbete 2010-2014).

Sammanfattningsvis har utvärderingen två syften: 1) Att ge ICLD kunskap om utfallet, relevansen, kostnadseffektiviteten samt långsiktigheten i de båda programmen: 2) Ge underlag till hur en förändring av riktlinjerna för programmet kan utformas.

Bakgrund

De kommunala partnerskapsprogrammen har sedan starten år 2005 genomgått ett antal förändringar. Initialt fanns ett program för Östeuropa och Centralasien samt ett som riktade sig till övriga världen, numera finns endast ett program och nya samarbetsländer har tillkommit efterhand. Mellan år 2005 och 2008 drevs de kommunala partnerskapen av SKL:s dotterbolag SALA IDA, (numera SKL International) och totalt har 397 projekt för 113 mkr beviljats inom ramen för de båda programmen Kommunalt Partnerskap Nord-Syd (265 projekt) samt Kommunalt Partnerkap Öst- och Centraleuropa (132 projekt).

De kommunala partnerskapsprogrammen är en fördjupning och utvidgning av de s.k. vänortsarbetena som pågått sedan 1991. Under perioden 1993 till 2001 uppgick Sidas stöd till kommunsamarbete till 145 mkr fördelat på 450 olika projekt.

I dagsläget är det 20 länder som kan ingå samarbete med svenska kommuner inom ramen för programmet (partnerskap bedrivs för närvarande i 14 länder). Ytterligare en förändring är att projekten tidsmässigt kan variera från ett till tre år. Nya riktlinjer antogs av Sida år 2008 i

samband med ovan nämnda förändringar och det faktum att ansvaret för programmet överfördes till ICLD 2009.

Uppdraget

Utvärderingen skall inkludera en utförlig beskrivning av programteorin eller logiken bakom de studerade programmen. En tydlig åtskillnad skall göras av utvärderaren mellan resultaten av utvärderingen vad gäller input, aktiviteter, outputs, outcome, och om tillämpligt, impact. I anbudet skall det anges hur konsulten avser att verifiera resultaten på olika nivåer i resultatkedjan.

Utvärderingen består av två olika delar; en del som behandlar graden av måluppfyllelse i programmen samt en del som syftar till en framåtblickande analys som skall utmytna i förslag på eventuella förändringar av de gällande riktlinjerna.

Programmen Kommunalt Partnerskap Nord-Syd samt Kommunalt Partnerskap Öst- och Centraleuropa hade olika mål.

Målet med programmet Kommunalt Partnerskap Nord-Syd var att *bidra till fattigdomsbekämpning*, framför allt genom att:

- Underlätta genomförandet av fruktsamma utbyten mellan svenska kommunala strukturer och motsvarigheter i samarbetsländerna.
- Bygga långsiktiga samarbeten kring konkreta projekt som gagnar kommunerna i samarbetsländerna såväl som den svenska parten.

För programmet Kommunalt Partnerskap Öst- och Centraleuropa gällde följande mål: *Främja en hållbar utveckling, fördjupad integration och partnerskap i Östersjöområdet och dess omgivningar, utifrån behoven i samarbetsländerna och med utnyttjande av den svenska resursbasen.* Tre riktlinjer styrde samarbetet:

- att främja systemförändringar och integration i europeiska samarbetsstrukturer,
- att främja relationerna med Sverige samt
- att låta ett jämställdhetsperspektiv präglade samarbetet

I uppdraget ingår att inventera tidigare utvärderingar (tillhandahålles av Sida och ICLD). Även programmens riktlinjer skall inkluderas i utvärderingen samt relevanta styrdokument från Sida och SALA IDA men också övergripande dokument såsom Politik för global utveckling, regeringens Policy för demokratisk utveckling och mänskliga rättigheter inom svenskt utvecklingssamarbete 2010-2014 samt regeringens policy för Aktörssamverkan från december 2007. Erfarenheter från Sidas, SKL:s och ICLD:s personal skall tas tillvara genom intervjuer med de som arbetat med programmet. Ytterligare en grupp som skall inkluderas i utvärderingen är de kommuner, landsting, regionförbund och kommunalförbund som har erfarenhet av programmen. Utvärderingen bör också relatera till internationella utvärderingar eller erfarenheter av liknande program/samarbetsform.

Utvärderingen kan delas in i följande etapper:

- Etapp 1 Förstudie och detaljplanering
- Etapp 2 Kartläggning och dokumentation av styrdokument och riktlinjer
- Etapp 3 Intervjuer med berörd personal
- Etapp 4 Analys och bedömning

- Etapp 5 Utarbetande av slutrapport med rekommendationer

Två veckor efter kontraktskrivande skall konsulten inkomma med en redovisning av etapp 1. Av redovisningen skall konsultens tillvägagångssätt gällande fältstudien framgå. Därutöver skall ett avstämningsmöte i form av ett seminarium hållas efter slutförandet av utvärderingens första del (etapp 1-3) i syfte att diskutera möjliga frågeställningar för den andra och mer framåtblickande delen. Det huvudsakliga syftet med den framåtblickande delen är att se hur resultaten av utvärderingen kan användas för att förändra utformning av programmet och dess riktlinjer. Utvärderingen skall även ge ett svar på hur de nya riktlinjerna kan formuleras.

I syfte att tillvarata de erfarenheter som finns av partnerskapen och projekten skall någon eller några resor göras till ett urval av de länder som ingick i programmet mellan år 2005 och år 2008. Urvalet av länder bör sträva mot att ge en så heltäckande bild som möjligt av samarbetsformen. En diskussion om vilka länder som skall inkluderas i utvärderingen skall diskuteras med uppdragsgivaren vid det första avstämningsmötet. Under fältbesöket bör konsulten hålla ett avslutande möte med strategiska personer i samarbetskommunerna i syfte att framföra de observationer som hittills gjorts.

Utvärderingsfrågor

De frågor som utvärderingen syftar till att besvara är om, och i sådana fall hur, programmen Kommunalt Partnerskap Nord-Syd och Kommunalt Partnerskap Öst- och Centraleuropa har uppnått målen för programmet. Utvärderingen bör ta fasta på såväl måluppfyllelsegrad som processen genom vilken målen sökt uppfyllas. Mot bakgrund av PGU samt Policyn för aktörssamverkan skall utvärderingen vidare belysa om utformning av programmet är tillfyllest för att bidra till aktörssamverkan, samt ge förslag på eventuella justeringar. De frågor som utvärderingen bör besvara i den första delen av utvärderingen är som följer:

- A) *Bidragit till fattigdomsbekämpning?*
 - i. Har programmet Kommunalt Partnerskap Nord Syd bidragit till fattigdomsbekämpning?
 - ii. Om ja, hur (på vilket sätt och i vilken utsträckning) har det bidragit till fattigdomsbekämpning?
 - iii. Finns det några skillnader mellan projekten gällande graden av måluppfyllelse? Hur tar sig de skillnaderna uttryck?
- B) *Främjat systemförändringar?*
 - i. Har programmet Kommunalt Partnerskap Öst- och Centraleuropa främjat systemförändringar?
 - ii. Om ja, hur (på vilket sätt och i vilken utsträckning) har programmet främjat systemförändringar?
 - iii. Finns det några skillnader mellan projekten gällande graden av måluppfyllelse? Hur tar sig de skillnaderna uttryck?
- C) *Stärkt/kapacitetsutvecklat den lokala nivån?*
 - i. Har de kommunala partnerskapsprogrammen bidragit till att den lokala nivån stärkt sin kapacitet?
 - ii. Om ja, hur (på vilket sätt och i vilken utsträckning) har programmen bidragit till att den lokala nivån stärkt sin kapacitet?
 - iii. Finns det några skillnader mellan projekten gällande graden av måluppfyllelse? Hur tar sig de skillnaderna uttryck? Vilka typer av projekt har haft högst grad av måluppfyllelse? Vilka faktorer har främjat respektive hindrat måluppfyllelse?

I utvärderingens andra del, den framåtblickande delen, kommer frågorna till viss del att bestämmas av resultaten av den första delen. De områden som vi redan nu bedömer vara intressanta att belysa, och som med fördel kan utvecklas vid avstämningen är som följer:

D) *Resultat i varaktiga relationer?*

i. Har de kommunala partnerskapsprogrammen resulterat i varaktiga relationer mellan kommuner i Sverige och i samarbetsländerna? Varaktiga skall i detta fall förstås såsom att samarbetet mellan kommunerna ifråga fortsatt även efter det att finansiering av samarbetet har upphört.

ii. Om ja, hur (på vilket sätt och i vilken utsträckning) har programmet resulterat i varaktiga relationer?

iii. Finns det några skillnader mellan projekten gällande varaktigheten i relationerna? Hur tar sig de skillnaderna uttryck? Vilka typer av projekt har lyckats leva kvar efter det att finansieringen har upphört?

E) *Varit ömsesidigt?*

i. I vilken utsträckning har ömsesidig nytta mellan parterna uppnåtts?

ii. Finns det några skillnader mellan projekten gällande graden av ömsesidighet? Hur tar sig de skillnaderna uttryck? Vilka typer av projekt har lyckats leva kvar efter det att finansieringen har upphört?

Utvärderaren bör därutöver kunna belysa om förändringar i resultat hanteringssystemet bör vidtas i syfte att säkerställa att ICLD om 3 år med större säkerhet skall kunna utvärdera de ovannämnda frågeställningarna.

Utvärderingsteamet

Utvärderaren skall uppfylla följande krav:

- Ha Lång erfarenhet av utvärdering av internationellt utvecklingssamarbete.
- Vara väl förtrogen med svenska förhållanden samt ha god kännedom om Sidas styrdokument.
- Behärska såväl svenska som engelska i tal och skrift.

Tidplan

Utvärderingen beräknas ta 280 arbetstimmar i anspråk, vilket motsvarar ca 14 veckor på halvtid.

Rapportering

Rapporten skall innehålla ett uttömmande svar på de angivna frågeställningarna och ge rekommendationer till förändringar av programmet Kommunalt Partnerskap i syfte att bäst uppfylla ICLD:s mål att främja lokal demokrati och lokalt självstyre. Ett första utkast av rapporten, skriven på engelska, skall tillställas ICLD i elektronisk form senast 20 augusti 2010. ICLD kommentarer skall beaktas och slutrapport inkomma 14 dagar efter det att dessa har lämnats till utvärderaren. Slutrapporten bör inte överskrida 40 sidor exklusive bilagor.

Utvärderaren skall även muntligt presentera rapporten för representanter från ICLD och Sida vid två tillfällen; en första rapportering lämnas vid det första avstämningsmötet. Delrapportering sker enligt överenskommelse vid kontraktsskrivning mellan konsulten och ICLD. En muntlig föredragning skall även ske vid uppdragets slut.

Annex 2 Survey

For technical reasons enclosed as separate Excel file.

Annex 3 Literature review

Policy Documents and Reports

Actors Collaboration: Aktörssamverkan för global utveckling – policy för aktörssamverkan inom utvecklingssamarbetet 2007-12-19. UD2007/46452/UP

Democratic development: Förändring för frihet – Policy för demokratisk utveckling och mänskliga rättigheter inom svenskt utvecklingssamarbete 2010-2014

ICLD: Analysis of the second and third period of application to the Municipal Partnership Programme in 2009 and of the first period in January 2010.

ICLD: Internal guidelines for Municipality Partnership (including budget guidelines, application formats etc)

ICLD: Kommunalt partnerskap - en översyn av programmet. Adiam Tedros 2010-06-22

Lag (2009:47) om vissa kommunala befogenheter

Policy for Global Development: Globala utmaningar - vårt ansvar. Skr 2007/08:89

Sala Ida Annual Reports: Årsrapport 2005 – Utbytesverksamhet med länder i Afrika, Latinamerika och vissa länder på Västra Balkan

Sida Memo: Stöd till inrättande och finansiering av internationellt centrum för lokal demokrati (ICLD) på Gotland. Dnr 2006-001451

Sida's Programme Twinning Cooperation between Municipalities in Sweden and in Countries of the South; Bo Andréasson & Lennart Königson. Sida evaluation 03/39

SKL Annual Reports:

Kommunalt Partnerskap Öst: Årsrapport 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 & Slutrapport 2009 (ref no 2006-000901)

Municipal Partnership North-South 2005/07 2006/07, 2007/08 & Final Report 2005-2009 (ref no 2005-002022)

Svenska kommuner och vänortssamarbete: Erfarenheter, nya förutsättningar och möjligheter, Agneta Rolfer, Sida 2005-04-06.

Swedish Country Strategy for development cooperation with Belarus 2007-2010.

Reviews and evaluations of international partnership programmes

Mid-Term Review of the North-South Local Government Cooperation Programme; Juho Uusihakala consulting and advisory services, Dr. Athumani J. Liviga, Univ. Of Dar-es-

Salaam, Dr. Ari Sihvola, Haus International, Final report to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland 2009.

Towards improved local governance through strengthened local government - Evaluation of the LOGO South Programme 2007-2010; Universiteit Utrecht & University of Amsterdam, Report commissioned by VNG International 2010.

Norway: Organisational Review of The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS); Jørn Holm-Hansen, Daimon Kambewa and Hans Øyvind Hvidsten, NORAD 2009.

Municipal Development Cooperation, Approaches and experiences of other bilateral and multilateral donors. Studies of the Netherlands, Great Britain, Denmark, and the European Union; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, GTZ 2003.

Contribution of Decentralized Cooperation to Decentralization in Africa; United Nations Public Administration Programme & Regione Toscana, Consiglio Regionale, 2008.

Other relevant sources and interviews

Svenska Dagbladet: www.svd.se/nyheter/svds-natgrav

Framework documents, project proposals and reports as well as interviews with representatives of the municipality actors in Sweden: Bräcke, Göteborg, Halmstad, Nacka and Tyresö and East/South partners: Baranovich in Belarus and Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality in South Africa.

Interviews with staff representing;
ICLD, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida and SKL-international.