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FCG Sweden and Tana Copenhagen in partnership with
the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and D-Arch

Mapping of democratization support

Final report



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

EBA	The Expert Group for Aid Studies
DEVCO	Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development
DFID	Department for International Development
DRG	Democracy, Human Rights and Governance
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office
FCG	Finnish Consulting Group
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OSF	Open Society Foundations
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
ToC	Theory of Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Preface

This report presents the first output under the Evaluability Study of Sida's Approach to Democratization in Different Contexts (see terms of reference (ToR) in Annex 1). Sida in May 2020 commissioned FCG and Tana Copenhagen in partnership with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and D-Arch to undertake a comprehensive evaluability study of Sida's democratization support. Three distinct outputs form the combined evaluability study: (i) a mapping of research and donor approaches to democratization providing learning of how democratization can be approached, (ii) a mapping of research and donors' approaches to assessing the status and progress of democratization providing learning for such assessments and (iii) a feasibility study of evaluating Sida's democratization support.

The Evaluation Team consisted of Erik Bryld (team leader), Agnes Cornell and Harry Blair (both sub-team leaders), Nadia Masri-Pedersen (senior evaluator) and Charlotte Bonnet (junior evaluator). The Final Report was quality-assured by Susan Tamondong, whose work was independent of the evaluation team. Léonie Borel and Kelsey Welham provided research support. The report has been professionally proofread by ProofreadingServices.com.

The author would like to thank Charlotte Bonnet, Léonie Borel and Kelsey Welham for their extremely helpful assistance. A special thanks also to the donor representatives who we interviewed online for this report. They invariably exhibited patience and willingness to answer our many questions at length, and they were most helpful in pointing us to useful documentation

Executive Summary

Sida is considering an evaluation of its support for democratization. This report presents the findings from two mapping exercises aimed at providing Sida with insights into democratization support from researchers and donors. The first exercise maps the research frontier on the relationship between aid and democratization. It covers a broad sample of research with a focus on studies published in prominent journals in the last 10 years. The second exercise maps approaches to democratization among six donor agencies and one foundation (Sida is not included in this exercise).

General findings from the mapping exercise of the research frontier:

- **Distinction between foreign aid and democracy aid:** There was a clear distinction in the academic research between theories of change for foreign aid in general and theories of change in democracy aid, defined as aid that specifically supports democracy in aid recipient countries. This implies that the assumed factors that explain the theory and the expected impact depend on the type of aid, be it general or democracy aid. The theories on aid in general focus primarily on the strategic interests of donors and recipients with a strong focus on aid conditionality while those on democracy aid focuses on citizens' empowerment, the different activities included in democracy aid and their respective impact on democracy, and to some extent on the strategic interests of relevant actors. Aid in general was mostly found to have no effect or a negative impact on democracy whereas a positive relationship was found in several studies on democracy aid.
- **Recipients' and donors' strategic interests:** The context in which aid activities are implemented is of great importance in research. However, this is not to say that everything is case-specific; rather, specific types of contexts provide a more enabling environment for the implementation and therefore the successful impact of aid. The incumbent's strategic interest and donors' ability to credibly condition aid on political reform are important factors in creating enabling environments.
- **Risks in engaging with democratic and non-democratic governments:** The research on the relationship between aid and democratization has important implications for potential risks and whether and how donors should engage with non-democratic governments. The research analysed points to the importance of analysing the impact of the strategic interest of the recipient. The risks of obstruction and cooptation are important to consider both in democracies and non-democracies. There are, however, additional risks to take into account in relation to non-democracies. First, are conditions on political reforms targeting meaningful reform or will it result in pure window-dressing? Second, to what extent risk aid programs to be used to keep the ruler in power by for example legitimizing the authoritarian regime?

- **Perspective of gender and perspectives of people living in poverty:** These perspectives are rarely present in the articles although some explicitly examined gender-related aspects of democracy support and factors related to the perspectives of people living in poverty. There are a few articles with a gender equality perspective focusing on the impact of international aid on the introduction of gender quotas. However, there is not much focus on the perspectives of people living in poverty in studies on the relationship between aid and democratization.

General findings from the mapping exercise of donors' approaches to democratization:

- **No explicit definitions of democracy.** The mapping exercise on other donors' approaches to democratization shows that most donors do not employ explicit definitions of democracy or democratization despite including aspects of democracy in their work.
- **Three types of theories of change:** Three different types of theories of change in approaches to democratization are common among the donors. First, they focus on the extension of **political inclusion** since they believe political participation to be important for democratization. Second, they stress the importance of supporting different **components of a democratic political system** to foster the deepening of democratic processes and the building of democratic institutions. Third, it is often common to view **support to governance** broadly, such as the provision of public goods, anti-corruption and support for the rule of law, as one way to enhance the resilience of democracy.
- **Engagement with non-democratic governments:** Donors do not refrain from working in authoritarian regimes or with authoritarian incumbents, and there are generally no overall strategies for how to work in different types of regimes and situations; however, they do adapt their work to the context. In authoritarian regimes, they concentrate their work more on civil society organisations than on the state, and sometimes they redirect their support to democratization at local levels if it is not possible to work at the national level. It is also common to focus on less politically sensitive issues of governance when working with authoritarian governments. However, interviewees from donor agencies also stress that decisions about working with certain governments are beyond their discretion. They have to adapt to the foreign policy of their foreign ministries.
- **Strong focus on gender equality:** All donors strongly focus on gender equality and especially the extension of women's participation.
- **The perspectives of people living in poverty:** This aspect is mainly addressed through the political inclusion of marginalised groups.

Sida can draw several lessons from these mapping exercises:

- 1) **Examine the impact of aid of foreign aid from other sectors on democratization**

There is much research on aid from other sectors (foreign aid in general) and its relationship with democratization, but, beyond democracy aid, donors focus

primarily on the governance sector in relation to their democratization support and do seldom seem to consider the impact on democracy of foreign aid to other sectors. Since aid to other sectors may have other impacts compared to democracy aid. It has been shown in research to, in some circumstances, even prevent democratization and to prop up autocracies, it may be worth considering the impact of other types of aid on democratization.

2) Consider the risks of cooptation and obstruction when engaging with non-democratic recipients

Donors need to consider the risks of cooptation of and obstruction to aid programs which could be particularly risky when donors engage with non-democratic governments.

3) Focus on recipients' strategic interests

Donors' theories of change do not often consider different types of contexts or recipients' strategic interests, factors which are important in academic research to understand why aid sometimes harm democracy and sometimes strengthens it.

4) Political inclusiveness is no guarantee for a democratic change

Political inclusiveness is at the fore of many donors' agenda, however, researchers also point at the risks of cooptation and legitimization of authoritarian regimes as a result of some activities aimed at increasing political participation. Moreover, the impact of aid in research is limited to increasing democracy levels and does not seem to affect regime change in a democratic direction. Donors' expectations on how their efforts to promote political participation in non-democratic regimes may lead to political change through citizen empowerment may be too optimistic in these settings.

1 Introduction

This report presents researchers' and donors' approaches to democratization with the aim to provide learning regarding how democratization can be examined. It provides an overview of these approaches. We map insights of theories of change from the academic research frontier and donors. The mapping thus contains two lines of investigation; one that focuses on academic research findings and one that centres on mapping insights among donors.

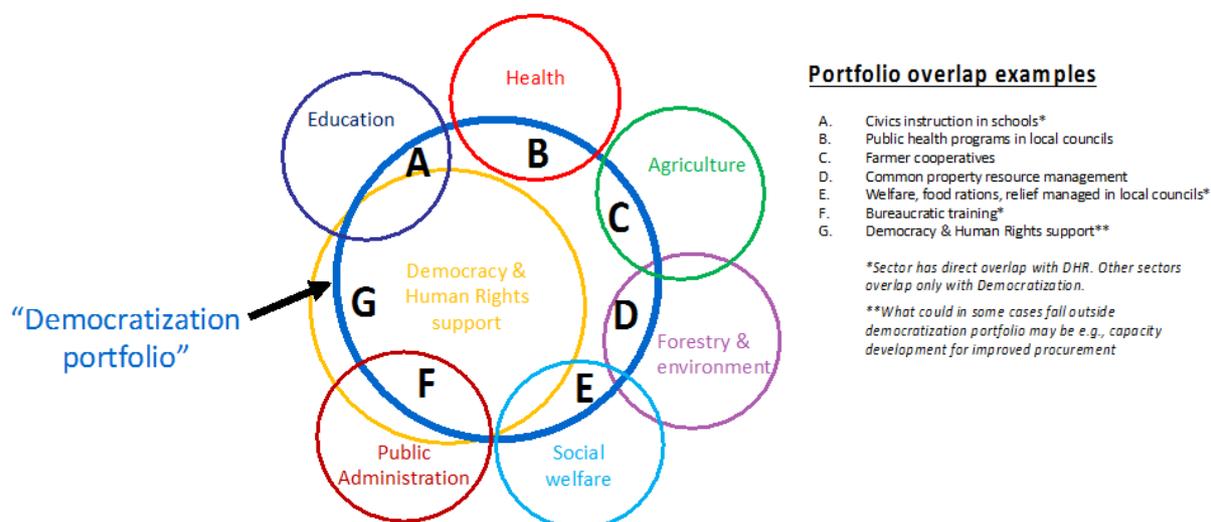
The mapping of academic research is limited to studies relevant to the relationship between country portfolios and democratization (outcome). This implies that research on specific aid interventions is only included if it is relevant to the relationship between country-level aid and democracy. The definitions of democracy used in these mapping exercises are based on the definitions provided by donors and researchers.

In the mapping of donors' theories of change, the focus is on donors' strategies both generally and at the country portfolio level. Donor mapping is not restricted to democracy aid but could potentially encompass all sectors depending on whether donors' own approaches to democratization include those sectors. The approach to democratization may thus involve multiple sectors and not just the support provided to the democracy sector as defined in accordance with OECD-DAC purpose codes.

To provide a visual understanding of the object of the study, the team developed Figure 1 below to illustrate an example of a democratization portfolio at the country level.

Figure 1 - Democratization portfolio

The Democratization Portfolio



Note that the figure does not consider aspects such as support to rights holders versus duty bearers or specifically refer to sub-populations and gender. These other dimensions will be included in the portfolio assessment as well.

The mapping exercises employ systematic methodologies, and the findings are based on evidence from interviews with donor officials, donor documents and published academic research.

1.1 QUESTIONS ASKED IN BOTH LINES OF INVESTIGATION

The mapping exercise focuses on a set of main questions asked in both lines of investigation:

- How is democracy defined?
- Which are the dominant schools of thought on change logic and theory for democratization in academia vs. donors/partners?
- What are the different approaches undertaken by donors and conclusions drawn by researchers in different political situations (democratic transition, backsliding, autocratisation, etc.) and contexts (non-democratic regime vs. democratic regime, post-conflict vs. conflict etc.)?
- To what extent is the perspectives of people living in poverty considered by donors and researchers?
- To what extent is gender equality considered by donors and researchers?

For the mapping of academic research, we also ask the following question:

- What are the results of aid according to academic research? In other words, has aid been effective in democratization?

In posing these questions, we seek to systematise the different types of theories of change present in both academic research and among partners and donors.

In posing these questions, we also address whether academics' conclusions vs. donors'/partners' approaches are different depending on different types of contexts. For example, we examine whether differences exist in terms of theories of change in different types of political regimes, democracies and non-democracies and also whether differences are observed between certain types of democracies (e.g., electoral vs. liberal) and authoritarian regimes (e.g., *de facto* or *de jure* one-party vs. competitive). Moreover, differences between different sub-populations and in gender equality are also considered. For example, democracy support to civil society may assist specific groups of the population that are already active (e.g., women activists), but those may not be the primary target segments of the specific activity (e.g., women who are poor).

2 Methodology

2.1 THE OVERALL METHODOLOGY FOR BOTH LINES OF INVESTIGATION

The methodology for both lines of investigation is based on a systematic search for evidence in relevant source material. It has been adapted to ensure breadth of different perspectives in research and to ensure we understand the overall strategies of donors.

In terms of sub-populations and the perspectives of people living in poverty and gender, it is worth remarking that we have made an effort to address these issues in both lines of investigation. The mapping exercise of academic research addresses the extent to which the perspectives of people living in poverty is present in the studies. It also includes specific searches for studies that explicitly address the impact of country portfolio–level aid on sub-populations’ inclusion in the political system. The same approach is used to map donors’ theories of change, enquiring on the extent to which sub-populations, especially the perspectives of people living in poverty, are part of donors’ theories of change and the degree to which country portfolios with the objective of democratization are targeting sub-populations. The same strategy is employed in terms of gender. We, for example, include research that addresses country portfolio–level aid’s impact on women’s inclusion in the political system. The mapping exercise also addresses to what extent gender is actually addressed in the research. The same approach is used to map donors’ theories of change, examining to what degree gender is part of donors’ theories of change and to what extent country portfolios with the objective to democratize are targeting women.

In the following sections, we present search criteria and methods that are specific to the respective lines of investigation, starting with the search criteria for academic research.

2.2 METHODS FOR MAPPING ACADEMIC RESEARCH

The mapping exercise of academic research must cast a wide net to include case studies, different outcome variables (not only levels of democracy), as well as to include analyses of aid in general. This makes the mapping exercise potentially endless, so we must balance breadth with depth to draw relevant conclusions. We employ a systematic approach, which includes both clear criteria for the selection of academic research and a methodical survey of each selected study based on pre-established categorisations.

We select academic research employing three different types of search methodologies. Each of these aims to capture different types of research to broaden the scope of inquiry and capture important research items published on relevant topics within the time frame.

2.2.1 Systematic search and selection based on journal impact factor

The first selection is made based on journals' impact factor. Impact factor is an important assessment criterion (but not the only one) for a scientific journal's quality and importance in the field. It is calculated by taking the number of citations for a specified period divided by the number of published articles for the same period.

The highest-ranked research journals in each relevant area will be browsed in search for articles focusing on any sector of development cooperation, including but not restricted to democracy support, if the study addresses any results related to democratization. We have identified which areas are relevant to the search of journals. See Table 1 for the chosen areas. We used the Scopus database in this search. It should be noted that these areas encompass a wide range of disciplines (from economics, development to sociology) with a focus on the social sciences, but multidisciplinary journals are also included. Some journals appear in several categories.

Steps in the search methodology for published articles are as follows:

- 1) Select the 10% highest-ranked journals (according to impact factor) in each relevant area.
- 2) Use keywords (general search, not article keywords) to find potentially relevant articles within each journal for the period 2010-2020.
- 3) Browse abstracts and titles for selection of articles.
- 4) Browse content for final selection of articles.

Table 1 - Journal categories and CiteScore according to Scopus (CiteScore 2019 calculated for the period 2016-2019)

Journal Category	Number of journals (top 10%)	CiteScore (2019) (scores from top to bottom in ranking)
Economics, Econometrics and Finance	158	22.7-1.0
Multidisciplinary	13	51.0-1.0
Social Sciences: Development	34	12.8-1.2
Social Sciences: General Social Sciences	40	9.5-1.1
Social Sciences: Geography, Planning and Development	106	17.0-1.1
Social Sciences: Political Science and international relations	79	9.6-0.7
Social Sciences: Public administration	28	13.1-3.0
Social Sciences: Sociology and Political Science	203	16.0-0.6

The search with the broad keywords ‘aid’ AND ‘democratization’ in journals resulted in 724 articles. In a second step we browsed all titles and abstracts of these articles. Out of the original search, 93 articles were deemed relevant from title and abstract, based on the criteria stipulated above. In a third step and for our final selection we went through the content of the 93 articles. Out of these, 53 were finally deemed relevant (about development cooperation and outcomes related to democratization). The final selection of articles is listed in the ‘Matrix of categorisation of academic research’ (Annex 2). This represents a broad sample of articles from 21 journals. It should be noted, for example, that an additional search on aid and gender did not result in any new items and that the articles in this sample include a broad range of outcome variables broadly related to democratization, and not restricted to democracy levels.

2.2.2 Selection of monographs and edited volumes

The second search focused on monographs and edited volumes covering relevant topics. We browsed the book catalogues (for the same period) of the most prominent publishing houses in relevant fields (such as Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press) since some important research is published in monographs and edited volumes. A few monographs and edited volumes were added from this search (see reference list, Annex 6).

2.2.3 Selection of other working papers and articles

We also made additional searches (using the same keywords) in Scopus for the relevant period to see if there are any articles in non-selected journals (with lower ranking) that

appear relevant as well. There may also be important articles to add based on citations in later research. Moreover, since there are also important working paper series that publish relevant research (often prior to publication in peer-reviewed journals), we have also made similar searches using Google Scholar. Some articles have also been added based on the author's own knowledge and experience of the field. To make sure we also capture the political inclusion of sub-populations, the perspectives of people living in poverty and gender, we performed additional searches using alternative search words, such as aid and political participation and aid and empowerment.

However, we also critically assessed any research items that were selected to ensure that the conclusions drawn in this mapping exercise are based on research that has been conducted according to recognised standards in academia. The final selection of other articles (than the ones selected according to the criteria in Section 2.2.1) referred to in the text are listed in the reference list (Annex 6).

2.3 SPECIFIC METHODS FOR RESEARCH MAPPING: CATEGORISATION, SYSTEMATISATION AND QUALITATIVE DESCRIPTION

The mapping methods included categorisations of relevant research items and systematisation as well as qualitative descriptions of trends at the research frontier. It should be noted that the decision on which research items to include in the categorisations and qualitative descriptions was based on the relevance to mapping theories of change.

For each relevant research item (article or monograph), we examined whether the study presents a specific theory of causation (causal mechanisms), particularly the important aspects of that theory. We were inductive in examining the theories of change. We therefore provided qualitative descriptions of the most common and prominent change theories. However, the theories of change of the different studies are also, to the extent possible, systematised; for example, when there are similarities and differences in the types of actors, researchers placed the most importance on in processes of democratization (e.g., the elite vs. ordinary people) as drivers of change. In order to systematize the findings we produced the 'Matrix of categorisation of academic research' (Annex 2) which presents the most relevant aspects of all 53 research items selected in the systematic search.

2.4 SPECIFIC METHODS FOR DONOR MAPPING

In this assignment, donors were identified as international entities providing funding for democratization. Donors included bilateral donors, multilateral donors, NGOs and foundations. The team and Sida identified the following criteria to be applied when identifying donors subject to the mapping exercises: (a) donors that are considerable financial contributors to democratization, (b) donors that have had a significant normative role in defining democracy support, (c) donors that have experimented with

new ways to provide democratization support particularly pertaining to gender and with a poverty focus and (d) donors that are sufficiently transparent in terms of sharing information about priorities and funding to allow for meaningful assessment by the team. Based on these criteria, the following donors were included in the mapping exercise:

- a) Global Affairs Canada (GAC)
- b) Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom
- c) European Union (EU)
- d) Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)
- e) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- f) United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- g) Open Society Foundations (OSF)

The mapping of insights from donors and partners was made using pre-established categorisations, balancing the depth and breadth of the exercise. We primarily used documents such as global and regional policies, country strategies and evaluation reports but complement those with interviews with centrally placed informants, such as desk officers responsible for democracy support at specific agencies as well as other relevant decision-makers. It may also include desk officers from other sectors or regional bureaus if these are assessed to contribute to democratization. Our semi-structured interviews, consisting of 13 sessions with 16 interviewees (see Annex 5 for the list of interviewees), provided important complementary information to the policy documents, and we also confirmed which documents were the most important for the work in the area. We employed an interview guide for the interviews as a general structure for questions asked. All interviews were conducted online (using Zoom or another interface), and we were able to record all sessions. The interviews lasted generally about one hour. The parts of the interviews relevant to the mapping of approaches to democratization were transcribed (not verbatim).

The mapping of donors'/partners' insights provided a comparison of their different approaches in different contexts. The donors' theories of change were categorised by context and targeted sub-population (and other relevant categories) and presented in analytical form as well as in a simple table format. The table includes an assessment of the theory of change (see Annex 3).

We primarily investigated donors' theories of change at the portfolio level (see Figure 1 above). However, it is likely that different strategy documents, interviewers and other sources of information would show discrepancies between different sources of information in how the same donor perceives theories of change. We documented them and analysed their causes. Discrepancies may, for example, arise between strategies made at different levels of the organisation or, more specifically, between general documents and strategy documents about democracy support. There were, moreover, differences due to how donors adapt to a specific context or situation. We also strived to capture these differences. In some cases, we needed to move from the overall

portfolio level to the recipient-country level to assess these differences. In those cases, we used country examples for illustrative purposes.

2.5 LIMITATIONS

There were several limitations of this mapping exercise. In the mapping of academic research, a balance had to be struck between broad enough coverage and high-quality research. The search criteria restricted the search to journals with higher impact factors to find high-quality research, but to catch with a broad net, the search was made in a wide variety of disciplines. In addition, Google Scholar was used as a complement to the Scopus search to not miss highly cited research in less prominent journals. However, we also used our skills in the team, as researchers, to make judgments on the strength of conclusions etc. Even though we manage to cover relevant research items there is a risk of publication bias, that is, that research that shows null effects is not even published or papers not even written in the first place.

Several limitations also have to be mentioned for the mapping of donors' approaches. First, there was the challenge of finding the right people. Several donor agencies had recently undergone or were undergoing organisational restructuring during the period of the study. This meant that organisational charts were out of date. Second, once we found the right people, they did not always agree to be interviewed, due to their tight schedules and time constraints. At some agencies, the availability of persons we would have preferred to interview was limited. The challenge is to know whether those who were interviewed provided a fair representation of the agency's work. The questions posed were focused on the donor agency rather than the persons' own views, but there was still a risk that other persons at the agencies may portray the agencies' work differently.

Donor documents are therefore crucial since they portray the donor agency's official standpoints, definitions etc. However, there are several limitations regarding those documents. Strategy documents seem to play different roles for different donors. Sometimes they are critical and sometimes less so; sometimes interviewees were familiar with the agency's official strategy documents and sometimes they were not. This difference between official documents and what donor officials said in interviews has also been noted in recent research.¹ The mapping exercise focused on the official strategy documents and especially those referred to by interviewees as important for the agency's work and approach.

Moreover, it should be noted that most donors did not have explicit theories of change on democratization, and therefore the mapping of donors' theories of change was an interpretation of what donors write in documents and mention in interviews as important assumptions of how their aid activities may contribute to democratization.

¹ E.g., Brown and Fisher 2020.

3 Mapping findings from the research frontier

This section maps insights from the research frontier with a point of departure in the questions posed in Section 1.1 and based on the search criteria presented in Section 2. See ‘Matrix of categorisation of research’ (Annex 2) for a summary of the relevant research items selected from the general Scopus search. The research items added in other searches etc. are listed in the list of references (Annex 6). The following sections provide a summary of prominent theories of change in the research frontier.

3.1 DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATISATION AMONG RESEARCHERS

There are two main definitions used in the academic research on democracy/democratization. Researchers who define democracy and democratization in continuous terms often implicitly or explicitly define democracy in line with Dahl’s definition of polyarchy (see Box 1)² whereas those who define these terms in a dichotomous manner often use a more minimalistic definition similar to Schumpeter’s,³ which focuses on competitive elections as the ‘sine qua non’ of democracy, or Przeworski et al.’s: ‘a regime in which some offices are filled as a consequence of contested elections’.⁴ Democratization is defined either as positive changes in levels of democracy at any level or as a regime change from an authoritarian regime to a democratic political system (see Figure 2). The black arrows in Figure 2 show how democratization can be considered as any positive change (red arrows) along a continuum or as a regime change (red vertical line) from autocracy to democracy. It should be noted that many of the research items included in this study also used other outcome variables related to democratization, such as the introduction of competitive elections, coups d’état and different types of accountability mechanisms (e.g., incumbent turnover).

Box 1 - Polyarchy

1. Elected officials
2. Free and fair elections
3. Inclusive suffrage
4. Right to run for office
5. Freedom of expression
6. Alternative information
7. Associational autonomy

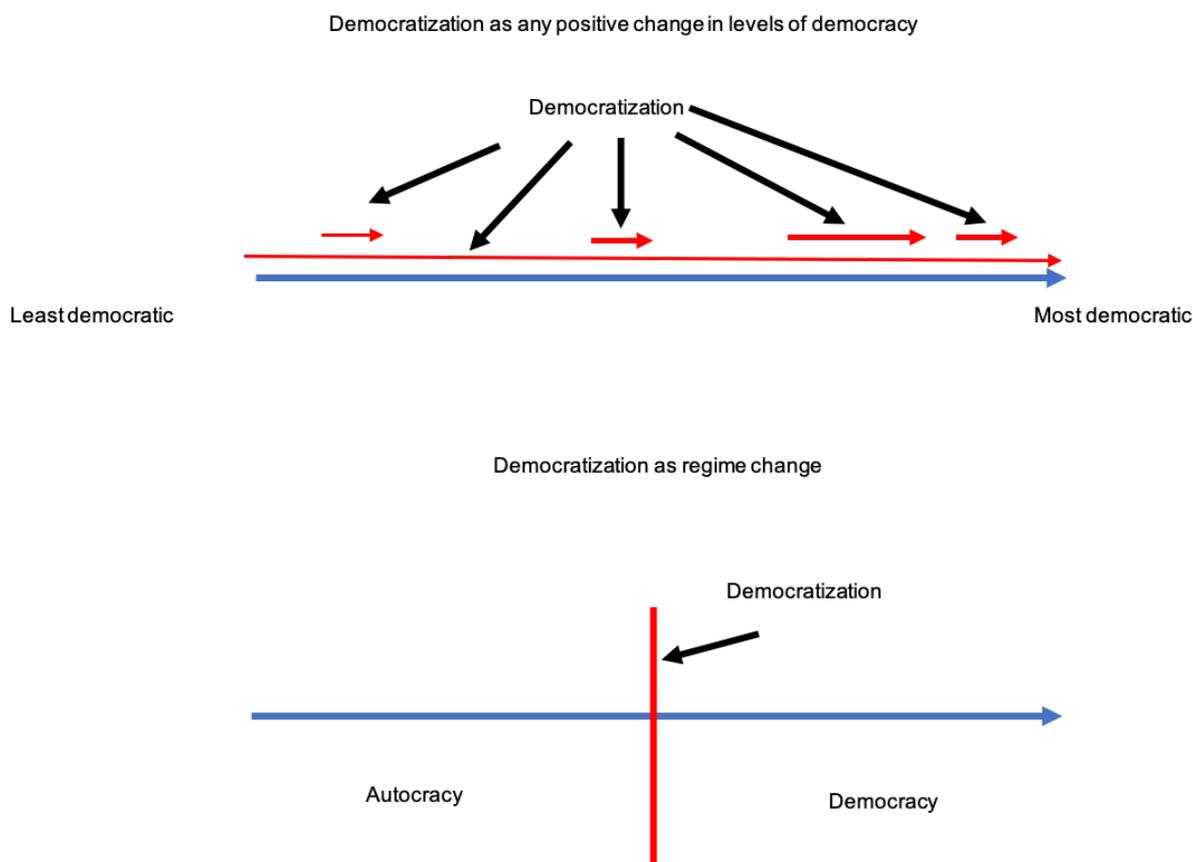
Source: Dahl 1989, 222.

² Dahl 1971, 1989.

³ Schumpeter, Joseph. 1976.

⁴ Alvarez et al. 1996, 4.

Figure 2 - Democratization as a process or regime change



3.2 THEORIES OF CHANGE

As noted above, theories of change differ between studies that focus on democracy aid (as a sub-type of development cooperation) and research on foreign aid in general. The next sections will therefore present theories of change first in relation to foreign aid generally and then theories of change for democracy aid. Generally, research on the relationship between foreign aid other than democracy aid and democratization tend to collapse all aid sectors (including democracy aid) into a general theory of how foreign aid generally fosters or hinders democratization. There is scant research on specific sectors of aid (other than democracy aid) and democratization. The few exceptions examine military aid, military training, technical assistance and governance (often collapsed with democracy assistance).

3.2.1 How can foreign aid in general foster or hinder democratization?

Foreign aid can be assumed to foster democracy in two main ways. First, if aid contributes to the socio-economic development of recipient countries, then foreign aid may foster democracy indirectly through socio-economic development. Second, donors can condition aid on political reforms. Figure 3 shows the assumed relationship between foreign aid and democratization through these two mechanisms.

Figure 3 - Theories of change in research on aid and democratization: Two alternative mechanisms



However, there are important assumptions underlying these that must be met for aid to have an impact through these two paths. For aid to contribute to democracy via socio-economic development, it must first be effective in, for example, reducing poverty, increasing educational levels and promoting economic development. Second, socio-economic development must be causally related to democracy outcomes. Although most researchers agree there is a correlation between economic development and democracy, the causal relationship between these factors is debated.⁵ To ensure, moreover, that aid contributes via conditionality, donors must condition aid on political reform in a credible and efficient way, and the recipient must be sufficiently dependent on aid. Thus, there are several links that need to be in place in order for general aid to contribute to a democratic development.

Several studies argued that foreign aid does not contribute to democratic outcomes since there are several obstacles to the two pathways described above. The point of departure for many theories of change in foreign aid research is the strategic interest of the incumbent government of the recipient country versus that of the donor country. For aid to have a certain effect, it must be in the incumbent's interest to implement it and in the donor country's strategic interest to push for its implementation. Studies argued, for example, that conditionality on political reforms is not always a credible threat for recipients and thus not likely to induce political reforms.⁶

The first link between aid and development is simply not there, according to these studies, since foreign aid is fungible, and the incumbent government has discretionary power over aid resources. This implies that the incumbent government can use aid resources for the benefit of the regime, for example, to repress opponents or distribute goods to regime supporters. Foreign aid, therefore, contributes to the stabilisation of the regime in place, and if it happens to be an authoritarian regime, aid is not likely to lead to democratization⁷ or can even deteriorate democracy.⁸ Other scholars have

⁵ There is a large literature on the relationship between economic development and democratization. See for example: Acemoglu et al. 2008; Przeworski et al. 2000; Lipset 1959; Boix and Stokes 2003; Rueschemeyer et al. 1992; Rustow 1970; Treisman 2020; Inglehart and Welzel 2005.

⁶ Bearce and Tirone 2010; Gibson et al. 2005; Wright 2009.

⁷ Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010; Morrison 2009.

⁸ Djankov et al. 2008.

criticised the argument that aid would be similar to the oil curse. Altincekic and Bearce argued that aid is less fungible, more volatile and has more conditionality than oil revenues; therefore, there should be less support for an aid curse. The article found no strong evidence for aid leading to more repression or having an impact on regime change.⁹

The impact of foreign aid is conditional on several factors

Some studies have argued that certain conditions may create a more propitious ground for aid implementation.¹⁰ Most of them assert that the potential for conditionality may differ depending on certain factors or circumstances:

Bargaining power of the donor: According to several scholars the impact of conditionality depends on the leverage and bargaining power of the aid donor.¹¹ Some donors may be able to use conditionality for political reforms in a more credible and efficient way than other donors. Carnegie and Marinov argued that aid from the EU is positively related to democracy and human rights since the EU can condition political reforms efficiently on the recipients.¹² Similarly, Western donors have more leverage on recipients after the end of the Cold War than during it.¹³ For the post-Cold War period, Bermeo showed that aid from democratic donors actually affected democratization but that aid from authoritarian donors has no such effect.¹⁴

Efficient monitoring: Gibson et al. asserted that technical assistance can be used by donors to monitor recipients efficiently. If donors can monitor recipients' use of aid funding, they can prevent recipients from using funds for patronage, and it also allows donors to exert conditionality more efficiently.¹⁵

Recipients' strategic interest: Wright argued that recipients are more likely to endorse political reforms if the incumbent does not risk losing political power as a result of democratization.¹⁶ Other scholars have stressed that some aspects of political reform, the introduction of multiparty elections, may be more salient and send a clearer message that political reforms are under way than other less visible changes that are important for the consolidation of democracy. Since the holding of elections is a visible sign of political reform in a democratic direction, donors can confirm that elections have indeed taken place, and incumbents may not lose so much if oppositional parties are not strong etc. Monitoring of these visible changes is easier for donors, while it is in the strategic interest of recipients to retain political power. We should therefore, according to this research, not expect foreign aid to affect democracy in a way that goes

⁹ Altincekic and Bearce 2014.

¹⁰ See for example Resnick and van de Walle (eds.) 2013 for case studies from various African countries.

¹¹ Bearce and Tirone 2010; Gibson et al. 2005; Wright 2009.

¹² Carnegie and Marinov 2017.

¹³ Dunning 2004; Wright 2009.

¹⁴ Bermeo 2011.

¹⁵ Gibson et al. 2015.

¹⁶ Wright 2009.

beyond the mere introduction of multiparty elections (or even the introduction of competitive authoritarianism).¹⁷

In sum, the relationship between aid and democratization is dependent on a number of factors. To the relationships presented in the theoretical models in Figure 3 we therefore add conditional factors. Figure 4 illustrates the model with the socio-economic development pathway. We can, for example, see that the degree to which aid is fungible and the recipients' strategic interests conditions the effects of foreign aid on socio-economic development, as well as the degree to which conditionality works.

Figure 4 - Theories of change in research on aid and democratization: Conditional effects, pathway socio-economic development

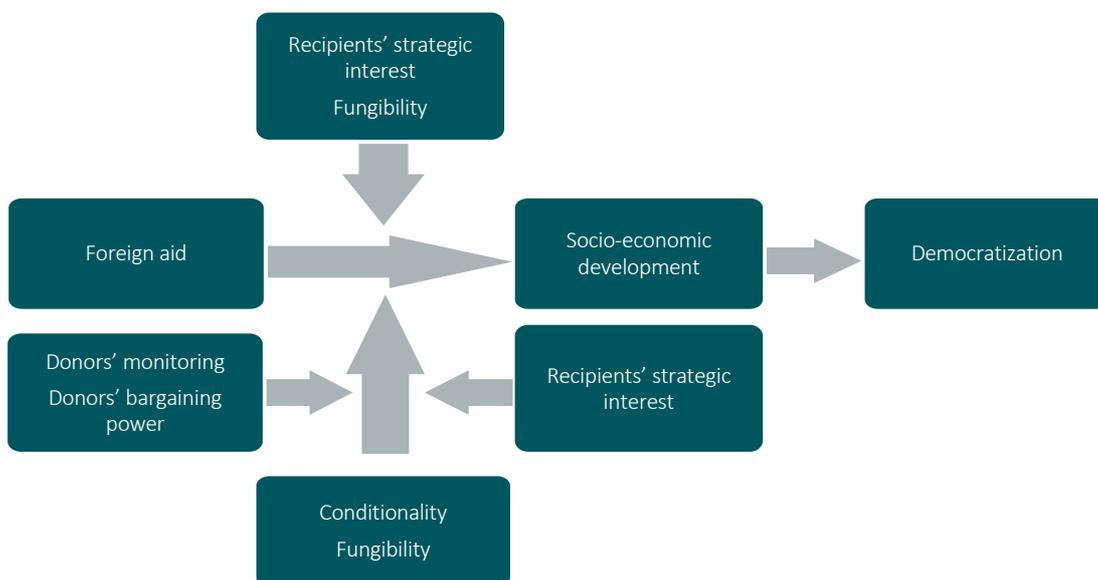
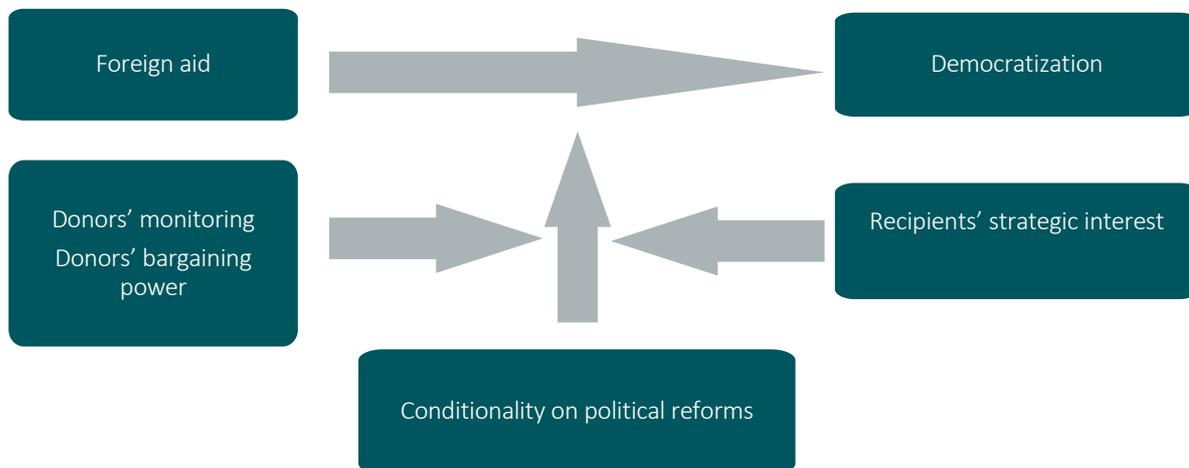


Figure 5 illustrates the model with the political conditionality pathway. The important difference to note between the two pathways is that in this second model with political conditionality it is assumed that donors exert political conditionality that is they condition aid on political reforms which would strengthen democracy in the recipient country.

¹⁷ Miller 2020; Dietrich and Wright 2015.

Figure 5 - Theories of change in research on aid and democratization: Conditional effects, pathway, political conditionality



An additional factor could be donor characteristics, and more particular whether bilateral or multilateral donors are involved. Very few studies on the relationship between aid and democratization explicitly compare bilateral and multilateral aid. One study concluded, however, that the effects on democratization (probability of democratic regime) are negative for multilaterals as well as for total aid from all donors.¹⁸ Moreover, as mentioned above, aid from one multilateral, namely the EU is assumed to be particularly efficient in promoting democracy since the organization is more efficient in their use of political conditionality.¹⁹ However, as we will see below in the mapping of donors' approaches to democratization, the EU is very different from other multilateral donors, such as the UNDP, and thus it is not obvious that we should generalize the findings on EU aid to other multilateral donors.

3.2.2 Is democracy aid any different from foreign aid in general?

Democracy aid is argued to be different from general aid for several reasons. First, democracy aid is arguably **less fungible** than other sectors of aid. Democracy aid activities would often not happen without democracy aid flows, and therefore, there are no freed resources from democracy aid to be used elsewhere. Second, at least part of it is channelled through **non-state actors**, which means that it should not prop up incumbent governments to the same extent as aid that is only channelled through the state. However, non-state actors are also involved to a large degree in other aid sectors, so it is debatable whether this is a real difference between all other sectors of aid and democracy aid. Third, since democracy aid, as it is defined, **aims to support democracy**, the activities and actors chosen should be targeted to improve democracy and thus fine-tuned to this aim whereas we should not expect other types of aid with more general development purposes to be sensitive to issues of democracy. Fourth, several studies have shown a **positive impact** of democracy aid whereas the impact of

¹⁸ Kalyvitis and Vlachaki 2012.

¹⁹ Carnegie and Marinov 2017.

general aid on democratization is seemingly more contested among academics. As seen above, several studies have shown no impact, or even a negative impact, of aid on democracy or impact that is conditioned on certain periods.²⁰ A few studies on US democracy aid, and some studies on democracy aid from all OECD/DAC donors, have suggested a positive relationship between democracy aid and democracy levels, and a recent report from EBA concludes that democracy aid, from Sweden, is positively related to democratization, and more efficient in promoting up-turns in democracy levels than in preventing down-turns.²¹ Other researchers have shown that the effects of democracy aid may be limited to certain types of regimes or to certain processes of democratization, i.e., democratic consolidation (preventing democratic backsliding) but not inducing democratic transitions in authoritarian regimes.²² However, as pointed out by some researchers, the positive impact of democracy aid may also be an artefact of aid as an incentive for ‘good behaviour’ and not the effect of the activities per se.²³

3.2.3 Theories of change: Democracy aid and democracy

In terms of the direct effects of democracy aid, there are two arguments for why democracy aid would foster democracy (see Figure 6 for an illustration of the two main models). The first is centred on the **content of democracy aid**. Democracy aid activities are argued to target the right actors and strengthening political institutions. The implementation of this aid leads to the empowerment of local actors (civil society, political parties, local politicians etc.) and thus alters power relationships. Democracy aid is also directed towards supporting and strengthening certain practices, such as elections, and institutions, such as parliaments and electoral management bodies that are important for the functioning of democracy.²⁴ The second argument is still about the content of democracy aid, but focuses on the **strategic interests of recipients** to implement it. The positive relationship between democracy aid and democracy, according to this second argument, is due to ‘anticipated reactions’ from the recipient side²⁵:

[D]emocracy assistance encourages recipient governments to implement democratic changes in order to secure further funding from democratic donors.²⁶

²⁰ See for example; Knack, Stephen. 2004; Djankov et al. 2008. Dunning 2004.

²¹ E.g., Finkel, et al. 2007. See also Finkel et al. 2020. Scott and Steele. 2011 ; Kalyvitis and Vlachaki 2010; Lührmann et al. 2018; Heinrich and Loftis 2019; Niño-Zarazúa et al. 2020. But see also Grimm and Mathis 2018; there are no significant effects of democracy aid from the EU to the Western Balkans, but it is a very small sample.

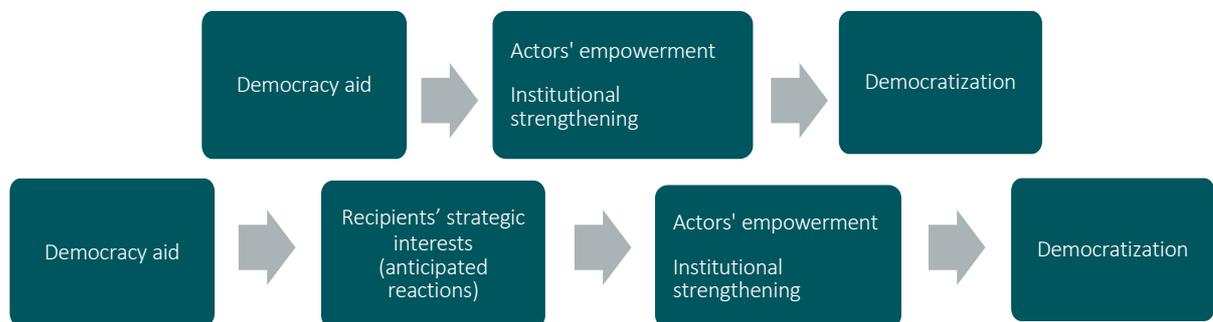
²² Cornell 2013. Dietrich and Wright 2015.

²³ Steele et al. 2020.

²⁴ Finkel et al. 2007; see also Steele et al. 2020; Dietrich and Wright 2015.

²⁵ Scott and Steele 2011.

²⁶ Steele et al. 2020, 4.

Figure 6 - Democracy aid: Two alternative theoretical models

The impact of democracy aid is conditional on several factors

Although some studies found direct effects of (US) democracy aid, others argued that the impact of democracy aid is conditional on a number of factors.²⁷ Figure 7 summarizes how the impact of democracy aid may be conditioned on several factors. The main assumptions in this literature are similar to the one for foreign aid: the strategic interests of recipients and donors and power of the donor government over the recipient government are important factors. Dietrich and Wright argued that democracy aid to governmental institutions does not threaten the incumbent in democracies whereas aid to civil society does and since recipient governments only have an incentive to implement those types of projects that do not threaten them, democracy aid channelled through governmental institutions is more likely to affect democratic consolidation than aid to civil society. However, these effects will largely strengthen institutions that do not threaten incumbent power.²⁸ Dietrich and Wright concluded,

*Despite the rhetoric about strengthening civil society, we show that donors largely pursue democracy promotion through governance aid, with predictable effects on maintaining a stable multiparty electoral system.*²⁹

A parallel argument for authoritarian regimes is found in Cornell's 2013 article. She argues that democracy aid is more likely to increase democracy levels when risks are low for the regime and there are institutions in place for its implementation (one-party regimes). However, since risk is at its lowest in more stable regimes, democracy aid is only likely to foster changes in democracy levels within the authoritarian regimes – political liberalisation – and not likely to foster regime change.³⁰ Similarly, Lührmann, in a case study on electoral assistance from the UN to Libya, Sudan and Nigeria, argued that the strategic interests of elites and whether elites are constrained or not are important factors for the effectiveness of electoral assistance.³¹ Savage asserted that

²⁷ It should be noted that Finkel et al. 2020 also points to favourable conditions for democracy aid in their update of the 2007 article.

²⁸ Dietrich and Wright 2015.

²⁹ Dietrich and Wright 2015, 232.

³⁰ Cornell 2013.

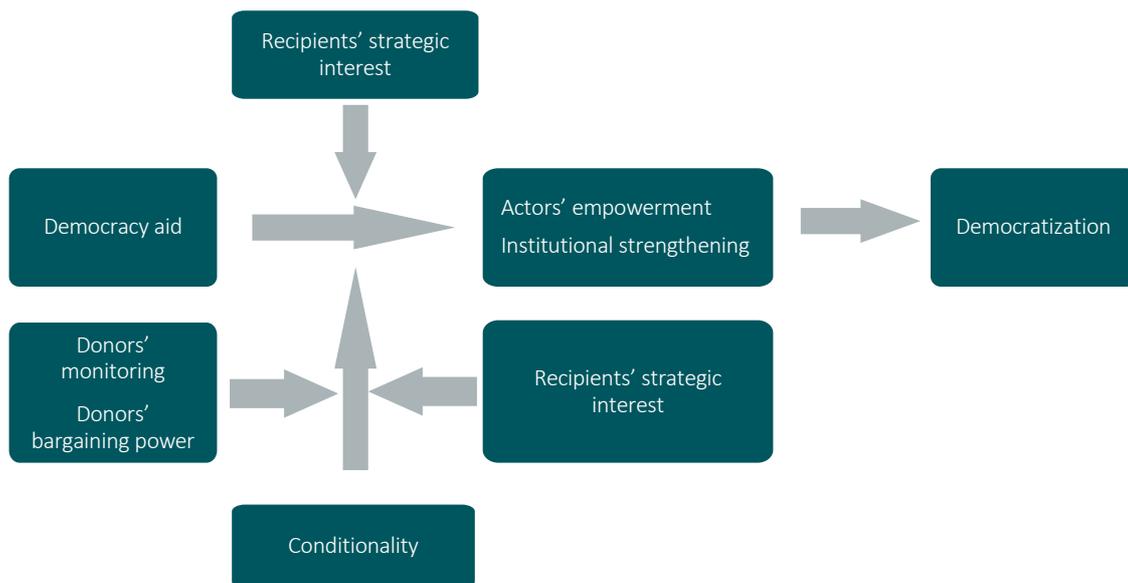
³¹ Lührmann 2019.

democracy aid is more likely to be efficient when the size of the military is small since the military is likely to be threatened by political liberalisation.³²

One of the more important recent contributions to this literature is Sarah Bush's book *The Taming of Democracy Assistance*. She presents an argument focusing on the strategic interactions between the recipient government, the donor governments as well as organisations in the democracy aid establishment. She argues that these strategic interactions will lead to the taming of democracy assistance, that is, regime-compatible assistance with measurable outcomes that does not directly confront dictators, and this assistance can have a negative impact on effective democratization.³³

A quite unusual argument is found in a recent article by Sebastian Ziaja. He argues that the diversity of donors involved in democracy aid makes a difference. More fragmented aid is preferable since no donor is likely to find an optimal way to promote democracy, and if many donors offer democracy aid, local actors can choose among different options rather than a blueprint being imposed by donors.³⁴

Figure 7 - Democracy aid: Theories of change with conditional effects



Democracy aid to civil society and political parties and other (specific) types of democracy aid

A few studies have focused on particular types of aid. As mentioned above, Lührmann examined electoral assistance.³⁵ There are also a few studies on factors that contribute

³² Savage 2017.

³³ Bush 2015.

³⁴ Ziaja 2020.

³⁵ Lührmann 2019.

to resistance to international civil society funding with a similar focus on the incumbent's strategic interest in upholding international recognition, but at the same time not risking losing power. More resistance to international civil society funding is found, for instance, when regimes are threatened domestically and when a recipient that feels threatened receives more aid and holds competitive elections that may threaten the incumbent.³⁶ Other studies have pointed to other challenges with internationally financed NGOs, such as failure to address the most pressing local concerns, organisations being accountable to donors instead of their members or local populations and organisations having to adapt their work to donors' demands also in terms of content.³⁷

Several studies have identified challenges with political party support.³⁸ Ash argued, in a case study on Belarus that support for opposition parties in elections in authoritarian regimes may be harmful for the opposition and bolster the regime. In these contexts, oppositional parties are incentivised to participate in elections since that can provide more aid to them, but participating in elections may actually harm the opposition more than strengthen them since it may lead to increased repression against them.³⁹ In a case study in Morocco, it was asserted that party assistance helps strengthen the status quo in a hybrid regime since those parties that can be supported more or less belong to the system in place.⁴⁰

3.3 PERSPECTIVES OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY IN RESEARCH ON AID

The perspectives of people living in poverty does not figure very prominently in the research on the more general relationship between aid and democratization. However, some articles explicitly focused on aspects related to the perspectives of people living in poverty. A case study on social accountability mechanisms in Cambodia and the Philippines concluded that those arrangements are not very likely to lead to the empowerment of people living in poverty, contrary to expectations of international donors that promote those types of mechanisms as ways to improve democratic governance. The study argued that social accountability mechanisms run the danger of being cooptated by the regime and activists are drawn into technical and administrative process instead of engaging in autonomous political action.⁴¹ Another case study on two Indian villages found that the influx of aid financing, international actors and NGOs after the tsunami in 2004 had various impacts on different groups in these communities. Interestingly, marginalised groups (low caste groups) and women use

³⁶ Christensen and Weinstein 2013; Dupuy et al. 2016.

³⁷ Nagel et al. 2015; Kamastra and Knippenberg 2014.

³⁸ See also Erdmann 2010; Svåsand 2014.

³⁹ Ash 2015.

⁴⁰ Bolleyer and Storm 2010.

⁴¹ Rodan and Hughes 2012.

formal channels in their interactions with the state to voice their concerns whereas elite groups tend to use informal channels to a greater degree.⁴²

3.4 GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN RESEARCH ON AID

The gender perspective is largely absent in general research on the relationship between aid and democratization. However, a few articles focused specifically on gender-related aspects, with some related to women's empowerment more broadly and others to the introduction of gender quotas in recipient countries' parliaments and women's political participation.⁴³

A field experiment conducted in villages in Afghanistan to test the impact of a development program that mandated female participation showed that the intervention had some impact on women's empowerment in terms of the broader acceptance of women's participation and increased women's participation outside their households; however it had no effect on attitude towards women's broader role in society.⁴⁴

Sarah Bush argued that international pressure for reform is an important factor in explaining gender quotas. According to Bush, recipients of aid introduce gender quotas to show their commitment to democracy. Employing a statistical analysis of a large global sample of countries over time, she showed that countries that are more heavily aid dependent are more likely to introduce gender quotas; the same is true for countries that invite international electoral observers and countries with UN peace operations.⁴⁵

Amanda Edgell also argued that international pressure may be important for the adoption of quotas. However, she also examined whether activities targeted towards women's empowerment make a difference. Her results were mixed. On the one hand, it seems like recipients dependent on US aid are more likely to adopt quotas, especially less democratic states, suggesting that signalling is important. On the other hand, aid flows targeting women's empowerment from other DAC donors also seem to matter in the adoption of women's quota.⁴⁶ A working paper similarly showed that aid targeting women's equality organisations and institutions increases women's participation in national parliaments in the MENA region.⁴⁷

However, Bush also argued that supporting gender equality through, for example, increasing women's participation is not likely to lead to the breakdown of dictatorships. She showed an example involving democracy assistance in Jordan:

⁴² Kruks-Wisner 2011.

⁴³ See also Pospieszna 2015.

⁴⁴ Beath et al. 2013.

⁴⁵ Bush 2011.

⁴⁶ Edgell 2017.

⁴⁷ Balamoune-Lutz 2013.

Although those programs all explicitly claimed to promote democracy in Jordan, only some were designed to challenge Jordan's King Abdullah. The Jordanian legislature, for example, is a favorite institution of the monarchy, which uses the parliament as a means to distribute patronage to supporters; it is not an engine of democratization but instead a tool of autocratic survival. NDI's effort to increase women's representation thus took place within a regime-sanctioned institution and played into the regime's strategy of impressing foreign donors with a progressive record (for the region) on gender. Meanwhile . . . there is little evidence that the female participants in such programs used their new positions to press for change. Elsewhere, USAID's electronic voting system collected dust – especially during the lengthy periods when the king dismissed parliament at will. As such, it did little to destabilize liberal authoritarianism in Jordan.⁴⁸

3.5 CONCLUSIONS: RESEARCH FRONTIER

A few general findings from this mapping exercise are important to note. First, there was a clear distinction in the academic research between theories of change for foreign aid in general and theories of change in democracy aid, defined as aid that specifically supports democracy in aid recipient countries. This implies that the assumed factors that explain the theory and the expected impact depend on the type of aid, be it general or democracy aid. Aid in general was mostly found to have no effect or a negative impact on democracy whereas a positive relationship was found in several studies on democracy aid. Second, it should be noted that the context in which aid activities are implemented is of great importance in research. However, this is not to say that everything is case-specific; rather, specific types of contexts provide a more enabling environment for the implementation and therefore the successful impact of aid. The incumbent's strategic interest and donors' ability to credibly condition aid on political reform are important factors in creating enabling environments. Third, the mapping exercise also showed that the perspectives of gender and of people living in poverty are rarely present in the articles although some explicitly examined gender-related aspects of democracy support and factors related to the perspectives of people living in poverty.

3.5.1 Implications of conclusions: Potential risks and aid to non-democratic governments

The research on the relationship between aid and democratization has important implications for potential risks and whether and how donors should engage with non-democratic governments. The research analysed points to the importance of analysing the impact of the strategic interest of the recipient. The risks of obstruction and cooptation are important to consider both in democracies and non-democracies: To what extent will recipient governments obstruct aid implementation? To what extent will recipient governments coopt civil society organizations, political parties and mechanisms for decision-making? There are, however, additional risks to take into account in relation to non-democracies. First, are conditions on political reforms targeting meaningful reform or will it result in pure window-dressing? Second, to what

⁴⁸ Bush 2015, 53-54.

extent risk aid programs to be used to keep the ruler in power by for example legitimizing the authoritarian regime.

4 Mapping approaches among donors

The following sections map insights from donors based on the questions posed in Section 1.1 and the methodology presented in Section 2. A summary of results from all donors are found in the ‘Matrix of categorisation of donors’ (Annex 3).

4.1 DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY AMONG DONORS

The following describes three different aspects related to definitions of democracy among donors. First is the absence of strict definitions of democracy, second is the qualification of governance as related to democracy using terms such as ‘democratic governance’ or ‘inclusive governance’, and third is how donors perceive democratization as primary a process of extending political inclusion. Democracy is thus a broader and more encompassing concept among donors compared to the research reviewed and the process-oriented perspective among donors imply that they seldom define democratization as regime change.

4.1.1 The absence (and presence) of a definition of democracy

Several of the interviewed donor officials were hesitant to define democracy and it was clear that some donors refrained from defining democracy altogether. Donor officials from UNDP, EU and FCDO said in interviews that they do not have a definition of democracy⁴⁹ although their approaches to democracy are quite different. EU and FCDO took a firm stance in defence of democracy as a political system while UNDP refrained from using the concept altogether.⁵⁰ The strategic documents of UNDP do not mention democracy but instead use the concept of inclusive and accountable governance.⁵¹ It was also clear from the interviews with UNDP officials that they would not say they worked on democracy promotion; instead, UNDP’s strategy is on inclusive, effective and accountable governance. UNDP’s aim is not to promote a specific foreign policy objective, as democracy, but to support local governments in their efforts to promote representation, participation and better decision-making.⁵²

But there may be differences within the UNDP since it is an extremely decentralised organisation, and it was clear that even though it adopts no definition of democracy, UNDP works in many areas to assist governments in their efforts to be representative, accountable and transparent to their populations, which are considered by other donors

⁴⁹ Interviews UNDP, EU, FCDO.

⁵⁰ Interview EU; DFID 2019.

⁵¹ UNDP 2017a.

⁵² Interviews UNDP.

to be within the area of democracy promotion.⁵³ The heart of the idea is that the goal to foster an inclusive social contract and several aspects of democracy are important in this endeavour.⁵⁴

Some donor officials at GAC said that the agency and its official documents do not have a particular definition. On occasions when they were asked about how much is spent on democracy, they decide on which OECD/DAC purpose codes should denote spending on democracy aid. However, other interviewees did provide their definitions.⁵⁵

The OSF broadly defines democracy as a government for and by the people. It includes elements of vertical and horizontal accountability as well as political participation in but also beyond elections.⁵⁶

USAID documents emphasise that one of the agency's objectives is democracy (see also USAID 2019b). The stated goal of the Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) strategy explicitly refers to democracy:

*USAID's overarching goal in DRG is to support the establishment and consolidation of inclusive and accountable democracies to advance freedom, dignity and development.*⁵⁷

However, in the interviews, an explicit definition of democracy was not clear. One of the interviewees referred to citizen-responsive governance as the definition that is often used and the work being about creating channels between citizens and the government and increasing participation. Other interviewees said they do not discuss the definition of democracy.⁵⁸

However, the only donors in this sample that explicitly defined democracy in a general strategic document were USAID and SDC. The USAID's strategic policy document on democracy, human rights and governance has a definition, but it should be noted that it is not mentioned up front but rather at the end of the document, in the glossary:

Democracy refers to a civilian political system in which the legislative and chief executive offices are filled through regular, competitive elections with universal suffrage. Democracy is characterized by civil liberties, including the rights to speech, association, and universal suffrage, as well as the rule of law and respect for pluralism and minority rights. Democracy means 'rule by the people' wherein the authority of the state is rooted in the explicit consent of its citizens. Following from this basic conception, the extent of democracy in a given society can be considered along three key dimensions: 1) the degree of free contestation for political

⁵³ Interviews UNDP; UNDP 2015, 2016, 2017a.

⁵⁴ UNDP report 2016.

⁵⁵ Interviews GAC; GAC 2019b.

⁵⁶ OSF interview.

⁵⁷ USAID 2013, 13.

⁵⁸ USAID interviews.

authority; 2) the extent and character of inclusion in that contestation; and 3) the level of recourse to democratic deliberation based on dialogue and the exchange of ideas.⁵⁹

The SDC defines democratization as the introduction of a democratic system and then discusses what a democratic system is. Similar to the USAID, the SDC mentions this in the glossary of a strategic document:

Democratisation is the introduction of a democratic system. At its core, democracy is a system in which the government is controlled by the people and in which citizens are considered equals in the exercise of that control. The legitimacy of political institutions is based on people's consent, either by direct vote or through representation. This is usually backed by constitutional guarantees for equal rights to vote, the liberty of opinion and free media, equality before the law, the separation and control of powers and the principle of the rule of law, which binds state authority to a constitutional framework and legal norms.⁶⁰

4.1.2 Democracy as democratic or inclusive governance

In the absence of a strict definition of democracy, several donors use other terms to define the area of their work and their goals in their approaches to democratization. Many times, they use broader terms that are arguably related to democracy or contain aspects of it, such as democratic governance, inclusive governance or inclusive and accountable politics. For example, FCDO relates to accountable and inclusive politics or open, inclusive and accountable governance.⁶¹

GAC is one of the donors that focus on a broader term, in this case inclusive governance, for their democracy support.⁶² The inclusivity of governance is defined as follow:

Governance is inclusive when it effectively serves and engages all people; takes into account gender and other facets of personal identity; and when institutions, policies, processes and services are accessible, accountable and responsive to all members of society.⁶³

However, one interpretation is that inclusive governance is considered a core concept, another interpretation can be that GAC considers inclusive governance as a democratic approach to governance. In fact, inclusive governance is also sometimes referred to as a broader concept than democracy itself, and narrower definitions of democracy were sometimes provided in the interviews.⁶⁴ It was clear and manifested in the interviews that donor officials sometimes define democracy in narrower terms than inclusive governance, but they are not always convinced that there is a difference between the two. In restrictive terms, democracy is, for example, a form of government in which the people being governed choose those who would govern them, a peaceful and pluralistic participation in the governance of a country, a certain set of institutions by

⁵⁹ USAID 2013, 37; also stated in a shorter version in USAID 2014, 14.

⁶⁰ SDC 2020b, 40.

⁶¹ Interview FCDO; DFID 2019.

⁶² GAC 2020.

⁶³ GAC 2019a.

⁶⁴ Interviews GAC; GAC 2019a.

which people make their choices known to their government, and the way citizens participate in the governance of their society.⁶⁵

The EU makes a distinction between which aspects of governance should be included in democracy support and which are not related to democracy per se (EU interview).

4.1.3 Democratization as a process (more political inclusion, more democracy)

Donors often refrained from using the concept of democratization⁶⁶ since it has bad connotations, expressing some type of imposition of certain values rather than supporting countries to strengthen their implementation of their own international commitments⁶⁷ or promoting the assumption of democracy as an end state or a linear process.⁶⁸

Democratization is not often found in donor documents, but it is interesting to note that the term is used on EU/DEVCO's website:

*The EU supports democratisation and fundamental freedoms in partner countries by encouraging broad participation in political decision-making and local ownership of sectors that are key to sustainable development.*⁶⁹

However, when donor officials nevertheless opted to define democratization, they often saw it as a process, for example, of expanding democratic space, extending and increasing the means of democratic expression and providing more opportunities for citizens to contribute to the governance of their country⁷⁰ and not often as a regime change towards a democratic direction. An exception may be SDC, which, as noted above, defines democratization as the introduction of a democratic system.⁷¹ Moreover, OSF uses democratization to denote both a process and the transition to democracy.⁷² Sometimes the framing of democratization is used by UNDP at the country level, but then it is about the transition to democracy. The term would only be used when countries are heading in the right, democratizing direction, and would not be referred to if countries were heading in the other direction, experiencing democratic backsliding or transitions from democracy.⁷³

4.2 THEORIES OF CHANGE

As mentioned in Section 2.5, it is not an easy task to provide theories of change for different donors since these are usually not explicitly spelled out in relation to

⁶⁵ Interviews GAC.

⁶⁶ Interviews GAC; interviews EU; interview FCDO.

⁶⁷ Interview EU.

⁶⁸ Interview FCDO.

⁶⁹ EU 2020b.

⁷⁰ Interviews GAC.

⁷¹ SDC 2020b.

⁷² Interview OSF.

⁷³ Interviews UNDP.

democracy/democratization. It should be noted that donors usually do not claim a single theory of change, and several interviews even stated that there cannot be a single, homogenous theory of change since these processes are all localised and national specific, which needs local and nuanced decisions.⁷⁴ All donors also stressed the importance of decentralised decisions on which activities to undertake, what actors to support etc. As an example, DRG country assessments are extremely important for how strategies and thus programmes of USAID are set up in particular countries since they point to in which areas and among which actors there is a potential for change and where there is less of opportunities and even closing areas.⁷⁵

The following sections are therefore an attempt to interpret what could be considered implicit theories of change among the different donors. These are grouped according to different types or factors in their theories of change that are considered to be important for democracy: political inclusion and participation, democratic system components, governance, other sectors' contribution to democracy and leverage by aid financing (see Figure 8 for the most important factors).

Figure 8 - Main theories of change in donors' approaches to democratization



4.2.1 Political inclusion and participation

There was a strong emphasis on supporting the broadening of political inclusion among many donors. UNDP, for example, focuses on fostering inclusive participation by supporting electoral processes but also uses political inclusiveness to motivate several efforts to support other democratic processes and institutions, such as constitutional support, political party assistance and support to parliaments.⁷⁶ According to FCDO/DFID, more inclusion is important, as it will increase accountability.⁷⁷

GAC highlights the broadening and widening of the number of voices and especially the inclusion of those who have been traditionally excluded. One part of this work is to

⁷⁴ Interviews UNDP; interviews USAID.

⁷⁵ Interviews USAID.

⁷⁶ UNDP 2015.

⁷⁷ DFID 2019.

support the production of information (e.g., capacity of statistical agencies) so that they can provide data that can be used by actors to make their voices heard.⁷⁸

4.2.2 Strengthening democracy through the components of a democratic system

Strengthening democracy through the components of a democratic system could very well be called an activity-based approach to theories of change since in lieu of coming up with underlying assumptions on why their aid should promote democracy (or concepts related to democracy, such as democratic governance), donor officials often preferred to relate to specific components that are part of their programmes and assumptions about these components' specific impact on certain aspects of democracy. An example is how support for independent media can increase citizens' awareness of government and their understanding of politics and democracy.⁷⁹

That said, several donors' theories of change were focused on strengthening the components of an entire democratic system,⁸⁰ often combining support for different types of political institutions in the state (e.g., parliaments⁸¹ and electoral management bodies) and for non-state actors (e.g., civil society organisations and/or political parties).

The balance between the different components may vary among donors. For example, since the UNDP is hosted by governments, which are themselves members of the UN, the focus has been on the governance side and thus the state institutions of the democratic political system even though they endeavour to also work with non-state actors:

[A]ny attempt to build resilient, democratic governance must empower young women and men as key agents of change in their societies and communities.⁸²

USAID, on the other hand, stresses the empowerment of citizens even though they also support political institutions such as parliaments.⁸³

Electoral processes are important for the donors since elections are seen as a primary aspect of democracy.⁸⁴ Support for inclusive, credible and transparent elections is important since elections are considered necessary but not sufficient for democracy. The strengthening of electoral management institutions is seen as important for electoral processes, and electoral observations are considered a crucial instrument for the EU.⁸⁵ USAID stresses the role of elections in a democratic process as follows:

⁷⁸ Interviews Global Affairs Canada.

⁷⁹ Interview FCDO.

⁸⁰ Interviews UNDP; UNDP 2015; interview SDC.

⁸¹ E.g., EU 2020a, 2020b.

⁸² UNDP 2016, 15.

⁸³ USAID 2013.

⁸⁴ E.g., interview EU.

⁸⁵ EU 2020a, 2020c.

Elections can be a primary tool to help force political openings and expand political participation. The electoral process has often been a principal vehicle for democratization, as authoritarian governments have frequently fallen to democratic forces. For an election to be free and fair, certain civil liberties, such as the freedoms of speech, association, and assembly are required. Elections offer political parties and civic groups an opportunity to mobilize and organize supporters and share alternative platforms with the public. Electoral campaigns also tend to foster political liberalisation. They also serve to encourage political debate.⁸⁶

Civil society support is an important part of many donors' democratization portfolio, which stress the importance of civil society for different democratic outcomes. For GAC, strengthening civil society's voice is to empower participation in democracy.⁸⁷ According to the EU, civil society is seen as 'an essential pillar of a pluralist and inclusive democracy'.⁸⁸ Civil society organisations are seen in EU documents as indispensable implementing partners, watchdogs and advocates for democracy and human rights.⁸⁹ The support for human rights defenders and democracy activists is an important part of EU's support for civil society.⁹⁰ According to FCDO, the support for civil society is important to increase the civic space.⁹¹ A similar approach was found in USAID documents. Civil society is important for fostering accountability and channelling citizens' voices.⁹² A strong role for civil society was made clear in the DRG guide from 2019:

It is through the advocacy efforts of civil society organisations and civic education that people are empowered to exercise their rights and gain a voice in the process of formulating public policy and political processes.⁹³

Parties are considered by some donors as important to support since they are significant intermediaries between society and the rulers and are seen as a key institution of political representation and participation.⁹⁴

Free media is another component that several donors mentioned. The support for free flow of information and independent media is important in getting a real opposition to the regime.⁹⁵ Media which allows people to access credible and reliable information and use that information within the formal political process fosters an open society (interview EU; interview FCDO).

⁸⁶ USAID 2019a, 60.

⁸⁷ Interview GAC.

⁸⁸ EU 2019b, 5.

⁸⁹ EU 2019a, 2020c.

⁹⁰ Interviews EU; EU 2020a.

⁹¹ FCDO interview.

⁹² USAID 2019, 2013.

⁹³ USAID 2019a, 40.

⁹⁴ Interview EU; see also EU 2020a, 2020b; see also USAID 2013.

⁹⁵ Interview EU; see also EU 2020a.

Several donors emphasise the importance of human rights.⁹⁶ GAC emphasises the importance of expanding rights for people’s empowerment.⁹⁷ The EU stresses that human rights and democracy are ‘interdependent and mutually reinforcing’.⁹⁸

4.2.3 Governance contributing to democracy

As we have seen above, governance was many times included in the concepts, such as inclusive governance, to define the aims and goals of donors in the area of democratization support. In this regard, Inclusive or democratic governance was many times seen as the aim for this area of support, but the support for governance, rule of law and anti-corruption was also seen by several donors as an important factor in strengthening democracy and accountability more generally.⁹⁹

The strengthening of state institutions can, according to UNDP, strengthen trust and legitimacy of the political system, and rule of law is considered an important factor in promoting participation among the poorest and most vulnerable and supporting their human rights:

The rule of law, where firmly and fairly established, allows the poorest and most vulnerable people to secure their human rights, access legal protection and participate in decisions that affect them. In empowering people, it drives inclusive, equitable development, and underpins stable societies. (UNDP 2015, 28)

USAID also considers governance as an important factor in sustaining democracy, noting that the ability of the system to deliver is important for confidence among citizens:

Because citizens lose confidence in a government that is unable to meet their basic security and service needs, the degree to which a government is able to carry out its responsibilities at any level is often a key determinant of a country’s ability to sustain democratic reform.¹⁰⁰

In GAC’s notion of inclusive governance, it is believed that inclusive governance fosters respect for diversity and for human rights. There is also a belief that strengthening the state will foster trust in it since citizens will be more satisfied with the delivery of public services. This more indirect support is also seen as less sensitive than working on more political issues but it varies depending on the context. In some contexts, the work on democracy is not as explicit, but then there is a perception that fostering involvement in decision-making and the participation of civil society organisations in other areas such as education and making public service more responsive generally contributes to inclusive governance.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ E.g., USAID 2013.

⁹⁷ GAC 2018.

⁹⁸ EU 2020a, 18.

⁹⁹ See for example EU 2019a; interview SDC; interview OSF.

¹⁰⁰ USAID 2019a, 64.

¹⁰¹ Interviews Global Affairs Canada.

4.2.4 Other sectors contributing to democratization

The agencies are quite strictly divided into their sectors of work and do not tend to think in terms of a democracy portfolio encompassing all support that would in one way or another facilitate democratization.¹⁰² If donors do relate to other sectors, it is often in relation to the governance of those sectors, such as making sure that programmes in other sectors include a broad range of stakeholders and that women's network and, more broadly, civil society actors are included.¹⁰³ For instance, it is more about democratic processes and practices in education than about education contributing to democratization writ large. There is clearly some integration of democratic governance into other sectors, but less emphasis is put on whether these sectors could contribute to democracy. Civic education is an example of how USAID works to promote democracy through education, with the idea that knowledge of how the system works will foster politically engaged citizens in the future, but it is actually considered a part of the DRG programme.¹⁰⁴

However, in some interviews and in several donor documents, some other sectors are mentioned as important for fostering democracy, in which stability and peace are seen as crucial factors.¹⁰⁵ Economic inclusion and the reduction of economic inequality is, for example, thought to increase trust in democracy. Democracy needs to deliver to sustain itself: 'Combating inequality is crucial for rebuilding trust in democracy and its institutions'.¹⁰⁶ However, according to an interviewee, we should not expect that work on poverty reduction, reducing economic inequality etc. will lead to change in a democratic direction in autocracies. Transitions usually come as a surprise; they are hard to predict. Assistance to non-democratic states may be important, nevertheless, to reduce inequality and poverty for its own sake.¹⁰⁷

Economic development, less poverty and better education are seen to contribute to the demand side, the empowerment of citizens.¹⁰⁸ FCDO stresses that the arrows work in both directions. There are important feedback loops to consider; inclusion, stability and economic growth all facilitate a more open, inclusive and accountable governance.¹⁰⁹

USAID mentions the importance of a middle class for democratization and of property rights to foster the expansion of the middle class. In relation to hybrid regimes, an inclusive economic environment, economic competition and trade liberalisation are important factors in reducing the regime's control.¹¹⁰

¹⁰² E.g., interview EU.

¹⁰³ E.g., interview FCDO; interviews USAID; interview SDC.

¹⁰⁴ Interview USAID; for an example, see USAID 2019c.

¹⁰⁵ USAID 2013; interview USAID.

¹⁰⁶ EU 2019b, 4; see also interviews EU.

¹⁰⁷ Interview EU.

¹⁰⁸ Interview UNDP.

¹⁰⁹ DFID 2019.

¹¹⁰ USAID 2013.

However, it should be noted that donors' documents and interviews with donors give the impression that donors' focus is more often on the other way around, that is, how democracy can contribute to different outcomes, such as reduced inequality and economic prosperity, rather than on how these factors are related to democratization.

4.2.5 Political leverage through financing with conditionalities

Only in interviews with EU officials was the approach of leverage through economic aid with conditionalities mentioned. It was argued that since budget support gives donors the opportunity to have policy dialogues with the highest levels in recipient countries, this can be an efficient way of exerting influence and pushing for political reform in a democratic direction. The indicators used as conditionalities can be tailored to the specific issues where the donor wants to see change. It is, according to the interviewee, an efficient way of having influence even though the funding in itself is fungible. Budget support is thus seen as a political instrument that can be used to foster political change in a democratic direction.¹¹¹

4.3 ADAPTION TO SPECIFIC TYPES OF CONTEXTS AND SITUATIONS

The main foundation for adaption to specific contexts seems to be case by case. When interviewed, donors commonly stressed the importance of country-specific strategies and context analysis that form the backbone of what they decide to do on the ground. For example, UNDP programmes are formulated at the country level, and programme decisions are made in collaboration with local stakeholders. UNDP works closely on the ground and is represented wherever they collaborate with both local and international staff.¹¹² The analysis of the specific case is thus evidently and unsurprisingly crucial, and this is also put forward in various donor documents.¹¹³

However, even though donors adapt to specific contexts by being case specific, there may be patterns in donors' approaches to democratization in different **types of contexts** and different **types of situations**. How do donors perceive working in non-democratic settings? Are there types of contexts or situations in which donors prefer to work with non-state actors as opposed to state actors? How do donors adapt to rapid changes in democracy, such as democratic backsliding? In the next sections, we will explore these questions.

¹¹¹ Interview EU.

¹¹² Interviews UNDP.

¹¹³ E.g., SDC 2016; USAID 2013.

4.3.1 Non-democratic settings

USAID, FCDO and SDC list particular regimes/contexts and provide a kind of regime or context typology related to democratic vs. authoritarian settings. They also list context-specific approaches to different situations at a strategic level.¹¹⁴

The DFID/FCDO position paper lists five different ‘development challenges’: active conflict and humanitarian response, fragile contexts, non-democratic political systems, stable but stuck, and middle-income-/transition-/prosperity-focused geographies. The different contexts are not defined further, but DFID/FCDO does list what approaches ‘might be applicable to the context’.¹¹⁵

The USAID strategy on DRG lists four different country contexts that are similar to regime typologies in the academic literature: authoritarian regimes, hybrid regimes, developing democracies and consolidated/liberal democracies. The document also describes at some length the characteristics of each and what the general direction of DRG support should be in each particular context. The strategy also adds three different types of situations that may influence DRG work in the country: whether a country is in a transition, is backsliding or is fragile/in conflict. It is emphasised that if a regime experiences backsliding, there should be a shift in USAID policy.¹¹⁶ However, the document also highlights that a strategy must be country-specific, ‘guided by the realities on the ground’.¹¹⁷ Moreover, when asked about these different regimes and USAID’s work in these particular contexts, donor officials stressed that what matters are country-specific factors.¹¹⁸ Other donors did not seem to have elaborated on regime typologies. For example, a UNDP interviewee said they do not work with rigid typologies.¹¹⁹

As mentioned above, DFID/FCDO lists non-democratic political systems as one of the ‘development challenges’ and highlight some context-specific approaches, but the recommendations are broad, such as ‘Engage pragmatically to support growth and inclusion whilst acknowledging dilemmas and working toward inclusive institutions’.¹²⁰ FCDO also mentions the promotion of local forms of collective action. Moreover, FCDO should also be prepared to ‘move quickly to support movements of rapid change’¹²¹

SDC recently published a policy note on the theme of working in authoritarian settings in which different types of regimes are listed: autocracy, liberalised autocracy, limited political democracy and political democracy (see Box 2). It is important to mention that SDC emphasises a continuum along two dimensions: liberalisation and

¹¹⁴ DFID 2019, 20; USAID 2013, 27-28; SDC 2020a, 3, 6-9.

¹¹⁵ DFID 2019, 20.

¹¹⁶ USAID 2013.

¹¹⁷ USAID 2013, 27.

¹¹⁸ Interviews USAID.

¹¹⁹ Interview UNDP.

¹²⁰ DFID 2019, 20.

¹²¹ DFID 2019, 20.

democratization. It also highlights the advantages of staying engaged in settings of democratic backsliding. SDC develops at some length how approaches can be adapted to different types of regimes. In difficult authoritarian settings, it is important to adapt activities, but dialogues with authoritarian leaders may also be fruitful; however, it is also important to consider risks, especially in autocracies in which risks with the fungibility of aid is high, and aid can be used for other purposes to support the survival of the regime.¹²²

Box 2 - SDC strategy in four types of regimes

<p><u>Limited Political democracy</u> Regime characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular free and fair elections • Restricted participation for certain groups • Limited civil liberties <p>Focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralization • Political accountability (judicial system, parliament, media etc.) • CSOs <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political capture of key institutions • Reformers removed from office 	<p><u>Political democracy</u> Regime characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective participation before a policy is adopted or rejected • Equality in voting • Informed electorate • Citizen control of the political agenda • Inclusion <p>Focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks and balances • Political pluralism (political parties and parliaments) • Long-term view of governance processes (sectoral budget support, fiscal decentralization systems)
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Source: SDC 2020a. Regime characteristics, policies etc. are examples and not exhaustive lists.

4.3.2 Non-state vs. state actors in different contexts

The case-to-case approach is also prominent with regard to the balance between civil society actors and the state.¹²³ However, even though all agencies work with both state and non-state actors, there is some adaption to non-democratic vs. democratic countries: civil society actors seem to be preferred to state actors in non-democratic recipient countries. There are situations in which donors choose to work with civil society and refrain from working with states on certain issues if there are political difficulties, democratic deficits, and practical difficulties or different types of risks such as corruption,¹²⁴ and there are special considerations regarding non-democratic incumbents:

¹²² SDC 2020a.

¹²³ Interviews EU.

¹²⁴ Interviews GAC.

*You have to be more careful with governments that don't have track records of democratic participation and therefore you scale back your work with those governments.*¹²⁵

In the different regimes described in the USAID DRG strategy, there is a difference in how the work should relate to the state. In authoritarian regimes, the focus of the strategies is on non-state actors whereas in developing democracies, there is more emphasis on government partnerships.

*DRG strategies in these countries [authoritarian regimes] typically strengthen democracy and human rights activists outside government by working with NGOs, watchdog groups, independent media and political parties that are committed to democratic principles and value fundamental freedoms.*¹²⁶

It should be noted that in the interviews, more specific country strategies were considered more important than regime typologies, and there was also an emphasis on foreign policy concerns. However, in the interviews with USAID officials, it was also mentioned that there may be situations where it can be more efficient to work with civil society or to work locally if it is harder to have an influence at the national level; however, it was far from clear that democratization would be easier to achieve at the local level.¹²⁷ Also, SDC officials mentioned that the solution has sometimes been to work at decentralised levels, but that this strategy is not always efficient; local levels are as much co-opted as national levels. It is a matter of finding the right level of engagement in the particular situation and context.¹²⁸

Even though there seemed to be some preference for working with civil society actors as opposed to the government in non-democratic settings, it was also extremely clear, especially perhaps in the interviews with donor representatives, that one must not always refrain from working with the state in authoritarian regimes. The balance in different sectors may shift, even within democratic governance, but it is not always obvious that donors prefer turning to civil society actors in these contexts. For example, EU officials said that the more a country moves away from fundamental principles, the more the balance would shift from state actors to civil society, but one must also balance that with the need of the population, and sometimes there is not much of a choice but to continue to work with non-democratic governments. The focus of the work may be different in non-democratic settings than in more democratic countries, for example, working more with issues that are related to governance, accountability and transparency rather than democratic governance or work in other sections and more at a technical level, such as education.¹²⁹

According to the interviewees, the USAID does not refrain from working with the state in authoritarian regimes, but working in a particular context, withdrawing or focusing on different aid sectors are closer to foreign policy decisions than purely developmental

¹²⁵ Interview GAC.

¹²⁶ USAID 2013, 28.

¹²⁷ Interviews USAID.

¹²⁸ Interviews SDC.

¹²⁹ Interviews EU.

concerns. There are non-democratic regimes in which USAID works with the government, such as Vietnam, because it is strategic from a foreign policy perspective, and they have withdrawn from other non-democratic countries, such as Cambodia.¹³⁰ In USAID's DRG strategy, it is mentioned that there may be USAID opportunities for participation for participation and accountability when working with governance in other sectors in authoritarian regimes, but:

“caution must be taken to avoid having development assistance used to enhance the legitimacy of a repressive regime.”

This approach to working in authoritarian regimes is similar to the perspective of GAC. Even in non-democratic countries such as Vietnam, the perception is that strengthening institutions fosters a belief that the state is there to serve the people and that it can strengthen relations between the state and citizens.¹³¹ It therefore makes sense for donors to contribute to capacity building in non-democratic countries as well.

UNDP cannot abandon its work with the state since they are hosted by the government, but there are circumstances in which they do not work directly with host governments. On some occasions, they actually work regionally instead of nationally. They work in the space that is provided for them and look for opportunities for change.¹³² Sometimes it may be difficult to work nationally on some issues, but then they can work with those issues sub-nationally or regionally. This is also a perception in the EU case that it may be possible to work with democracy support at a sub-national level, fostering local democratic institutions. But there can also be situations where there is no space and where it is not possible to do anything since also working with activists would put those people at risk.¹³³

According to the interviewees from GAC, support for civil society organisations is also considered important in situations where there is limited civic space since the idea of civil society can be strengthened. Moreover, there seems to be high confidence in that donors can identify the ‘right’ civil society organisations to work through, for example, their local partners and international partners.¹³⁴

In relation to different implementers of aid, it is also important to mention the choice of working bilaterally vs. multilaterally. There are several benefits to working with multilateral organisations in supporting the strengthening of public institutions. There are economies of scale, some international organisations are considered competent in specific areas, and it may also be less risky for recipients to work with multilaterals when the issues are politically sensitive.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ Interviews USAID.

¹³¹ Interviews GAC.

¹³² Interviews UNDP.

¹³³ Interviews EU.

¹³⁴ Interviews Global Affairs Canada.

¹³⁵ E.g., Interviews Global Affairs Canada.

It is important to note that many of the interviewed donor officials emphasised the importance of other considerations and factors being important for decisions whether to work with the state, withdraw or stay in a certain country etc. These factors are often outside the discretionary powers of the agency. It is thus not only a matter of effectiveness in bringing development, but other factors also play an important role in the decision; salient among the interviewees were, for example, foreign policy concerns and national security.

4.3.3 Adaption to (rapid) changes in democracy

One important way to adapt to specific types of situations such as rapid deterioration in democracy is to employ specific agencies, foreign ministries or special instruments or funding. The EU has special instruments with funds, and USAID special bureaus, such as the Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization, are designed to act faster than the normal workings of the aid agencies.¹³⁶ OSF has specially reserved funding that teams can leverage when there are opportunities or political crises that they want to respond to in different ways. OSF can therefore adapt rapidly to changes in the political environment. The organization looks for opportunities and political crisis and respond to these political changes.¹³⁷

The EU does not have a pre-established strategy but adapts on a case-by-case basis. If changes are rapid, it is hard for a huge organisation like the EU to change its orientation, but shifts within a sector are easier to do than between them. If the area of concentration is not democratic governance, it may be hard to move funds there, and EU also has other instruments at its disposal.¹³⁸

The EU has instruments that imply that there will be policy dialogues with countries in bilateral cooperation with the EU if, for example, there is democratic backsliding. Democratic backsliding can lead to a halt in disbursements or even the stoppage of a whole programme.¹³⁹ However, there are also smaller funds that can be moved faster when there are rapid changes etc. The so-called European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) instrument is often directed towards civil society organisations in difficult situations:

Civil society organisations remained the main recipient of support under the EIDHR. Building on its key strength – the ability to operate without the need for host government consent – the EIDHR was able to focus on sensitive issues and innovative approaches, and to cooperate directly with isolated or marginalised civil society organisations in a timely and flexible manner. For instance, through adapted, flexible procedures such as the EIDHR Human Rights Crises Facility, the EU has provided five direct awards for civil society working in exceptionally difficult conditions.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Interviews EU; USAID.

¹³⁷ Interview OSF.

¹³⁸ Interviews EU.

¹³⁹ Interview EU.

¹⁴⁰ EU 2019a, 19; see also EU 2020c.

There are also examples of specific institutions that should be supported in situations of backsliding:

Where democratic space is under threat we will support democratic institutions such as Parliaments, political parties and the role of the Judiciary in upholding the rule of law and civic freedoms.¹⁴¹

4.4 PERSPECTIVES OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY IN APPROACHES TO DEMOCRATIZATION

Even though most donors would say that their work is focused on marginalised groups, among them people living in poverty, and that the overall aim of their agencies is to *leave no one behind*, the primary focus in relation to their approaches to democratization is on the inclusion of marginalised groups more generally.¹⁴²

For example, GAC highlights several factors that lead to exclusion; it is not only the perspectives of people living in poverty that is important, but also the human rights and representation of any marginalised groups that have been traditionally excluded. They have an intersectional approach that includes several different identities (including LGBTQ2I and a SOGIE, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression lens).¹⁴³

USAID has an inclusive development approach, and as such, it is about the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups more generally and some target groups such as religious organisations, but they do not have a particular approach to perspectives of people living in poverty in their democracy promotion work.¹⁴⁴ Marginalised groups normally denote a wide spectrum of groups in society. The groups that may be important to a large extent pertain to which ones are identified as marginalised or vulnerable in the particular country context.¹⁴⁵

4.5 GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE IN APPROACHES TO DEMOCRATIZATION

All donors included in this study stressed the importance of a gender equality perspective and women's empowerment and political inclusion as an important part of their work, and several agencies mainstream gender in their whole portfolio.

UNDP supports women's empowerment, for example, through legislation for political representation. Women, but also youth, are seen as essential both in terms of their own

¹⁴¹ DFID 2019, 19.

¹⁴² E.g., interviews FCDO; interviews EU.

¹⁴³ Interviews Global Affairs Canada; Global Affairs Canada 2018, 2019a, 2019b.

¹⁴⁴ Interviews USAID; USAID 2013.

¹⁴⁵ Interview FCDO; Interviews USAID.

empowerment but also as change actors, and it is therefore important to support women's political participation.¹⁴⁶

The gender perspective is a strong focus for GAC. Canada has adopted a feminist international assistance policy, and thus, a feminist approach should guide all of Canada's international assistance. Within the area of inclusive governance, this, for example, implies a focus on women's political participation. It is also clear that the emphasis on women and girls is not only seen as important for the empowerment of these groups, but it is also considered as being important for achieving Canada's goals in the development area.¹⁴⁷

All of the EU's assistance mainstreams gender, and the agency has programmes supporting the political participation of women, such as in party politics, but young people are also an important group, and there is also an emphasis on inclusion more generally as mentioned above. EU has specific gender equality targets for their programming and the empowerment of women and girls is a priority in all areas of action according to the last action plan for democracy and human rights.¹⁴⁸

Women's empowerment is important within the inclusive politics dimension of FCDO, and it also figures prominently in an important position paper and reports from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.¹⁴⁹

4.6 CONCLUSIONS: DONORS' APPROACHES TO DEMOCRATIZATION

What are the main conclusions to be drawn from this mapping exercise on donors' approaches to democratization?

First, there are no strict definitions of democracy and democratization that donors adhere to and is applied in their work. However, there is a frequent use of other related terms, such as 'inclusive governance' and 'democratic governance', which denote broader concepts than democracy. Although most donors would agree democracy is present in these concepts, the role democracy plays in those is sometimes ambiguous. Moreover, while democracy is used, many donors avoid the term 'democratization', and when it is used, it commonly refers to the extension of political participation and inclusiveness.

Second, no explicit and centrally formulated theories of change are spelled out in donors' approaches to democratization. There are explicit theories of change, but they refer to the overall goals of the agencies rather than to democratization. The attempt to interpret the underlying assumptions in this area found three important approaches

¹⁴⁶ UNDP 2016; UNDP 2015; interview UNDP.

¹⁴⁷ Interviews GAC; GAC 2017.

¹⁴⁸ Interviews EU; EU 2020a; see also 2020c.

¹⁴⁹ Interview FCDO; DFID 2019; Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2020.

within democracy aid. The first is the strong focus on the political inclusion of different groups in terms of participation, representation and ability to influence policies as being important for democratization. The other approach is activity-based in that donors support activities related to different components such as institutions, processes and actors that they believe are essential for a democratic political system. Donors also highlighted the importance of strengthening governance more generally for sustaining support for democratic political institutions and processes. However, donors do not usually incorporate other sectors (than governance) in their approaches to democratization even though some mentioned, for example, that economic equality is important for the sustainability of democracy. The conditionality approach is, moreover, almost absent from donor agencies' approaches to democratization.

Third, donor officials tended to stress case-by-case adaption rather than overall strategies when asked about how their approaches differ between different regimes (democratic vs. non-democratic) and whether, for example, the balance between working with civil society and the state depends on the type of regime although there are a few examples of donor strategies that explicitly refer to different types of regimes. Although several donors prefer to tip the balance in favour of civil society in non-democratic settings, it was also clear that they also see the benefits of continuing to work with non-democratic states and authoritarian incumbents even if that means focusing on the less politically sensitive areas of democratic governance. However, donors stressed that foreign policy, security concerns and decision-making outside the discretionary powers of their own agency play a significant role in deciding when to continue aid and when to withdraw it.

Fourth, all donors have integrated gender into their approaches to democratization. This often implies a heavy focus on women's political participation and representation and on supporting women in politics and women's civil society organisations. Even though "no one left behind" and other related socio-economic developments are important goals for donor agencies the perspectives of people living in poverty is, as such, not as prominent in donors' approaches to democratization. People living in poverty are considered by some donors as one of several marginalized groups. However, that said, much work is oriented towards the political inclusion and strengthening of human rights of marginalised and vulnerable groups, but who are considered members of these special attention groups differ between donors and country contexts.

Fifth, it is also important to mention that the multilateral donors included in this examination, the UNDP and the EU stand out, in comparison to the bilateral donors, but they stand out in two different extremes. The UNDP is the organization that most clearly refrain from defining democracy and to define their work in this area as democracy aid, while the EU clearly has an agenda for democracy promotion.

Taken together, donors' approaches to democratization tend to focus on people's political inclusion and ability to assert their human rights as citizens. Citizens' empowerment is more at the fore than elite competition. The overall picture that emerges is that of a participatory approach to democratization.

5 General conclusions

There are interesting differences between recipients and donors in their respective approaches to the relationship between aid and democratization (see Table 2). While the strategic interest of incumbent recipients (and of donors to some extent) is prominent in the research, it is not prevalent in the theories of change among donor agencies. This may, at least in some cases, be due to the division of labour between foreign ministries and development aid branches of government. When donor interviewees were asked about strategies in different contexts they sometimes answered that it is beyond their mandate to take such decisions.

The main theories of change among donors seem to be to increase political inclusion and to support components of the democratic political system. The focus on political inclusion among donors is to some extent related to researchers' agent empowerment mechanisms. The focus on different components of a democratic political system is also present among researchers focusing on democracy aid. Although some research show a positive correlation between democracy aid and democracy levels, other researchers point at the risks for recipient regimes' obstruction in the implementation of aid programs in certain type of contexts and thus that democracy aid may not work as intended.

While the conclusion in research is that we should probably not expect regime change in a democratic or authoritarian direction as a result of aid, donors see benefits to working with authoritarian regimes. They wait for opportunities to come; if they are present in the country, donors assume it will be easier to support changes in the case of sudden openings. It may be the case that the mere presence gives those donors an informational advantage and that they can act quicker. However, donors also expect their work in governance more generally to support democratization in the longer run. In this regard research points at risks with cooptation and legitimizing of the authoritarian regime.

Donors' approaches to working with governance in authoritarian regimes is, however, probably also related to the notion of democratization as increasing and extending participation and political inclusion, compared to the more demanding definition among researchers either as increases in democracy levels or regime change. Here it is useful to relate donors' focus on inclusiveness to the two dimensions of democracy suggested by Dahl; political competition (contestation) and participation.¹⁵⁰ Indeed, donors highly focus on increasing inclusion through citizens' participation. There is no guarantee, however, that increased and more inclusive participation will lead to more democratic political competition. If any extension of participation in any forum is regarded as democratization, then this development may be observed in the realms of

¹⁵⁰ Dahl 1971.

an authoritarian regime. However, whether increased participation will lead to regime change in the longer run depends, according to research, on to what extent the authoritarian ruler fails in his or her attempts to coopt participatory activities, oppositional forces etc.

All donors incorporate a gender perspective in their approaches to democratization. People living in poverty are mainly included in donors' focus on the political inclusion of marginalised groups. Research on the general relationship between aid and democratization does not generally include a gender perspective or perspectives of people living in poverty. However, some studies show that aid affects the inclusion of women in politics, although it should be noted that increasing the representation of women in parliaments does not necessarily lead to democratization. Some researchers even point to the risk that these efforts contribute to the strengthening of authoritarian regimes.

Sida can draw several lessons from these mapping exercises. First, there is much research on aid from other sectors (foreign aid in general) and its relationship with democratization, but, beyond democracy aid, donors focus primarily on the governance sector in relation to their democratization support and do seldom seem to consider the impact on democracy of foreign aid to other sectors. Aid to other sectors may, however, have other impacts compared to democracy aid. It has been shown in research to, in some circumstances, to even prevent democratization and to prop up autocracies, it may be worth considering the impact of other types of aid if donors aim to promote democratization. Second, donors need to consider the risks of cooptation of and obstruction to aid programs which could be particularly risky when donors engage with non-democratic governments. Third, donors' theories of change do not often consider different types of contexts or recipients' strategic interests, factors which are important in academic research to understand why aid sometimes harm democracy and sometimes strengthens it. Fourth, since the impact of aid in research is limited to increasing democracy levels and does not seem to affect regime change in a democratic direction, donors' expectations on how their efforts to promote political participation in non-democratic regimes may lead to political change through citizen empowerment may be too optimistic in these settings.

Table 2 - Donors' and researchers' approaches to democratization

Theme	Donors	Academic research
Definition of democracy	Absent or broad Participatory	Political democracy (minimalist or Dahlsian) Participation and contestation
Theories of change	Activities broadening political inclusion Components of democracy Citizens are the main actors of change	Strategic interests of recipients and donors Components of democracy Conditionality Elite and citizens in interaction are the main actors of change
Different types of contexts in terms of types of regimes and political processes (e.g., democratic transition, backsliding, autocratisation etc.)	Not very adaptive at the strategy level, specific units for rapid action in certain situations, adaptive to different contexts on a case- by-case basis	Different contexts are important for theories of change
Perspectives of people living in poverty	One of the marginalised groups	Not prominent
Gender perspective	Prominent	A few studies

Annex 1 - Terms of Reference



Terms of Reference **for the Evaluability study of** **Sida's approach to democratization in** **different contexts**

2020-04-29

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1. Introduction

Sida has strong directives to support democratization in its partner countries as well as to strengthen democracy through support at regional and global levels. The democracy support at these three levels is interconnected and meant to be mutually reinforcing at country level. Implementing these directives can be a challenging and sensitive task given that Sida often operates in complex contexts. The task involves decisions related to how the entire country programme/portfolio should be managed to further democracy, create synergies between sectors and handle trade-offs to avoid possible negative effects. This means that the choice of channels, the level of involvement with the state and/or other change agents as well as how democracy support and support in other sectors contribute to democratization are important considerations. Democracy is Sida's largest thematic area¹ - just over a quarter of all funds disbursed, which is almost twice the average of the world's largest donor countries within the OECD.

The Swedish engagement in democracy support has increased significantly² over time. From 112 MUSD, 16% of Sida's budget in 1998 to 870 MUSD, over a quarter of the budget in 2018. Also, the focus of the interventions has changed significantly. To see how well Sida has adapted to this increased focus, fast growth and change of the sector, Sida intends to conduct an evaluation assessing Sida's approach to democratization relative to the experiences and best practices available.

Sida regularly performs a number of strategic evaluations in areas deemed important for the organization. The strategic evaluation plan for each period is decided by the Director General with support from Sida's management team. For 2020, one of the strategic evaluations expected to be initiated is an evaluation of Sida's approach to democratization in different contexts.

An evaluation of Sida's approach to democratization is also included as part of the proposed actions in Sida's response³ to the Letter of Appropriation 2020, where Sida is tasked to make an inventory and report back to the Swedish Government on Sida's work on democracy in development cooperation⁴.

It is stated in the strategic evaluation plan 2020 that an evaluability study shall be undertaken prior to a decision on the proposed full-scale evaluation. This document is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for this evaluability study.

2. The proposed full-scale evaluation.

This is a short description of the proposed full-scale evaluation of Sida's approach to democratization in different country and regional contexts, as well as on global level.

¹ Democracy is defined in terms of OECD DAC's sector code and includes e.g. human rights, gender equality, the rule of law and public administration.

² Government letter in response to looking through and developing the work on democracy in development cooperation, 2019, and Study on Sida's Support to Public Administration & Institutional Capacity Development 2003-2015: Perspectives, Evidence and Lessons Learned, 2016

³ <https://www.esv.se/statsliggaren/regleringsbrev/?RBID=20271>

⁴ Government letter in response to looking through and developing the work on democracy in development cooperation, 2019

2.1 Users

Primary intended users:

- Sida's networks for Democracy & Human Rights and Freedom of Expression & ICT as well as policy experts and program managers.
- Sida's board and management.
- Operational Departments at Sida's head office, including the geographical departments, the Unit for Democracy and Human Rights (DEMO), the Unit for Civil Society Support (CIVSAM) and the Unit for Capacity Development (KAPAME), as well as Swedish Missions abroad working with development cooperation.

Secondary intended users:

- The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.
- The Swedish Parliament.
- Institutions and organizations engaged in democracy support, and in other thematic areas, as intermediaries or implementors of Swedish democracy support, with a focus on Sida's partners.

Other users:

- International institutions and organizations engaged in democracy support, as intermediaries or implementors and in other thematic areas.
- OECD/DAC Governance Network.
- Like-minded donors and philanthropists.

2.2 Use

- Increased knowledge of Sida's approaches (direct and indirect) to democratization in different contexts.
- Input to improvement/development of the operationalisation and programming of strategies for Swedish Development Cooperation.
- Input to Sida's strategy proposals to the Swedish Government, where democratization is a proposed strategy goal.
- Contribute to learning and development as well as internal consistency in democratization work within Sida at different geographical and organizational levels as well as coherence in Sida's methods, theory and assessments related to this work.
- Support for communication and dialogue with cooperation partners and the general public.
- Part of Sida's response to the assignment in the annual letter of appropriation related to the drive for democracy of the Government of Sweden.

2.3 Tentative areas of interest for the proposed full-scale evaluation

This is a short overview of the current thinking on relevant areas of interest for the proposed full-scale evaluation. Please see also sub-chapter 3.3 on aspects of change logic and theory as well as assessment of democratization that will be considered.

2.3.1 Theory and Logic

- Comparing Sida's different approaches to democratization in different country contexts as well as on regional and global levels (the logic Sida uses and the theory behind it) with approaches used by other donors and in academic research. **This should include a discussion on the suitability and, if deemed feasible, results of Sida's approach as well as recommendations on potential improvements.** On regional and global levels, the focus is primarily on the supportive effect for democratization support at country level.

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- Analyzing and assessing rationality and coherence of the theoretical and methodological approaches, including concepts and definitions used at different levels and departments/units within Sida as well as Sweden's Missions abroad. Furthermore, analysing and assessing Sida's logical/theoretical approach for evaluating/choosing different implementing partners and the partners' approach.
- **As part of this issue the question on how internal learning between departments/units/Swedish missions abroad can improve have a high focus.**
- Espoused theory relative to theory-in-use (what we say we do compared to what is actually done). *When evaluating interventions, implementation failure should be distinguished from theory failure.*

2.3.2 Assessment

- Sida assesses the quality, level and change of democracy in partner countries as well as on aggregated regional and global levels continuously. This is done both as part of a context analysis at country, regional and global level for the purpose of policy discussions as well as part of planning and assessing strategy-, program- and portfolio- results. Since Sida's target groups are often subsets of the population, assessments of effects must be disaggregated into relevant population segments. The proposed full-scale evaluation should compare Sida's (and co-operating partners') approach when assessing levels and changes of democracy with approaches used by other donors and in academic research. This should include a discussion on how the results feed back into the programs as well as Sida's learning and method development. It should also include a discussion on the suitability of Sida's approaches for assessment in different contexts and for the different purposes discussed above as well as recommendations on potential improvements.
- Discussing if using different methods and metrics would significantly alter the perceived outcomes in Sida funded programs and projects (contributions).

3. The assignment

3.1 Purpose of the Evaluability study: Intended use and intended users

This is an evaluability study in preparation for a proposed full-scale evaluation of Sida's approach to supporting democratization in its partner countries, through interventions and partnership on national, regional and global levels. The purpose of the evaluability study is to assess the evaluability of Sida's approach to democracy support and to development cooperation in other thematic areas and sectors supporting democratization. The evaluability study should also provide recommendations on methodology and methods as well as suggest relevant evaluation criteria and questions given the intended use of the proposed full-scale evaluation. The focus shall be on the underlying logic and theory used by Sida, the applied change theories⁵. See 2.3.1.

In addition, the evaluability study shall address the evaluability of the methods used by Sida to assess the situation, progress and results in the sector. See 2.3.2.

⁵ Change logic/theory is used here and in the rest of the document as a generic term and not a specification of any specific school of thought. It is meant to include the logic explaining which (chain of) actions are assumed to lead to which results as well as the theory behind these assumptions

Conclusions and recommendations from this evaluability study will provide input to Sida's Evaluation Unit's (UTV) decision on whether to proceed with the proposed full-scale evaluation. The tender is expected to include suggestions on how to make the process inclusive with for example workshops for discussing recommendations on how to conduct the proposed full-scale evaluation with optimal result. It is expected that the tender will suggest a progress reporting structure on a biweekly basis that keeps UTV current on the findings of the evaluability process. These reports are to be used as input to UTV's parallel planning of the proposed full-scale evaluation.

The results from this evaluability study shall also provide input/data to the proposed full-scale evaluation, described above. The evaluability study is expected to compile two mappings including analysis within the areas of change logic/theories and assessment methods (see 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 below). These mappings shall be made available as two separate reports forming a base for Sida internal discussions and learning. Primary intended users of the mappings are the networks of Democracy & Human Rights and Freedom of Expression & ICT, including policy specialists and operational staff. As part of the process of compiling these mappings it is expected that tenders will propose one seminar/workshop for each mapping based on early findings and that the input from these seminars/workshops are allowed to have a large impact on the final analysis and mappings. It is also expected that tenders will include one learning seminar for each mapping where the results are presented and discussed.

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

3.2 Scope of the Evaluability Study

It is expected that the scope of the evaluability study shall be discussed in the tender. It is also expected that different alternatives for the scope of the evaluability study shall be further elaborated by the evaluator in the inception report with a discussion on pros and cons for the alternatives.

3.3 Objective of the Evaluability Study

3.3.1 Feasibility of the proposed full-scale evaluation

The proposed full-scale evaluation will focus on two main areas, both of which will be discussed more in detail below.

The question on how internal learning between departments/units/missions abroad can improve has a high focus.

(A) Sida's change logic/theory, including how Sida assesses partners' change logic/theory and

(B) Sida's assessment of the quality, level and change of democracy in a country.

The first objective of the evaluability study is to assess the feasibility of the proposed full-scale evaluation with regards to availability of information/data for these two areas (A and B), as well as suitable methodology and methods for data collection. The evaluability study is expected to include a thorough discussion and recommendations on methods both for data collection as well as for evaluating (A) and (B) along the areas of interest discussed in section 2. The evaluability study is expected to include recommendations on the scope of the proposed

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full-scale evaluation. Since the proposed full-scale evaluation would be rather demanding both regarding availability of data and methodology the tender is expected to show an understanding of the issues. When possible, methods prioritizing a larger sample by using desk studies, remote interviews etc. should be used instead of field trips.

To provide some reality feedback on the proposed methods, the report is expected to include a small scale “proof of concept“ collection of information/data from a representative selection of sources (to be defined during the inception phase but not more than four cooperation countries).

The feasibility study should include proposals and discussions on scope, selection criteria regarding countries and interventions, data and suggestions on evaluation criteria and evaluation questions. **This should include a discussion on how the change logic/theory and assessment methods used by Sida and its cooperation partners (data from point A and B below) can constructively be related/compared to the mappings from objective 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 below.**

The tender should include a proposal on a debriefing workshop/seminar where the results relevant for the proposed full-scale evaluation can be discussed.

A) Sida’s change logic and theory as used and/or referenced to explicitly and implicitly within Sida or by an implementing partner.

The proposed full-scale evaluation is expected to include an extensive mapping of the change logic and theory (if any) used by Sida (or if relevant, it’s implementing partners) at different levels within Sida. This includes specifying the underlying logic (cause and effect relationships) of Sida’s democracy support including what resources and activities are expected to produce what results as well as the underlying theory on causality (why are these activities expected to produce these results). The theoretical superstructure should be limited to what is relevant for understanding the assumed causation in the chain of logic described. The theoretical mapping should include the commonly recurring theme - if and how donors should engage with non-democratic governments and, a discussion on the potential effects on democratization from donor involvement in other thematic areas and sectors. How can involvement within different sectors of a donor portfolio interact to support the goal of strengthening democracy? How can involvement through different channels interact to support democratization ?

This is proposed to be done at three levels of analysis within Sida. The levels overlap in some cases and it is expected that a working division for the feasibility study will be agreed on in the inception report.

1. **Sida (agency) level.** Sida has a unit for Policy Support with Lead/Policy Specialists in the area of Democracy and Human Rights including Freedom of Expression/ICT (TEMA), as well as a dedicated unit for global support to Democracy and Human Rights (DEMO). Analysis at this level frequently focuses on policy and aggregated trends.
2. **Strategy level.** Approximately every fifth year a new country and regional strategy governing Sida’s work in each partner country is drafted and adopted by the Government of Sweden. This is done in two steps. First, a strategy proposal is elaborated by Sida which is by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to inform government decisions on country, regional and global a co-operation strategies which govern Sida’s work.
3. **Operational and intervention level.** When a new strategy is launched, the relevant Sida department/unit or Swedish mission abroad

drafts an operationalization plan. A change logic and theory is an explicit part of the operationalization plan. Individual interventions are then initiated or in the case of already existing interventions they are either terminated or continued as deemed relevant for the new strategy. This is usually handled by the relevant country offices or regional departments.

The focus is both on espoused theory: What does Sida's representatives communicate? How does Sida argue in strategy proposals? What does Sida units or Swedish missions abroad say or write in intervention documentation, as well as on what is actually done?

Note that the focus on change logic and theory should be on use relevant to Sida's mission on democracy support and human rights with a focus on people living in poverty/people who are poor⁶.

B. Current assessment of democratization in Sida

Sida assesses the situation and progress of its strategy goals and programs/interventions related to democracy promotion at least yearly. In addition, there is a continuous general discussion on the state of democracy and freedom related to our partner countries among programme officers, thematic experts and policy specialists. The study should assess the feasibility of evaluating the suitability of the assessment methods used by Sida. This should be done at different levels preliminary suggested below but to be agreed on during the inception phase.

- Usage in Sida internal discussions/analysis of the aggregated trends (i.e. 'shrinking democratic space', 'democratic backsliding*', 'autocratisation').
- In Sida internal assessments of goals/targets/progress for interventions and strategy goals.
- In Sida internal country analysis (i.e. Multi-Dimensional Poverty Analysis, MDPA).

3.3.2 State of the art thinking on change logic and theory for democracy promotion

International democracy support among OECD/DAC donors has remained fairly stable as share of donor budgets over time, 7% 1995 versus 10% today. Growing aid budgets however have increased the actual amount spent in the sector by almost 4 times to 12.5 billion USD (2017). During this time the focus of democracy aid has shifted substantially, and several new sub sectors/focus areas have been introduced. We can hope that 35 years of donor and partner experiences as well as academic endeavours have generated some valuable insights into what works well and what works less well in different contexts.

The second objective for the evaluability study is to compile a mapping of the current thinking among donors, partners and academics in the area of change logic and theory. Note that the same focus on practical use and limitations on theoretical superstructure as in the section above should apply here.

The mapping should relate to (but not be limited to) the following issues:

⁶ For a more stringent definition of poverty see Sida Multi-Dimensional Poverty Analysis primer which, in addition to economic resources define a number of other (for Sida) relevant dimensions.

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- Discussions on change logic and theory should, if relevant, also include information on existing criticism and areas of contestation of the logic/theory and if relevant, proposed alternatives.
- The definition of democracy support should include democratic political institutions and processes, human rights, the rule of law, well functioning public administration and institutions, including state building.
- Discussions on the potential effect on democratization from donor involvement in other sectors than democracy support. How can involvement within different sectors of a donor portfolio interact to support the goal of democratization? How can involvement through different channels interact to strengthen democracy?
- Comparison of bilateral support to strengthen democracy versus support through multilateral or international organizations.
- The discussion should include the commonly recurring theme if and how donors should engage with non-democratic governments. This issue should be considered in all of the questions above.
- Include a discussion on Effect versus Cost/Resources versus Risk for change logic/theories discussed where risk includes inherent risks of failure to reach the expected outcomes, risk of adverse effects as well as risks for backlashes in the political sphere in the donor or partner country, including security risks faced by partners.

Democratization processes are complex processes driven by factors to a large extent outside the influence of international development actors, something the logic and theories guiding democracy support must account for. We expect the mapping to use a systems perspective in categorizing the area in a way relevant for addressing complex processes, but the tender should tentatively outline the suggested approach.

Sida's work on strengthening democracy also takes place in many different contexts. It also works with many different approaches, most of the time overlapping. The tender should suggest how the mapping can relate to and include such factors in a constructive and comprehensible way including:

- Can we find a pattern of methodological/theoretical differences based on some categorization of context?
- Can we find a pattern of methodological/theoretical differences based on some categorization of within population target segments?

This mapping should be presented as a stand-alone deliverable (document and presentation) suitable to use as a basis for discussions and learnings. As part of the process of compiling the mapping, it is expected that the tender will include one seminar/workshop based on the early findings and that the input from this seminar/workshop is allowed to have a large impact on the final analysis and mapping. It is also expected that the tender should include a learning seminar after the conclusion of the study where the mapping will be presented and discussed.

3.3.3 State of the art for assessment of the state and change of democracy in developing countries

In order to analyse the state of democracy in our partner countries as well as assess to what extent the intended results of democratization support has been realized, one has to define both the intended results as well as be able to assess the state and change of democracy in a given context. Given the large number of actors as well as the varying contexts, the expected result

of democracy support will vary. Also, the unit of analysis will vary from the state down to different segments of the population.

The third objective for the evaluability study is to compile a mapping and discussion of the current thinking among donors, partners and academics on how to define and assess the levels and changes in the democratization processes of a country as well as its different sub populations. In particular with a focus on how to assess the results of democracy support as well as support through other thematic areas at strategy-, program- and portfolio level (formative as well as summative). Sida's main target group is people living in poverty/people who are poor⁷ within their partner countries so there should be a focus on that sub population in addition to gender. The focus should not be on making a list of yearly indexes but rather on more "analytical" methods. We expect the tender to include a first, tentative suggestion on how to approach this task and a more detailed specification in the inception report.

This mapping/discussion should be presented as a stand-alone deliverable (document and presentation) suitable to use as a basis for discussions and learning. As part of the process of compiling the mapping, it is expected that the tender will include one seminar/workshop based on the early findings and that the input from this seminar/workshop will be allowed to have a large impact on the final analysis and mapping. It is also expected that the tender should include a learning seminar after the conclusion of the study where the mapping will be presented and discussed.

Questions are expected to be developed in the tender by the tenderer and further developed during the inception phase of the evaluability study.

3.4 Approach and methods for the Evaluability Study

It is expected that the evaluator describes and justifies an appropriate evaluability study approach/methodology and methods for data collection in the tender. The evaluability study design, methodology and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully developed and presented in the inception report.

Limitations to the chosen approach/methodology and methods shall be made explicit by the evaluator and the consequences of these limitations discussed in the tender. The evaluator shall to the extent possible, present mitigation measures to address them. A clear distinction is to be made between evaluability study approach/methodology and methods.

A *gender responsive* approach/methodology, methods, tools and data analysis techniques should be used.

Sida's approach to evaluation is *utilization-focused*, which means the evaluator should facilitate the *entire evaluability study process* with careful consideration of how everything that is done will affect the use of the evaluability study. It is therefore expected that the evaluators, in their tender, present

- i) how intended users are to participate in and contribute to the evaluability study process and
- ii) methodology and methods for data collection that create space for reflection, discussion and learning between the intended users of the evaluability study.

In cases where sensitive or confidential issues are to be addressed in the evaluability study, evaluators should ensure a design and process that do not put informants and stakeholders at risk during the data

⁷ For a more stringent definition see Sida Multi-Dimensional Poverty Analysis primer which, in addition to economic resources define a number of other (for Sida) relevant dimensions of poverty as well as integrates the five perspectives, e.g. perspectives of people living in poverty, a human rights based approach (rights perspective) and a gender equality perspective

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collection phase or the dissemination phase. The evaluators will be requested to sign confidentiality agreements with Sida.

4. Organisation of evaluability study management

This evaluability study is commissioned by Sida's Evaluation Unit (UTV) at the Department for Operational Support. Which also, together with the networks for Democracy & Human Rights, Freedom of Expression & ICT, relevant policy specialists and operational staff involved in programming are the intended users. Representatives from UTV together with representatives from relevant units within Sida has formed a steering group, which has contributed to and agreed on the ToR for this evaluability study. The steering group is a decision-making body. It will approve the inception report, the final report of the evaluability study, the mappings and evaluate the tenders. The steering group will participate in the start-up meeting of the evaluability study, as well as in the debriefing/validation workshop and the two mapping workshops where preliminary findings and conclusions are discussed.

5. Quality of the Evaluability Study

All Sida's evaluations shall conform to OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation⁸. The evaluators shall use the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation⁹. The evaluators shall specify how quality assurance will be handled by them during the process.

6. Time schedule and deliverables

It is expected that a time and work plan is presented in the tender and further detailed in the inception report. The evaluability study shall be carried out between June 2020 and February 2021.

The table below lists key deliverables for the process. Alternative deadlines for deliverables may be suggested by the consultant and negotiated during the inception phase.

Workshops will be held in Stockholm. Meetings under point 6 will be virtual. Other meetings will be in Stockholm if deemed feasible by Sida, otherwise virtual.

Deliverables	Participants	Deadlines
1. Start-up meeting (virtual)	Steering group and evaluators	2020-06-17 13:00-16:30
2. Draft inception report delivered.	Evaluators	Mid-August.
3. Inception meeting in Stockholm or virtual	Steering group, evaluators and reference group.	End of August.

⁸ DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, OECD, 2010.

⁹ Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, Sida in cooperation with OECD/DAC, 2014.

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4. Comments from intended users to evaluators	Comments from Sida during inception meeting and in writing after inception meeting.	One week after inception meeting.
5. Approval of inception report	Steering group	
6. Data collection, analysis, report writing and quality assurance including bi-weekly update meetings/discussions with the steering group as a basis for their work on the ToR for the proposed full-scale evaluation.	Evaluators	Up to end of November
7. Workshop as part of input to mapping on change logic/theory (see 2.3.1)	Evaluators, steering group as well as relevant participants invited by the steering committee.	Date agreed on during the inception phase.
8. Workshop as part of input to mapping on assessment methods (see 2.3)	Evaluators, steering group as well as relevant participants invited by the steering committee.	Date agreed on during the inception phase.
9. Debriefing/validation workshop (meeting)	Evaluators, steering group, reference group.	Mid November
10. Draft evaluability study report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study • Mapping change logic/theory • Mapping assessment method 	Evaluators	Beginning December
11. Comments from intended users to evaluators	Steering group	Mid December
12. Final evaluability report	Evaluators	Mid or end January
13. Seminar Feasibility study	Evaluator, UTV, Steering group.	End January or beginning February
14. Workshop Mapping change logic/theory	Evaluators, relevant Sida personell	February, Steering group decides preliminary date during inception phase.

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15. Workshop Mapping assessment methods	Evaluators, relevant Sida personell	February, Steering group decides preliminary date during inception phase.
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The inception report will form the basis for the continued evaluability process and shall be approved by Sida before the evaluability study proceeds to implementation. The inception report should be written in English and cover evaluability issues and interpretations of evaluability questions, present the evaluability study approach/methodology (including how a utilization-focused and gender responsive approach will be ensured), methods for data collection and analysis as well as the full evaluability study design. A clear distinction between the evaluability study approach/methodology and methods for data collection shall be made. All limitations to the methodology and methods shall be made explicit and the consequences of these limitations discussed. A specific time and work plan, including number of hours/working days for each team member, for the remainder of the evaluability study should be presented. The time plan shall allow space for reflection and learning between the intended users of the evaluability study.

The final report as well as **the two mappings** (see 3.2, point 2 and 3) shall be written in English and be professionally proof read. The final reports should have a clear structure. The executive summary should be maximum 3 pages. The evaluability study approach/methodology and methods for data collection used shall be clearly described and explained in detail and a clear distinction between the two shall be made. All limitations to the methodology and methods shall be made explicit and the consequences of these limitations discussed. Findings shall flow logically from the data, showing a clear line of evidence to support the conclusions. Conclusions should be substantiated by findings and analysis. Findings, conclusions and recommendations should reflect a gender analysis/an analysis of identified and relevant cross-cutting issues. Recommendations and lessons learned should flow logically from conclusions. The report should be no more than 35 pages excluding annexes (including Terms of Reference and Inception Report) while a target for the two mappings should be discussed and agreed on during the inception phase. The evaluator shall adhere to the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation¹⁰.

The evaluator shall, upon approval of the final report and mappings, insert them into the Template for Sida Studies in Evaluation¹¹ and submit them to Nordic Morning (in pdf-format) for publication and release in the Sida publication data base. The order is placed by sending the approved reports to sida@nordicmorning.com, with a copy to [Johan Kiessling](mailto:Johan.Kiessling@sida.se) as well as evaluation@sida.se. Write "Sida Studies in Evaluation" in the email subject field. The following information must be included in the order to Nordic Morning:

1. The name of the consulting company.
2. The full report title.
3. The invoice reference "ZZ980601".
4. Type of allocation "sakanslag".
5. Type of order "digital publicering/publikationsdatabas.

¹⁰ Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, Sida in cooperation with OECD/DAC, 2014.

¹¹ The template will be provided by Sida.

7. Evaluability study team qualification

In addition to the qualifications already stated in the framework agreement for evaluation services, the evaluation team shall include the following competencies:

1. Extensive knowledge and experience of democratization support in different contexts, including developing, transitional and conflict and fragility affected countries.
2. An *active* researcher at consultant level PhD with expert knowledge of the research area democratization processes in different contexts, including developing, transitional and conflict and fragility affected countries.
3. An *active* researcher at consultant level PhD with expert knowledge of assessment methods of democratization (situation, levels and results).
4. Extensive experience of other donors' democratization support (processes, assessment methods, theories of change etc), including bilateral, multilateral, European and non-European donors.
5. Extensive experience of at least 5 assignments of evaluating democracy support.
6. Documented knowledge and experience of utilization-focused evaluation and participatory evaluation processes.
7. Extensive facilitation and communication skills.
8. Extensive experience of leading learning workshops.
9. At least one team member must have an excellent command of Swedish.

Please note that the consultancy firm/consortium, including separate members of a consortium carrying out the evaluability study, may not qualify for tendering for the full-scale evaluation due to potential conflicts of interest.

A CV for each team member shall be included in the tender. It should contain a full description of relevant qualifications and professional work experience.

It is important that the competencies of the individual team members are complimentary. It is highly recommended that local consultants are included in the team if appropriate.

The evaluators must be independent from the evaluation object and evaluated activities, and have no stake in the outcome of the evaluation.

8. Financial and human resources

The maximum budget amount available for the evaluability study is 1 800 000 SEK.

The contact person at Sida is Johan Kiessling, VERKSTÖD/UTV. The contact person should be consulted if any problems arise during the evaluation process.

Relevant Sida documentation will be provided by the Evaluation Unit, VERKSTÖD/UTV.

Contact details to intended users will be provided by the Evaluation Unit, VERKSTÖD/UTV.

The evaluator will be required to arrange the logistics for bookings, interviews, preparing visits including any necessary security arrangements. Meetings and workshops with Sida will be prepared in collaboration between Sida and the evaluator but the evaluator has the overarching responsibility for the organization.

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9. Annexes

Annex A: List of key documentation

Regeringsskrivelse till svar på att inventera och utveckla arbetet med demokrati i utvecklingssamarbetet, 2019 (references to important research can be found in the paper)

Sidas skrivelse som svar på Regleringsbrevsuppdrag om Krympande demokratiskt utrymme, 2017

Study on Sida's Support to Public Administration & Institutional Capacity Development 2003-2015: Perspectives, Evidence and Lessons Learned, 2016

SADEV, *Demokratisk utveckling och ökad respekt för mänskliga rättigheter – resultat av svenskt bistånd*, SADEV report 2012:1

Rocha Menocal & Sharma, *Joint Evaluation of Citizens' Voice and Accountability*, Synthesis Report, ODI, 2008
Andersen et al, *Supporting State-Building for Democratisation? A Study of 20 Years of Swedish Democracy Aid to Cambodia*, EBA Rapport 2019:03

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European Partnership for Democracy, *Democracy Abroad: Different European approaches to supporting democracy*, 2019, <http://epd.eu/>

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Carothers, Thomas, '[International Democracy Support: Filling the Leadership Vacuum](https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/07/18/international-democracy-support-filling-leadership-vacuum-pub-79522)', July, 2019, link: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/07/18/international-democracy-support-filling-leadership-vacuum-pub-79522>, accessed 2020-03-27

Carothers, Thomas, '[Defending Civic Space: Is the International Community Stuck?](https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/10/22/defending-civic-space-is-international-community-stuck-pub-80110)', October 2019, link: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/10/22/defending-civic-space-is-international-community-stuck-pub-80110>, accessed 2020-03-27

Anna Lührmann, Valeriya Mechkova, Sirianne Dahlum, Laura Maxwell, Moa Olin, Constanza Sanhueza Petrarca, Rachel Sigman, Matthew C. Wilson & Staffan I. Lindberg (2018) State of the world 2017: autocratization and exclusion?, *Democratization*, 25:8, 1321-1340, DOI: 10.1080/13510347.2018.1479693

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2018.1479693>, accessed 2020-03-27

Democracy Facing Global Challenges: Variety of Democracy Institute Annual Democracy Report 2019, länk: <https://duckduckgo.com/l/?kh=-1&uddg=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.v-dem.net%2Fen%2F>, accessed 20200124

International IDEA: The Global State of Democracy 2019 – Addressing the Ills, Reviving the Promise, November 18, 2019, Stockholm, link: <https://duckduckgo.com/l/?kh=-1&uddg=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.idea.int%2Four-work%2Fwhat-we-do%2Fglobal-state-democracy>, accessed 20200209

Nevitte, N. & Kanji, M. Authority Orientations and Political Support: A Cross-national Analysis of Satisfaction with Governments and Democracy. link: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSPublicationsPapers.jsp?PUB=9> (accessed 2020-02-10)

Annex 2 - Matrix of categorisation of academic research

Article	Sector(s) of aid	Type of outcome (Political participation, public support for democracy, levels of democracy)	Level of analysis (Individual, country)	Theory of change (specified)	Specific sub-groups (sub-populations) analysed (poor, rural, ethnic, sectarian etc.)	Attention to gender equality	Specific channels of delivery	Specific contexts (other than geographical scope)	Geographical scope	Period	Data	Method	Result of study
Altincekic, C., & Bearce, D. H. (2014). Why there should be no political foreign aid curse. <i>World Development</i> , 64, 18-32. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.05.014	Aid in general	Appeasement (tax burden negative if aid curse, social spending, positive if aid curse), repression (military spending, physical integrity rights), anti-government activities, political regime change.	Country-year	Yes, questions the argument that aid is similar to oil. Aid not as fungible as oil, more conditionality than oil, less constant. Appeasement and repression considered as the primary strategies to avoid democratization.	No	No	No	Democracies vs. Non-democracies	Global	?	Data on Aid from the World Bank	Error correction models	Aid has no strong effect on political regime type, a few results are supportive of a broader political aid curse.
Ash, K. (2015). The election trap: The cycle of post-electoral repression and opposition fragmentation in Lukashenko's Belarus. <i>Democratization</i> , 22(6), 1030-1053. doi:10.1080/13510347.2014.899585	Support to oppositional parties, electoral support	Contestation in elections, fragmented opposition, number of protests (in quantitative analysis)	Protests (Quantitative analysis)	"the availability of Western aid induces alternative incentives for staging campaigns that mirror the office-seeking aspirations among democratic politicians." "I believe that extra-electoral financial incentives are strongest in influencing opposition leaders and motivating	No	No	No	Authoritarian regime, competitive authoritarianism	Belarus	1994-	Various types, quantitative and qualitative	Quantitative and qualitative analysis but argument on aid not tested in quantitative analysis	"Policy-makers, especially those that focus on democracy promotion in competitive autocracies, should reconsider the value of advocating and funding electoral participation for

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				campaigns in the face of repression. Foreign aid-seeking politicians still have an incentive to contest elections, but don't have as much of an interest in winning office, as in demonstrating their strength among opposition supporters for foreign donors." (p. 1038)									a nascent opposition to an autocratic government. When an opposition force lacks the capacity to challenge a government, participating in elections could be harmful by eliminating capable leaders and exacerbating factional divisions, while proving unlikely to wrest any authority from the government."
Bartilow, H. A. (2014). Drug wars collateral damage: US counternarcotic aid and human rights in the americas. <i>Latin American Research Review</i> , 49(2), 24-46. doi:10.1353/lar.2014.0021	Counternarcotic aid from the US	Human rights (absence of repression)	Country-year	"By facilitating the expansion of states' coercive capability without equally expanding the necessary safeguards of due process and a credible independent judiciary (Freeman and Sierra 2005), US counternarcotic aid to democracies is likely to undermine the institutional checks and balances that are necessary to hold accountable the military and the various coercive	No	No	No	Democracies vs. Non-democracies	Americas (32 countries)	1984-2005	Various	Simultaneous instrumental variable model	US counternarcotic aid to democracies increases repression.

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				apparatuses of the state when the human rights of citizens are violated in the process of fighting the drug war. These conditions increase the probability of human rights violations, as the military and state security apparatuses are likely to enjoy immunity." (p. 29) Not the same effect in autocracies since coercive capacity is important for their very survival.									
Bermeo, S. B. (2011). Foreign aid and regime change: A role for donor intent. <i>World Development</i> , 39(11), 2021-2031. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2011.07.019	Aid in general	Democratization (regime change), democratic survival	Country-year	Donor intent matters.	No	No	No	Democratic vs. Authoritarian donors, democracies vs. Authoritarian regimes	Global	1992-2007	Data from Aiddata	logit models	Increased likelihood for democratization and democratic survival if democratic donor. Negative relationship for authoritarian aid and no impact on survival. Some indication that there is less impact when receiving authoritarian aid.
Bishop, S., & Hoeffler, A. (2016). Free and fair elections: A new database. <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> , 53(4),	Aid in general	Free and fair elections	Elections in countries	Not specified	No	No	No	No	Global	1975-2011	Aid as % of GDP	Probit models	Higher dependence on aid related to free and fair elections but warn against endogeneity

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608-616. doi:10.1177/0022 343316642508													
Bolleyer, N., & Storm, L. (2010). Problems of party assistance in hybrid regimes: The case of morocco. <i>Democratization</i> , 17(6), 1202-1224. doi:10.1080/13510347.2010.525934	Political party assistance	(a) professionalize party activities in the respective institutional setting, (b) initiate a change of formal-legal rules defining the institutional setting, and (c) establish and intensify party linkages with society.	Party assistance providers (international organizations)	INGOs have to rely on soft interventions, non-coercive measures, "that party assistance is more likely to function as an instrument of democratization in regimes already in the process of democratic consolidation, rather than in authoritarian or hybrid regimes that are yet to undergo democratic transition, the parties that are less likely to be responsive to party assistance (parties forming part of the accepted elite) are the ones that these organizations can legitimately target." Parties which channel citizen demands more effectively could equally lead to the stabilization of not yet fully democratized 'hybrid regimes', where elections take place regularly, while political power is only partially controlled by elected institutions." (p. 1207)	No	No	International non-governmental organizations, two American NGOs, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI), affiliated with the Democratic Party and the Republicans respectively, and UNDP	Hybrid regime	Morocco	?	Document analysis and 20 in-depth interviews with country experts	Qualitative case study	Parties that are part of these activities are not interested in fostering the mass party mode. Party assistance might not necessarily foster democratization but rather stabilize the status quo instead, especially when looking at assistance providers that cannot put pressure on targeted actors but depend on the latter's cooperation. Parties become more effective in the political process, but they do not challenge existing incentive structures.
Boutton, A. (2019). Military aid, regime vulnerability and	Military aid	Political violence	Country year	Regimes use coup-proofing more aggressively in situations when they	No	No	Military aid	Different types of regimes	Global (aid from the US)		Various	Statistical with instrument	Military aid increases political violence in

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the escalation of political violence. <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> , doi:10.1017/S000712341900022X				are weak (for example new regime, personalistic regime, newly established military juntas but not in one party regimes) when they receive military aid. One-party regimes less violent since they draw on support from a larger civilian coalition.									newly established regimes and in personalistic regimes, but not in one-party regimes.
Braithwaite, J. M., & Licht, A. A. (2020). The effect of civil society organizations and democratization aid on civil war onset. <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> , 64(6), 1095-1120. doi:10.1177/0022002719888684	Democracy aid	Civil war	Country year	Democracy aid's effects on civil conflict is conditional on the strength of civil society. If civil society is institutionalised actors expect their grievances to be addressed through the legal political system. Otherwise, civil society organisations will use democracy assistance for extra-legal activities to foster change. The increased capacity of some groups can also inspire others to take up arms.	No	No	No	Strong or weak civil society	Global	1969-2011	AidData and various other sources	Statistical (with instrument)	"Democracy assistance can increase the probability of civil conflict in recipient countries, but this effect is mitigated by vibrant CSOs." (p. 1112)
Brown, S., & Fisher, J. (2020). Aid donors, democracy and the developmental state in ethiopia. <i>Democratization</i> , 27(2), 185-203. doi:10.1080/1351	All, democratic assistance broad definition, not only aid	Not relevant in this case	Not relevant	"that Western donors' failure to engage substantively with the Ethiopian government on issues of democratization and human rights in recent years stands in contrast to their stated core values and priorities	No	No	No	Developmental state vs. Democracy	Ethiopia	Interviews from 2009-2018	64 interviews	Qualitative, interviews	Donors' and recipients' rhetoric and work on the developmental state risks squeezing out democracy promotion.

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0347.2019.167064 2				around foreign and international development policy. The language of the “developmental state” provides a vehicle for side-lining these priorities.” (p. 186)									
Brown, S., & Raddatz, R. (2014). Dire consequences or empty threats? western pressure for peace, justice and democracy in Kenya. <i>Journal of Eastern African Studies</i> , 8(1), 43-62. doi:10.1080/17531055.2013.869008	General foreign aid	Democracy and justice, long-term peace	Not relevant	Donors are reluctant to pressure for democracy since there are economic interests etc. Western pressure is therefore not efficient despite strong linkage and strong leverage.	No	No	No	No	Kenya	(1990) 2008-2013	Interviews with Western officials based in Nairobi and Kenyans	Qualitative interviews	See theory of change
Burnell, P., & Gerrits, A. (2010). Promoting party politics in emerging democracies. <i>Democratization</i> , 17(6), 1065-1084. doi:10.1080/13510347.2010.520548	Political party assistance	Liberal democracy, strengthening of party politics	Not relevant	"Party assistance works with an ideal-typical organizational, financial, and ideological image of political parties, largely derived from Western European experiences." (p. 1068) Party assistance is a controversial part of democracy promotion since it is intrusive.	No	No		Type of regime (parties function very differently in semi-democracies and autocracies)	A range of cases		Case study material	Case studies	Party assistance does not reach its objectives. It support particularistic aims in some instances. To make parties themselves accountable is a first step.
Bush, S. S. (2011). International politics and the spread of quotas for women in legislatures. <i>Intern</i>	Aid in general	Introduction of gender quotas	Country	Gender quotas are introduced either as part of post-conflict peace operations or by encouraging especially aid dependent countries to	No	Yes, focus of article.	No	Post-conflict but also general	Global (165 countries) and case study of Afghanistan	1970-2006	Statistical, from different sources	Event history analysis, process tracing analysis	Countries experiencing UN peace operations, have international electoral observations,

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<i>ational Organization, 65(1), 103-137. doi:10.1017/S0020818310000287</i>				signal their commitment to democracy. Post-conflict countries are very dependent on aid. The more aid a country receives the higher incentives to show commitments to liberal values.									and that are aid dependent are more likely to adopt gender quotas.
Carnegie, A., & Marinov, N. (2017). Foreign aid, human rights, and democracy promotion: Evidence from a natural experiment. <i>American Journal of Political Science, 61(3)</i> , 671-683. doi:10.1111/ajps.12289	Aid in general	Democracy and human rights	Country	Conditionality argument: Countries that receive more aid more likely to have higher levels of democracy and human rights since they are pressured to reform in order to receive aid.	No	No	EU aid	EU aid	Global (115 countries)		Varied, different sources	Regression with instrumental variables (country holding presidency in the EU and whether the country receiving aid is a former colony)	Aid is related to higher levels of human rights and democracy, but the effects seem to be short lived.
Carnegie, A., & Samii, C. (2019). International institutions and political liberalization: Evidence from the world bank loans program. <i>British Journal of Political Science, 49(4)</i> , 1357-1379. doi:10.1017/S0007123417000187	World bank loans programs	Political liberalization/level of democracy	Country year	Countries adopt liberalizing reforms in order to join the group of rich developed countries. Strong incentives to join the organization for outsiders.	No	No	No	No	Global	1987-2010	Democracy, Polity/ Freedom House combined, unified democracy score.	Regression discontinuity design, "compares countries with per capita GNIs just below the cut-off for graduation eligibility to those just above it"	International organizations fosters political liberalization. It is shown that graduation eligibility or world bank loans programs has a positive effect on political liberalization.
Carothers, T. (2016). Closing space for	Democracy promotion,	Pushback against democracy promotion,	Not relevant	Not really a theory of change: Lists a number of reasons for	No	No	Focuses on civil society	Semi-authoritarian regimes,	Global	Not defined	Various?	?	Donors have not been very efficient in

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international democracy and human rights support. <i>Journal of Human Rights Practice</i> , 8(3), 358-377. doi:10.1093/jhum an/huw012	aid to civil society	closing space of democracy aid		why a closing space for democracy promotion occurs; changing international environment; stronger civil society; counterterrorism spill over			organizations	authoritarian regimes and democracies					trying to work against the pushback against democracy promotion for a number of reasons.
Carothers, T. (2015). Democracy aid at 25: Time to choose. <i>Journal of Democracy</i> , 26(1), 59-73. doi:10.1353/jod.2015.0010	Democracy aid	Democracy?	Not relevant	Not really a theory of change.	People living in poverty are mentioned	No	All	No	Global	Not defined	Various?	?	Describes how democracy aid is doing in the contemporary world and gives several reasons for this; loss of democratic momentum, pushback against democracy promotion; problems in Western democracies, less certain commitment to democracy in international policy
Carothers, T. (2010). Democracy support and development aid: The elusive synthesis. <i>Journal of Democracy</i> , 21(4), 12-26. Retrieved from www.scopus.com	About the relationship between democracy aid and development aid in general	Not relevant	Not relevant	No	No	No	No	No	Global	Contemporary		Interviews and informal conversations	Argues that there is a divide between democracy support and development aid
Christensen, D., & Weinstein, J. M.	Support to civil society	Restrictions on foreign support for civil society	Country	Restrictions on foreign aid support for civil	No	No	Civil society	No	Global (98 countries)	Contemporary	Varied	Basic statistics	There are more restrictions on

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(2013). Defunding dissent: Restrictions on aid to NGOs. <i>Journal of Democracy</i> , 24(2), 77-91. doi:10.1353/jod.2013.0026				society are more likely when there are domestic challenges to the regime since its rulers feel vulnerable					and cases Rwanda and Uganda, Kazakhstan and Belarus			on restrictions on funding but no statistical analyses provided, paired comparison of four case	foreign support for civil society in regimes that feel vulnerable to domestic challenges.
Cornell, A. (2013). Does regime type matter for the impact of democracy aid on democracy? <i>Democratization</i> , 20(4), 642-667. doi:10.1080/13510347.2012.659021	Democracy aid (Democracy and governance aid)	Level of democracy	Country year	Different impact in different types of authoritarian regimes. In those regimes in which there are strong institutions for implementation and regime stability which implies less risk for incumbent, we should expect democracy aid to have a stronger impact on democracy.	No	No	No		Global, 143 countries	1990-2007	OECD/DAC. Creditor Reporting System; Democracy levels: Polity IV and Freedom House	Statistical	Democracy aid is positively related to democracy in one-party regimes (civilian regimes)
Dietrich, S., & Wright, J. (2015). Foreign aid allocation tactics and democratic change in Africa. <i>Journal of Politics</i> , 77(1), 216-234. doi:10.1086/678976	Democracy and Governance aid and economic aid, also disaggregation democracy aid by channels of delivery.	Transition to multipartyism and its reversal: the existence of an opposition party in an elected legislature; and consolidation of multiparty politics Electoral misconduct, opposition's vote share	Country year	Two mechanisms: "1) donors attaching political reform conditions to economic aid and (2) donors directly investing in democracy promotion through activities aimed at strengthening governance institutions and civil society." (p. 217) "Recipient governments therefore have an incentive to implement democracy aid projects, but only when do-nor goals	No	No	Yes, civil society vs democracy aid to governance vs. Economic aid	Non multiparty regimes vs. Multiparty regimes (democracies vs. Non-democracies)	Sub-Saharan Africa (44 countries)	1989-2008	OECD/DAC (from AidData) Commitment data.	Statistical	For democracy aid: No effect on transition but contributes to consolidation, reducing the incidence of multiparty failure and electoral misconduct. For economic aid: increases the likelihood of transition to multiparty politics.

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				such as improving state capacity or service de-livery do not threaten the ability of the incumbent to retain power." (p. 220) "aid efforts that directly target civil society and opposition forces largely bypass the incumbent regime. These projects should strengthen opposition groups and thus weaken incumbent leaders." (p. 220) Democracy aid to the government strengthens the incumbent while democracy aid to civil society weakens incumbent power. (p. 220)									
Dupuy, K., Ron, J., & Prakash, A. (2016). Hands off my regime! governments' restrictions on foreign aid to non-governmental organizations in poor and middle-income countries. <i>World Development</i> , 84, 299-311. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2016.02.001	Foreign aid in general	Restrictions on internationally funded NGOS	Country	Recipient countries balance between political imperative against economic imperative. They may lose power if they accept NGOs but they may lose international recognition and economic inflows if they put restrictions on them. Hypothesis: Restrictions on internationally funded NGOs are more likely when receiving more aid and after holding competitive elections	No	No	NGOs	Competitive elections	Global, (153 countries)	1993-2012	Various	Statistical	Hypothesis confirmed
Edgell, A. B. (2017). Foreign aid, democracy,	Foreign aid commitments, aid to	Adoption of gender quota	Country	Recipient adopt gender quotas in order to appease donors,	No	Yes! Focus of article.	No	Different types of regimes (less	Global (173 countries)	1974-2012	Various (Aiddata)	Statistical (discrete logistic	Differences between US aid and aid from

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and gender quota laws. <i>Democratization</i> , 24(6), 1103-1141. doi:10.1080/13510347.2016.1278209	women's empowerment			authoritarian regimes are more likely to gain from this signalling, specific activities that target women may contribute to the adoption.				democratic vs. More democratic regimes)				event history models)	other DAC-members. Signalling important for aid countries from the US to less democratic but for other DAC members' empowerment activities related to adoption of gender quotas.
Erdmann, G. (2010). Political party assistance and political party research: Towards a closer encounter? <i>Democratization</i> , 17(6), 1275-1296. doi:10.1080/13510347.2010.520551	Political party assistance	Party strengthening	Not relevant	See results	No	No	Political party assistance	No	Not relevant	Not relevant	Previous research	Based on previous research, more of a review of previous approaches to political party assistance in research	Lack of clear concepts of and strategies for international party assistance is a serious problem. Parties not as dependent on aid, and therefore conditionality not efficient, lack of collaboration between practitioners and researchers.
Fagan, A. (2011). EU assistance for civil society in Kosovo: A step too far for democracy promotion? <i>Democratization</i> , 18(3), 707-730. doi:10.1080/13510347.2011.563119	Civil society	Strengthening of civil society	Not relevant	Not specified	No (only in relation to what areas are promoted)	No (only in relation to what areas are promoted)	Civil society	No	Kosovo, EU aid	Contemporary	Interview data	Interviews, case study	Varied results of support to civil society organisations.

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Gibson, C. C., Hoffman, B. D., & Jablonski, R. S. (2015). Did aid promote democracy in Africa? the role of technical assistance in Africa's transitions. <i>World Development</i> , 68, 323-335. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.11.009	Technical assistance	Political liberalization/democratization: Different types of political concessions from leader to opposition groups. Another outcome: Patronage	Country year	Technical assistance has been used to monitor recipients and thus reduced incumbents' opportunities for using aid for patronage and their own survival in power. And also more likely that incumbents make political concessions.	No	No	Technical assistance	No	Sub-Saharan Africa	1985-1998	Data on technical assistance from World Development Indicators	Statistical	"an increase in technical assistance is associated with an increase in incumbents' level of concessions" (p. 329)
Grimm, S., & Mathis, O. L. (2018). Democratization via aid? the European Union's democracy promotion in the Western Balkans 1994-2010. <i>European Union Politics</i> , 19(1), 163-184. doi:10.1177/1465116517729761	Democracy assistance	Levels of democracy	Country year	Democracy assistance tied to accession conditionality and therefore positive relationship with democratisation	No	No	No	No	Western Balkans (7 countries), EU commission aid	1994-2010	European commission aid dataset constructed by the authors	Statistical, Random effects models.	No significant relationship between aid and democracy
Haass, F. (2019). The democracy dilemma. aid, power-sharing governments, and post-conflict democratization. <i>Conflict Management and Peace Science</i> , doi:10.11	Foreign aid in general	Democracy levels, Election quality, Rule of law (public goods)	Country year	Rent-seeking and office seeking elites in post-conflict contexts should prefer not to implement democratic reforms. However, conditionalities attached to aid can make elites implement some reforms but they will only do it in a limited way to	No	No	No	Post-conflict	Global (46 countries)	1990-2010	Various	Statistical	Positive but small improvement in democracy, improved electoral quality, but less rule of law (and more particularistic goods provision) but only when there is a power

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77/0738894219830960				maximise their chance of staying in power. And more so if a power-sharing government. This would result in weaker rule of law but higher electoral quality.									sharing government.
Hackenesch, C. (2015). Not as bad as it seems: EU and US democracy promotion faces China in Africa. <i>Democratization</i> , 22(3), 419-437. doi:10.1080/13510347.2014.1002476	Foreign aid in general and democracy assistance	Cooperation with recipient, implementation of democracy promotion strategies	Not relevant	It can be harder for Western donors to implement their democracy promotion strategies if a large authoritarian donor is highly present (like for example China)	No	No	No	Authoritarian regimes	Angola and Ehtiopia (EU ans US aid)	Contemporary	Interviews, documents	Qualitative case study	Not strong support that there is a "China threat". Domestic factors like challenges to the survival of authoritarian regimes may be more important
Hashimoto, B. (2020). Autocratic consent to international law: The case of the international criminal court's jurisdiction, 1998-2017. <i>International Organization</i> , 74(2), 331-362. doi:10.1017/S0020818320000065	Foreign aid in general	ICC jurisdiction	Leaders in state in countries	ICC jurisdiction can both protect leaders and expose them to prosecution. Financial assistance is more likely to lead to acceptance of ICC in authoritarian regimes since these leaders can obstruct prosecution more successfully than democratic leaders.	No	No	No	Authoritarian vs democratic regimes	Global	1998-2017	Various	Statistical (event history models, OLS)	More aid make autocratic leaders more likely to accept ICC's jurisdiction, and ICC's jurisdiction prevent anti-regime violence and leaders to longer leader survival. None of these effects are found for democratic leaders.
Heinrich, T., & Loftis, M. W. (2019). Democracy aid and electoral accountability. <i>Journal of Conflict</i>	Democracy aid	Accountability, economic vote (turnover following poor economic performance)	Elections. In countries	Democracy aid increases citizens' capacity to monitor and hold politicians accountable, and that capacity has an impact accountability.	No	No	No	No (other than definition of accountability, turnover following poor	Global (114 countries)	1975-2010	Various	Statistical	Democracy aid strengthens economic voting.

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<i>Resolution</i> , 63(1), 139-166. doi:10.1177/0022002717723962				Democracy aid help citizens be informed, for example via civil society, information campaigns, supporting political mobilization, supporting opposition parties and NGOs.				economic performance)					
Jentsch, C., Kalyvas, S. N., Schubiger, L. I., Carey, S. C., Colaresi, M. P., & Mitchell, N. J. (2015). Governments, informal links to militias, and accountability. <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> , 59(5), 850-876. doi:10.1177/0022002715576747	Foreign aid in general	Informal Government Militia	Country year	Informal government militia more likely in states that receive aid from democratic donors, since these countries can lose more when using official repression. And a stronger relationship in states that are difficult for donors to monitor.	No	No	No	No	Global but with case illustrations from Sudan and Bosnia		Various	Statistical (logit models)	Aid from democracies increases informal government militia, and more so if harder to monitor.
Kamstra, J., & Knippenberg, L. (2014). Promoting democracy in Ghana: Exploring the democratic roles of donor-sponsored non-governmental organizations. <i>Democratization</i> , 21(4), 583-609. doi:10.1080/13510347.2012.751975	Support to NGOs	Democracy	Not relevant	Civil society can play various roles for democracy: educational, communicative, representational, cooperative.	Yes, one of the organisations work with the poor and marginalised people.	Yes, one of the organisations studied work with gender issues	Civil society	No	Ghana	2007-2008	Interviews	Comparative case study	Donor support affects NGOs, allows to exist but also influences them negatively. Accountability toward the donor, not free to set their own agenda, competition for funds divide NGO community. NGOs do not perform several of the roles expected of civil

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													society organisations.
Khan, M. H. (2014). Aid and governance in vulnerable states: Bangladesh and Pakistan since 1971. <i>Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science</i> , 656(1), 59-78. doi:10.1177/0002716214543900	Foreign aid in general	Governance (including accountability)	Not relevant	Interaction between aid and pre-existing political and governance structures is important since aid is a source of rents. Aid can modify rent-seeking behaviour.	To some extent, NGOs that should support the poor	No	No	No	Pakistan and Bangladesh	1971-	Various sources	Comparative case study	Perhaps better to support development than governance?
Kono, D. Y., Montinola, G. R., & Verbon, N. (2015). Helping hand or heavy hand? Foreign aid, regime type and domestic unrest. <i>International Political Science Review</i> , 36(4), 409-424. doi:10.1177/0192512113507529	Foreign aid in general	Domestic unrest (strikes, public demonstrations)	Country-years	Foreign aid increases demand for public goods. Democracies spend their resources on public goods to a larger extent and no reasons for citizens to seek revolutionary change so the expectation is that aid should have no effect on unrest in democracies. In autocracies the impact of aid could be in both directions. Aid increase demand for public goods and can thus provoke unrest but there is a threat of punishment (more repression) that may deter protesters.	No	No	No	Democracies vs. Authoritarian regimes	Global (84 countries)	1970-2007	Various	Statistical	Foreign aid reduces domestic unrest in autocracies but there is no such effect in democracies. The mechanisms are also tested: Foreign aid increases military spending in authoritarian regimes and increased military spending decreases unrest in authoritarian regimes only.
Kruks-Wisner, G. (2011). Seeking the local state: Gender, caste, and	Foreign aid in general with a specific focus on aid to	Interactions with the state	Individual	As an effect of the 2004 Tsunami, a wave of new actors flows in providing not only	Yes (Cast minority groups)	Yes	NGOs	No	India, two coastal villages	3 years after the 2004	Interviews, small household survey,	Case study with both qualitative and	Women and local caste minorities more likely to turn to

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the pursuit of public services in post-tsunami India. <i>World Development</i> , 39(7), 1143-1154. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2010.11.001	NGOs (domestic and international)			material aid but also bringing ideas and norms, for example gender equality						Tsunami	ethnographic studies	quantitative methods	formal government channels to voice their concern than men from dominant community. Men tended to use informal channels.
Lankina, T., Libman, A., & Obydenkova, A. (2016). Authoritarian and democratic diffusion in post-communist regions. <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> , 49(12), 1599-1629. doi:10.1177/0010414016628270	Foreign aid in general (and some sub-components, support for civil society)	Democracy levels sub-nationally	Region, year	Normative power of the EU, socialization with EU counterparts that promotes democratic values	No	No	EU aid and some sub-components	No	EU aid to Regions in Russia	1990-2003	Lankina EU aid dataset and other sources	Statistical analysis	EU a positive relationship with democracy levels at sub-national level in Russia.
Levitz, P., & Pop-Eleches, G. (2010). Why no backsliding? The European Union's impact on democracy and governance before and after accession. <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> , 43(4), 457-485. doi:10.1177/0010414009355266	Foreign aid in general	Democracy and governance		There is potential for linkage and leverage also after the accession to the EU.	No	No	No	No	EU aid to 28 Post-communist countries	1990-2007	Various	Statistical analysis	No strong evidence for a post-accession backlash. There is room for EU influence also after accession. Other international factors (linkage and leverage) probably important.
Lührmann, A. (2019). United Nations electoral assistance: More	Electoral assistance	"impact of UNEA on democratization – understood as the gradual process for	Elections in a country	The strategic interests of elites are important. Constrained regimes more likely to comply.	No	No	UN (Multilateral donor)	No	Sudan (2010), Nigeria (2011) and	2010, 2011 and 2012	23 interviews UN officials and	Comparative case study	UNEA can improve elections if incumbents have

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<p>than a fig leaf? <i>International Political Science Review</i>, 40(2), 181-196. doi:10.1177/0192512117740915</p>		<p>making governments increasingly based on the preferences of the people (Dahl, 1971; Lindberg, 2009). Therefore, I focus on UNEA's contribution to the freedom and fairness of electoral processes." (p. 184)</p>		<p>These regimes have a strategic interest in electoral credibility.</p>					<p>Libya (2012)</p>		<p>electoral stakeholders and participant observations in Libya, secondary sources, media and electoral observation reports</p>		<p>strategic interest in electoral credibility.</p>
<p>Marinov, N., & Goemans, H. (2013). Coups and democracy. <i>British Journal of Political Science</i>, 44(4), 799-825. doi:10.1017/S0007123413000264</p>	<p>Foreign aid in general</p>	<p>Competitive elections or not after coups</p>	<p>Country year</p>	<p>International pressure to hold elections after the end of the cold war makes coup makers more likely to hold competitive elections if a country is more dependent on foreign aid.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Post-cold war vs. Cold war period</p>	<p>Global</p>	<p>1949-2004</p>	<p>Various</p>	<p>Statistical (Probit models)</p>	<p>Aid dependence make a country more likely to have competitive elections after a coup, but not very strong results</p>
<p>Miller, M. K. (2020). The strategic origins of electoral authoritarianism. <i>British Journal of Political Science</i>, 50(1), 17-44. doi:10.1017/S0007123417000394</p>	<p>All (foreign aid)</p>	<p>Introduction of multiparty elections (electoral authoritarianism in authoritarian regimes and alternative dependent variable; democratization</p>	<p>Country year</p>	<p>Autocratic leaders introduce multiparty elections for strategic reasons. "Autocrats recognize that a range of international benefits (including increased aid, trade and military alliances) that are nominally targeted at 'democracy' promotion can be secured with merely contested elections. As a result, they strategically adopt flawed elections and reap the rewards." Autocrats adopt partial reforms if they can</p>	<p>No, but inequality as separate variable.</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Global.</p>	<p>1946-2010</p>	<p>Boix for democracy. Aiddata for foreign aid data. Various sources for independent variables.</p>	<p>Multinomial logit.</p>	<p>If a regime is more dependent on external foreign aid it is more likely to introduce electoral authoritarianism . Foreign aid predict introduction of electoral authoritarianism but not democratization.</p>

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				gain benefits without losing power.									
Nagel, C., & Staeheli, L. (2015). International donors, NGOs, and the geopolitics of youth citizenship in contemporary Lebanon. <i>Geopolitics</i> , 20(2), 223-247. doi:10.1080/14650045.2014.922958	Aid to local NGOs	Democracy (citizenship formation)	Not relevant (NGOs)	Critical view on promotion of democracy through NGOs, "pushing aside real political differences and identities in the quest to foster tolerance and consensus, NGOs may render themselves incapable of dealing with these differences", there are limits to which groups NGOs can engage with.	Youth, sectarian politics	Yes	NGOs	No	Lebanon	2010-2014 (Data collection)	Semi-structured interviews	Case study, field work	NGOs promote de-politicization of youth, from sectarian politics to problem-solving at local scale.
Pospieszna, P. (2015). Democracy assistance and women's political empowerment in post-conflict countries. <i>Democratization</i> , 22(7), 1250-1272. doi:10.1080/13510347.2014.942642	Aid to women's organizations for peace-making	Democracy, peace, women's empowerment	Country year in statistical analysis. Not relevant in case study.	Democracy assistance to women's organizations can be considered as material empowerment, which can have a positive impact on women's political empowerment through mental and legal empowerment.	No	Yes, focus of article.	No	Post-conflict	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Contemporary	Various.	Case study (interviews with local organizations) and statistical analysis.	Case study: Support for the theoretical model. Statistical analysis: Aid to women's organizations no significant relationship with women's political empowerment.
Rodan, G., & Hughes, C. (2012). Ideological coalitions and the international promotion of social accountability: The Philippines and Cambodia compared. <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> , 56(2), 367-380.	Social accountability mechanisms, governance aid	Social accountability	Not relevant	Social accountability (often promoted by international donors) can foster empowerment but there can be different ideological rationales for accountability which will have an impact on the way social accountability is being played out	Yes, accountability as empowerment of the poor.	No	No	No	Philippines and Cambodia		Various	Comparative case study	Danger of co-optation in social accountability mechanisms, technical mechanisms of monitoring at the expense of mobilization of democratic forces and NGOs empowerment of the poor, can render autocratic

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doi:10.1111/j.1468-2478.2011.00709.x													rule more efficient.
Savage, J. D. (2017). Military size and the effectiveness of democracy assistance. <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> , 61(4), 839-868. doi:10.1177/0022002715595864	Democracy assistance	Democracy (Levels of)	Country, years	Democracy aid is more likely to be efficient when the size of the military is small since the military is likely to be threatened by political liberalisation.	No	No	No	Military size. Excluding established democracies	Global 141 countries (aid from the US)	1990-2004	Various	Statistical (fixed effects models)	Democracy assistance at lower levels of military size correlated with higher levels of democracy, but at higher levels the effect diminishes and becomes negative.
Savage, J. D., & Caverley, J. D. (2017). When human capital threatens the capitol: Foreign aid in the form of military training and coups. <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> , 54(4), 542-557. doi:10.1177/0022343317713557	Foreign assistance to military training	Coups	Country years	Military training risks increasing the probability of coups since it increases the military's capacity, professional identity, creates new social ties etc. Other aid is not likely to produce the same effects.	No	No	US military training	Democracies vs. non-democracies in some models but not main focus.	Global (189 countries)	1970-2009	Various	Statistical	Positive relationship between US military training and military-backed coup attempts
Savun, B., & Tirone, D. C. (2018). Foreign aid as a counterterrorism tool: More liberty, less terror? <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> , 62(8), 1607-1635. doi:10.1177/0022002717704952	Governance and civil society aid	Domestic terrorism in recipient countries	Country years	Supporting civil society creates a stronger civil society presence which can curtail the state's ability to curtail and repress civil liberties, Governance aid promotes community participation which enhance communication between citizens and the state and increase trust, and strengthen rule of law.	No	No	No	Civil conflict vs. Non-conflict situation	Global	1997-2010	Various	Statistical	Civil society and governance aid reduces the likelihood for terror attacks, but only in recipient countries in a non-conflict situation.

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Savun, B., & Tirone, D. C. (2011). Foreign aid, democratization, and civil conflict: How does democracy aid affect civil conflict? <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> , 55(2), 233-246. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5907.2010.00501.x	Democracy aid	Civil conflict	Country years	Democracy aid strengthens legitimacy, capacity etc. and thus prevents conflict in democratizing countries.	No	No	No	democratizing states	Global	1990-2003	Various	Statistical (with instruments)	Democracy aid reduces the risk for civil conflict during democratization.
Scott, J. M., & Steele, C. A. (2011). Sponsoring democracy: The United states and democracy aid to the developing world, 1988-2001. <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> , 55(1), 47-69. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2478.2010.00635.x	Democracy aid	Democracy levels	Country year	Two mechanisms for how democracy aid can impact on democracy: 1) Anticipated reactions: Strategic interactions between donors and recipients: Donors target aid to where they think it is most efficient, and recipients implement democracy aid efficiently since they believe they will receive more aid also from other sectors if they comply, 2) Agent empowerment: Democracy aid targets actors and institutions. It empowers citizens and strengthens institutions.	No	No	No	No	Developing countries outside of Europe and the Former Soviet Union, 108 countries (aid from USAID)	1988-2001	USAID "Actual expenditures" "USAID's annual Congressional Presentation and Congressional Budget Justification, as well as its annual reports."; Democracy levels: Polity IV and Freedom House	Statistical	Positive relationship between democracy aid and democracy (also when controlling for the effect of democratization on aid allocation). General foreign aid has no effect on democratization.
Spoerri, M. (2010). Crossing the line: Partisan party assistance in post-Milošević Serbia. <i>Democrati</i>	Political party assistance	Democracy	Not relevant	See results	No	No	No	No	Serbia	1997-2009	Interviews, documents	Case study	Partisan political party support can undermine democratisation.

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<p>zation, 17(6), 1108-1131. doi:10.1080/13510347.2010.520550</p>													
<p>Steele, C. A., Pemstein, D., & Meserve, S. A. (2020). Democracy promotion and electoral quality: A disaggregated analysis. <i>Governance</i>, doi:10.1111/gove.12526</p>	<p>Democracy assistance, democracy and governance aid, and disaggregated to elections aid from the US, uses democracy and governance aid interchangeably</p>	<p>"specific electoral institutions that should be directly tied to technical democracy assistance aid" "accuracy of voting registries (interval assessment of accuracy), de facto suffrage (%), election management board (EMB) autonomy (interval measure of level of autonomy), and electoral management board capacity (interval measure of capacity)" (p. 7) Variables related to elections: "extent of vote buying behaviour, incidence of voting irregularities, amount of government intimidation, and level of overall electoral violence." (p. 7) Aggregated measures: free and fair elections, multiparty, polyarchy, liberal democracy.</p>	<p>Country-year</p>	<p>Yes, agent empowerment and anticipated reactions, and conditionality mechanisms, and also discusses the risk that the relationship may be a result of endogeneity</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Global at recipient level but focusing on US democracy aid at donor level</p>	<p>1990-2004</p>	<p>Finkel et al (2007) data on democracy assistance. V-dem data on democracy factors</p>	<p>Statistical analysis (hierarchical models)</p>	<p>Ambiguous results for specific electoral institutions but positive results for aggregated measures of democracy but also endogenous results, showing a positive correlation between democracy and aid. "Democracy and government aid chases democracy but does not create it, which appears as over-time covariance with aggregate democracy changes in models." (p. 13)</p>
<p>Szent-Iványi, B., & Végh, Z. (2018). Is transition experience enough? the donor-side effectiveness of Czech and Polish democracy aid to Georgia. <i>Democra</i></p>	<p>Democracy assistance</p>	<p>Criteria for effectiveness</p>	<p>Not relevant</p>	<p>Analyses aid from three criteria; support for locally driven change, learning from results, and coordination.</p>	<p>Not addressed</p>	<p>Not addressed</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>New donors</p>	<p>Georgia (aid from Poland and Czech republic)</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Interviews, documents</p>	<p>Case study</p>	<p>Donors can do more to make their democracy aid more effective along with different criteria (see theory of change).</p>

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<i>tization, 25(4), 614-632. doi: 10.1080/13510347.2017.1404989</i>													
Yakouchyk, K. (2016). The good, the bad, and the ambitious: Democracy and autocracy promoters competing in Belarus. <i>European Political Science Review, 8(2)</i> , 195-224. Doi: 10.1017/S1755773914000459	All?	Unclear?	Not relevant	Russia, China vs. EU in Belarus, competition between promoters of democracy and authoritarian donors	No	No	No	No	Belarus	?	Unclear	Case study	Limited effects of EU-conditionality etc. so far since benefits of upholding power has been stronger.
Ziaja, S. (2020). More donors, more democracy. <i>Journal of Politics, 82(2)</i> , 433-447. doi:10.1086/706111	Government and civil society sectors count as democracy aid	Levels of democracy (measured with V-Dem's electoral democracy score)	Country level analysis	More fragmented democracy aid (from several donors) is positive for democracy since it provides choice for local actors how to be involved in the process of democratization, and thus to assess the viability of resulting institutions. A more concentrated donor community on the other hand implies an imposition of an institutional blueprint, which is not adapted to needs of the recipient society	No	No	No	Independent variable: the number of donors reporting democracy aid in a given year to a given recipient	Global, all countries with more than half a million inhabitants and defined by the OECD to be eligible for receiving official development aid	1994-2013	Aid data commitments	Statistical with Instrumental variable (The share of female legislators in the donor country), fixed effects, case illustration	Hypotheses confirmed (see theoretical framework)

Annex 3 – Matrix of categorisation of donors

Donor	Sectors of democracy support	Adapt to context and situation	Specific sub-groups	Theory of change applied	Geographical scope	Cross cutting issues addressed in theory of change	Other sectors contributing to democracy support
UNDP	Encompassing democratic governance widely: Rule of law, elections, parliaments, anti-corruption, civil society, enlarging and deepen citizenship	Conflict, post-conflict (no mention of other situations), adaption to context on a case by case basis, sometimes work regionally.	Women, youth, excluded groups more generally, indigenous people	To build trust in state institutions, legitimacy is key to sustaining democracy, legitimacy is based on citizens being able to exercise their rights fully, also economic policy (redistribution through fiscal policy, taxation) is important since wellbeing is fundamental for this exercise but also for the legitimacy of the system	Global	Gender, excluded groups, youth	Governance, support to public administration, economic actors
Global Affairs Canada	Inclusive governance (including human rights, democracy)	Case by case	Women, traditionally marginalized groups	Inclusive governance breeds democratic values	Global	Gender	Governance
European Union (EU)/DEVCO	Democratic governance (electoral processes/ media etc.	Case by case, but also with specific instruments for when backsliding happens, country strategies on human rights and democracy	Women, other marginalized groups	Several. Including leverage through targets in budget support, supporting different institutions, civil society and processes (principally) in the democratic system, supporting governance institutions, such as the	Global	Gender, human rights-based approach	Budget support

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				judiciary and more generally anti-corruption.			
USAID	Democracy, human rights and governance	Yes, authoritarian, hybrid, developing democracies, consolidated democracy, and also Conflict/fragile, transitional, backsliding, but country strategies based on country assessments very important	Women, marginalized groups, religious minorities	Components based approach, empowerment of citizens	Global	Gender	Governance, stabilization, counter-terrorism, (civic) education, economic development
Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom	Inclusive governance	Country by country and regional strategies, but also listed several "development challenges" and different approaches in these but not very detailed.	Women, marginalized groups	Components based approach and increasing political inclusion	Global	Gender	Other sectors include inclusive economic growth, stability and inclusion.
Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)	Democratic governance, participation and accountability	Yes, approaches to different types of regimes.	Women, marginalized groups	Components based approach, multi-level governance	Global	Gender, governance	Governance
Open Society Foundations	Democracy, transition processes, democratic governance	Yes, to a large degree, special funding	Women, marginalized groups	Increase diversity of voices, support electoral processes but also other means of accountability mechanisms, civil society activists, human rights activists	Global		Governance, support policy broad inclusion in policy debates

Annex 4 - Documentation

DFID 2019 (FCDO): "Governance for Growth, Stability and Inclusive Development, DFID position paper."

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USAID 2019b: “USAID’s Policy Framework: Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance”

USAID 2019c: “Georgia Civic Education Initiative.” Accessed at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TQ96.pdf

Annex 5 - List of interviewees

Name	Position	Organisation	Date
Sarah Lister	Head of Governance Unit	UNDP	October 22 nd , 2020
Eric Bertram	Deputy Director, Democracy Policy and Indigenous Affairs	Global Affairs Canada	October 23 rd , 2020
Patrick Costello	Head of Division Democracy and Electoral Observation	EU/EEAS	October 23 rd , 2020
Benedict Teagarden	Chief of Staff, Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization (CPS)	USAID	October 27 th , 2020
Jennifer Erickson	Deputy Director Global Issues and Development Branch	Global Affairs Canada	October 28 th , 2020
Melina Trippolini Papageorgiou	Democracy Lead	SDC	October 29 th , 2020
Ursula Keller Alazzawi	Gender Lead	SDC	October 29 th , 2020
Shehryar Sarwar	Senior Gender Equality Specialist	Global Affairs Canada	October 30 th , 2020
Muthoni Wanyeki	Regional Director	Open Society Foundations	October 30 th , 2020
Anonymous	Anonymous	FCDO	November 16 th , 2020
Dennis Curry	Senior Governance Advisor	FCDO	November 19 th , 2020

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Thomas Millar	Head of Sector Democracy	EU/DEVCO	November 30 th , 2020
George Conway	Deputy Director of the Crisis Bureau	UNDP	December 1 st , 2020
Brady Witthoft	DRG Learning team	USAID	December 7 th , 2020
Daniel Sabet	DRG Learning team	USAID	December 7 th , 2020
Matthew Baker	DRG Learning team	USAID	December 7 th , 2020

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Mapping of democratization support

This report presents the findings of the first mapping exercise that researches the frontier on the relationship between aid and democratization from a research' and donors' perspective. The study finds that researchers' theories on general aid focus on strategic interests of aid actors, while those on democracy aid focus on citizens' empowerment. The research reveals that autocracies can respond to aid conditionality by window-dressing and that aid programs can legitimize the regime. Donors stress the following aspects in theories of change: political inclusion, the components of a democratic political system, and governance, while focusing on gender equality.

This report recommends Sida should consider the impact of other types of foreign aid on democratization, recipients' strategic interests, and the risks of co-optation and obstruction, especially with non-democratic governments. Since the impact of aid is limited to increasing democracy levels and does not seem to affect democratic regime change, donors' expectations on how their efforts to promote political participation in non-democratic regimes may lead to political change through citizen empowerment may be too optimistic.



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