

KEY QUESTIONS

the big six

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What are Sweden's priorities for global development?

Focus on democratic governance, gender equality, SRHR, climate, and environmental resources

The Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are central in Sweden's policies, and the government seeks to be a leader in implementing them both nationally and internationally. The Agenda 2030 framework is referred to in national sector policies, and there is increased ambition to report which SDGs the policies and strategies adhere to and how. In line with this overarching framework, the Swedish development policy strongly aligns with the SDGs. This strong commitment to sustainable development is well regarded: Sweden ranks first in the Center for Global Development's 2018 'Commitment to Development Index', which ranks 27 wealthy countries based on their policies on ODA, finance, technology, environment, trade, security, and migration.

The government's 2016 'Aid Policy Framework' outlines the overall objectives of Swedish development cooperation and sets eight focus areas:

1. human rights, democracy, and the rule of law;
2. gender equality;
3. the environment and climate change, and the sustainable use of natural resources;
4. peace and security;
5. inclusive economic development;
6. migration and development;
7. health equity; and
8. education and research

The current government, sworn in in January 2019, will continue to focus on the previous government's flagship issues: women's empowerment/sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) within the framework of its feminist foreign policy, human rights, and climate change (see box). An added thrust will be put on democratic governance.

In 2014, Sweden was the first country in the world to launch and implement a feminist foreign policy and takes strong international leadership on gender equality. In August 2018, Sweden also published a feminist foreign policy handbook to provide a resource for international work related to gender equality. Sweden's foreign policy aims to enhance both gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls, with SRHR as one of the six sub-objectives of the policy. Sweden aims to mainstream gender equality in all programs for

Sweden's key development priorities:

- **Climate change:** Sweden is the largest per capita donor to GCF and GEF; strong focus on marine resources for bilateral ODA.
- **Gender equality and women's empowerment:** Sweden's feminist foreign policy governs overarching orientation of foreign policy; SRHR is one of six objectives.
- **Democratic governance, human rights, rule of law and freedom of speech:** New investments in these areas will be directed to eastern Europe and EU neighboring areas.

development. In May 2018, Sweden published its first strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment. It focuses on the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls, including through work on normative frameworks, discrimination, gender-based violence, safety and security for actors and organizations that promote gender equality, and increased access and use of sex-disaggregated data and research. It is backed by a funding envelope of SEK1 billion (US\$117 million) between 2018 and 2022 through Sida, Sweden's implementing agency for global development. So far, Sida's work on gender equality focused on five aspects:

1. women's political participation and influence,
2. women's economic empowerment and working conditions,
3. SRHR,
4. girls' and women's education, and
5. women's security, incl. combating all forms of gender-based violence.

Limiting climate impact, environmental resilience, and disaster-risk reduction is a top focus, with a special emphasis on marine resources. In its 'Strategy for development cooperation in sustainable environment, climate and marine resources, and sustainable use of natural resources' for 2018 to 2022, the government set aside SEK6.5 billion (US\$761 million) to promote progress in these areas. This focus is also demonstrated at the international level: Sweden is the largest per-capita donor to both the Green Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Sweden has committed SEK4 billion (US\$468

million) to GEF for 2016 to 2018 and SEK4.9 billion (US\$581 million) to GCF for the 2015 to 2018 period.

Human rights, democracy, and the rule of law is an area of work that is likely to gain importance under the new government. It is a particularly important issue for the Center and the Liberal parties, which are not in the government but whose support the minority government depends on to pursue its policies. Within this area, Sweden defined three objectives in its 2018-2022 'strategy for development cooperation in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law': 1) inclusive democratic societies, 2) equal rights for all; and 3) security, justice, and accountability. Women and girls' enjoyment of human rights is central to the strategy. Freedom of speech and

media will also be more prominent areas for cooperation. New investments in this area will be directed towards Eastern Europe and EU neighboring areas.

Conflict prevention is also key to Sweden's ODA, with a focus on women, peace, and security, including training and integration of women in peace-negotiation processes. In addition, Sweden has a national action plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which calls for increased participation of women in peace and security efforts within the UN. Women's empowerment, conflict-sensitivity, and resilience are systematically integrated into humanitarian- assistance programs.