

ADVANCING SRHR AND FAMILY PLANNING BILATERALLY

A collection of European donor country' good practices

This is a collection of good practices from a number of European donor countries in advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Family Planning (FP) in their bilateral cooperation.

Whilst in the last years **bilateral, government-to-government funding** has dropped in several European countries, often redirected to multilateral organizations and initiatives or private sector support, it has significantly increased in some countries. At the same time, the Consortium's long-term experience in [tracking funding by European donors](#) has shown that the most challenging financial data to collect are on bilateral assistance.

Further, in a context of shrinking Official Development Aid, it is increasingly important to also look beyond the funding streams itself, to how donors decide *who, how and what to fund*. **Bilateral aid thus has untapped potential for SRH/FP**. The Countdown 2030 Europe Consortium is therefore putting more focus on demanding transparency in European donor's bilateral, government-to-government cooperation; increasing its understanding of the political dialogues in which decisions are made; and ensuring support to SRH/FP therein.

An analysis of the bilateral cooperation of C2030E countries showed a general **need for greater coherence** between what are often strong, national-level donor commitments towards SRH/FP, evidenced by e.g.

dedicated gender, health or SRH/FP policies and international pledges, and the low prioritization of these issues when it comes to bilateral funding strategies and envelopes at country level, as well as annual reporting and measuring results. Further, more can be done by donor countries to **invest in in-house expertise**, e.g. through offering specific SRH/FP trainings for their diplomats or other employees.

The analysis also pointed at some **good practices by European donor countries**, of which other donor governments can learn and on which can be build. This will help to ensure increased coherency between policies and practice, capacity building on SRH/FP and increased transparency in the development aid for SRH/FP. **This paper highlights a number of these good practices, results achieved so far, and recommendations for further improvement.**

Good practices

1. Swedish support in policy dialogue, "Dialogue for change"
2. Dutch Development Results: an indicator framework for SRHR
3. Belgium's e-learning on SRHR, Body&Rights.be
4. Sida's senior Health and SRHR policy advisors
5. DFID's sexual and reproductive health in crises technical guidance note

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1. Swedish support in policy dialogue, “Dialogue for change”

WHAT’S “DIALOGUE FOR CHANGE”?

“Dialogue for change” is a set of reference and competence building materials to support Swedish staff at Missions and Embassies abroad on how to include Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in dialogues with other Governments. The Swedish Countdown 2030 Europe member RFSU developed it in close collaboration with the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida, the development agency.

WHAT AND WHO IS THE “DIALOGUE FOR CHANGE” FOR?

The material was primarily developed to support the dialogue and policy development by Swedish staff abroad but it has been used by others as well, including CSOs. The overall purpose is to strengthen the impact of Sweden’s SRHR policy by increasing the focus on dialogue and communication. “Dialogue for change” contains facts, frequently asked questions, speaking points and arguments on specific SRHR issues and provides guidance for the policy dialogue more generally.

HOW DOES “DIALOGUE FOR CHANGE” WORK?

Swedish Embassy staff are encouraged to read the material, including through a formal letter of instructions from the Minister for Development Cooperation. It serves as a reference for SRHR-capacity building trainings and workshops at Embassies and Missions. The “Dialogue for change” can also be used as a hands-on tool that provides speaking points and step-by-step instructions on how to convey SRHR messages.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The material supports Swedish staff to become more relevant actors on SRHR-topics, leading to better actions and decisions on SRHR in-country. It is easily accessible, has been widely used and praised. Recently, the material was complemented by policy briefs with updated key facts and arguments on three of the topics covered in the material, namely Safe abortion, Comprehensive Sexuality Education and LGBTI, developed by Sida in collaboration with RFSU.

For non-SRHR experts, the materials should preferably be introduced and “unpacked” during a series of trainings. As it was published in 2010, some facts and references require an update.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

⇒ The [“Dialogue for change”](#)

Briefs to be found at :

⇒ [Safe Abortion](#)

⇒ [Comprehensive Sexuality Education](#)

⇒ [LGBTI](#)

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2. Dutch Development Results: an indicator framework for SRHR

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) have been a priority in development cooperation policy of the Netherlands for many years. The Netherlands is one of the leading donors on SRHR and funds many SRHR related projects through capital funded programs and bilateral cooperation. In order to monitor progress and results on SRHR, the Netherlands developed an indicator framework which reports on SRHR indicators at global and at country level. The *Dutch Development Results*, including the ones on SRHR, are available online and updated on a yearly basis.

WHAT AND WHO ARE THE INDICATORS ON SRHR FOR?

The indicator framework allows the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands to plan, monitor and evaluate its programs on SRHR. It informs stakeholders on budget allocations and achieved results. Every year, the results of the Dutch development cooperation are presented to parliament and made publicly available online. The reporting includes both capital funded programs and the bilateral programs of the embassies.

HOW ARE SRHR INDICATORS USED IN DUTCH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION?

The SRHR indicators are clustered according to the four thematic areas of the Dutch SRHR policy, namely: 1) Youth, information and choice, 2) health commodities 3) health care services 4) rights and respect. Embassies have to give a detailed results overview and document progress on these indicators. These results are made accessible online, on the *Dutch Development Results* page, and show how the SRHR budget was spent and what progress has been made on various indicators. Webpage visitors can look up all focus countries in Dutch bilateral cooperation, where an overview is given of the context, general results, history and future, baselines and expenditures per theme and per channel.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With specific SRHR indicators at global and country level the Netherlands is able to monitor progress on SRHR outcomes. The new Minister for Development

Cooperation and International Trade Sigrid Kaag will continue to use the indicators in the coming years and link them to the SDG indicators. This is important, as the framework will allow the Minister to monitor the impact of her new policies.

Overall the SRHR indicator framework on country level can still be improved by making it more reader friendly. The layout is outdated, the font very small and it reads like a logframe. It is also recommended to provide more information regarding the methodology that is used and the data gathered.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- ⇒ [Dutch development results](#)
- ⇒ [Methodological explanation indicators](#)



Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, including HIV/AIDS

424
million

Expenditure (euro) 2016

1.8
million

Additional women and girls with access to modern contraceptive methods

1.21
million

Key populations have received SRHR and HIV services

7.01
million

Youths reached with comprehensive, correct information on SRHR

CONTACT

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3. Belgium's e-learning on SRHR

Body&Rights.be

WHAT'S BODY&RIGHTS?

Body&Rights is a free E-tutorial on sexual and reproductive health and rights, available in French and Dutch and with English subtitles. It provides a general introduction to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), and consists of informative modules on family planning and safe deliveries, HIV and STIs, sexual violence and violence against women, vulnerable populations and SRHR policies, including a 'how to'-module. The e-tutorial is an initiative of BeCause Health, Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation, the Institute for Tropical Medicine and the International Center for Reproductive Health, developed by Sensoa, the Flemish Center of Expertise on sexual health.

WHAT AND WHO IS BODY&RIGHTS FOR?

The e-tutorial is developed for all stakeholders in the (Belgian) development cooperation. The e-tutorial allows non-SRHR specialists to familiarize themselves with SRHR and make them more comfortable addressing SRHR-related topics in the policy dialogue with partner countries, as well during the planning, implementation and follow-up and review of projects and programs.

HOW DOES BODY&RIGHTS WORK?

The e-tutorial is freely available online for anyone who registers. The e-tutorial is self-paced and consists of presentation videos in French and Dutch and a version with English subtitles, instructing the user on contemporary SRHR themes, followed by multiple choice

questions. Each thematic module is supported with references to guiding documents and policies. It takes about 3 hours to follow the entire program. Users obtain a certificate by the Belgian DEVCO, the Institute of Tropical Medicine and Sensoa when they have taken watched all modules and responded to all questions.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the first year after the launch of Body&Rights 750 people registered online, of which 1/3 took the entire course and obtained the certificate. This result was twice as high as the initial objective of 350 users. The political support of the Minister for Development Cooperation has been critical for the successful roll-out of the tutorial, making it known and recommending its uptake.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

<https://www.bodyandrights.be/login>



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4. Sida's senior Health and SRHR policy advisors

WHAT'S SIDA'S HEALTH AND SRHR ADVISORS?

The headquarters of the Swedish development agency Sida in Stockholm includes three senior positions dedicated to *Health and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)*. Two of the senior advisors support Sida's bilateral and regional work in Africa and the other advisor supports Sida in Asia and the Middle East. The uniqueness of these positions lays in their strategic focus to provide direct policy and technical support on health and SRHR to Swedish embassy staff abroad.

WHAT AND WHO ARE SIDA'S HEALTH AND SRHR ADVISORS FOR?

The Health and SRHR advisors' role is to increase SRHR knowledge and capacity among Swedish embassy staff and to contribute with SRHR expertise in the development of strategies and large-scale programs in specific countries or regions. The advisors provide direct support to individual staff members who have a specific mandate on SRHR but they may also lead workshops and trainings for a wider audience of embassy staff, representatives of partner governments and CSOs.

HOW DO SIDA'S HEALTH AND SRHR ADVISORS WORK?

The technical advisors spend a significant part of their time in partner countries, focusing on supporting staff at 5-7 Swedish embassies annually. Embassies about to develop and/or implement new country strategies and/or who need help with large scale programs are prioritised. In addition to providing expertise and advice in the development of country strategies or large scale programs, the advisors can organise capacity building workshops and join staff at field visits as well as in dialogue meetings with the Government or other partners. This means that the advisors can provide tailored and contextualized SRHR advice and support. The

advisors may also refer to contracted consultants and review that work. The advisors encourage synergies between bilateral and global and/or regional contributions.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RFSU believes that compared to merely using policy guidelines and instructions, the SRHR advisors' support leads to better, more relevant and adjusted decisions and outcomes at embassy level. The advisors' function has not been evaluated, but there are currently more requests for support from Swedish Embassies than the advisors can provide for.



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5. DFID's sexual and reproductive health in crises technical guidance note

WHAT'S SRHIE TECHNICAL GUIDANCE NOTE?

Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies (SRHiE) Technical Guidance Note is an internal working document at the UK Department for International Development (DFID). It is a 6-page document that acts as a practical tool for DFID staff, giving them an overview of SRHR in Emergencies including during preparedness and resilience, acute and protracted crises. It gives an outline of the MISP and how to transition to comprehensive SRHR.

WHAT AND WHO IS THE SRHIE TECHNICAL GUIDANCE NOTE FOR?

The technical guidance note is frequently used across different areas at DFID, primarily for humanitarian advisors. Its aim is to provide an overview for Humanitarian and Health Advisers on how to support SRHR in all crisis settings. As an internal advocacy document, it aims to bridge the humanitarian-development divide, make policy priorities clear and increase understanding and awareness of SRHIE.

HOW DOES SRHIE TECHNICAL GUIDANCE NOTE WORK?

The guidance note is pushed out at every opportunity from the onset of acute emergencies to support response. It is also promoted through organizational learning days, lunch and learn sessions, professional development conferences and available on the DFID Intranet.

It acts as an initial entry point for UK based DFID staff to have more detailed conversations with DFID country advisers and teams about programming. The final page of the document links to a wider range of key documents, guidance notes and toolkits including internal resources and online learning tools.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DFID has not measured the uptake or impact of the tool directly but found the document has acted as a useful entry point to have relevant conversations and to offer support to country teams on SRHIE. They will refresh the content with updated MISP and new field manual but will keep it focused on what to do differently based on the updated guidance. The guidance note links to other tools rather than creating additional ones due to the variety of contexts Country Health Advisors work in and to avoid duplication.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

DFID has shared the note directly with other donor governments within the SRHR in Crises donor group.



Credit: IPPF/Alana Holmberg

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