

# Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Colombia 2021–2025



## 1. Strategic objectives

The objective of Sweden's international development cooperation is to create opportunities to improve the lives of people living in poverty and oppression. Sweden's development cooperation is based on the principles of aid and development effectiveness, the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

The strategy applies in 2021–2025 and provides the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) with a total of SEK 1.11 billion and the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) with SEK 45 million.

This strategy governs the use of funds allocated under appropriation item 7 in the appropriation directions for Sida for each budget year and funds allocated under appropriation item 7 'Latin America development cooperation activities' in Sida's appropriation directions, as well as use of the FBA funds allocated under 1.1 'Development cooperation activities' and 1.4 'Folke Bernadotte Academy' in the FBA's appropriation directions for each budget year.

Sida's activities will contribute to the following objectives:

### **Peaceful and inclusive societies**

- Improved conditions for democratic implementation of a negotiated peace and transitional justice.
- Improved conditions for peacebuilding and increased presence and capacity of state institutions in conflict-affected areas.

### **Human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality**

- Improved conditions for democracy and increased respect for the rule of law, including reduced corruption and impunity.
- Increased respect for human rights and increased protection and capacity for human rights defenders and environmentalists.
- Improved gender equality, including reduced gender-based violence and increased access to, and respect for, sexual and reproductive health and rights.

## **Environment, climate and sustainable use of natural resources**

- Reduced climate impact and greater resilience to climate change.
- Improved conditions for sustainable management and use of natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity.

The FBA's activities will contribute to the following objectives:

## **Peaceful and inclusive societies**

- Improved conditions for democratic implementation of a negotiated peace.
- Improved conditions for peacebuilding and increased capacity of state institutions.
- Increased gender equality, including equal opportunities for participation in conflict prevention efforts.

## **2. Country context**

The peace agreement between the Colombian Government and the guerrilla group FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*), concluded in 2016, is a milestone in the country's development. FARC has transitioned into a political party, a demobilisation process has been implemented and an innovative system for transitional justice focused on victims has been established. The parties to the peace agreement have assigned Sweden a special role to monitor the implementation of the agreement, focusing on gender equality, conflict victims' rights and the search for the disappeared.

However, major challenges remain. The society is polarised. The weak central government presence in large parts of the country reduces capacity to deliver basic community services and other peace dividends. Illegal activities and the prevalence of impunity and corruption create favourable conditions for illegal armed groups to operate. The prevalence of armed violence continues to cause human suffering. The violence especially impacts people in vulnerable situations in conflict-affected rural areas. The prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls is high.

Colombia is Latin America's fourth-largest economy and has shown steady economic growth. Colombia joined the OECD in 2020 and is a partner in

the Global Deal. At the same time, the country is marked by major inequalities and a large proportion of the population still live in poverty, particularly in rural areas that often lack sustainable livelihoods. Unsustainable natural resource management causes major environmental and climate impacts. In the wake of the deepened political, economic and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, an estimated 1.7 million Venezuelans have made their way to Colombia. Venezuelan migrants and refugees are especially at risk of poverty and abuses.

### 3. Activities

Sida will implement, monitor and report on activities in accordance with the Government's guidelines for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian aid strategies (UD2017/21053/IU). The guidelines state that activities must be actively directed towards achieving the objectives and that the actual performance must be monitored based on those objectives. The annual strategy report will be comprehensive and include a presentation, analysis and assessment of activities' performance in relation to stated objectives. Information about performance will be used for decision-making, learning and accountability, and for ensuring transparency to the general public. Monitoring will produce reliable and useful information about short- and long-term performance by using both qualitative and quantitative information where possible. Performance monitoring will primarily establish whether activities have made a difference, how and for whom. Based on the existing conditions, follow-up will determine the extent to which development cooperation has made a difference.

Sweden's development cooperation will contribute to sustainable development based on the 2030 Agenda, the financing for development commitments in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement. The activities' contribution will be particularly relevant to the following sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda: gender equality (SDG 5), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate action (SDG 13), life on land (SDG 15) and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16). Sida's strategy reports to the Government will refer to how activities contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Development cooperation will contribute to addressing the root causes of the conflict and promoting lasting peace for inclusive and sustainable development. Support for implementation of the peace agreement is central,

particularly in the areas in which Sweden has been assigned a special monitoring role. Support will be given to demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants. Activities will include support for broader peacebuilding, such as dialogue initiatives. Sida's activities will promote transitional justice, including support for the return of land.

Activities should contribute to increasing gender-equal participation in peacebuilding mechanisms. Sida's activities will contribute to a reduction in gender-based violence, increased respect for diversity and transformation of gender structures. Sida's activities will also contribute to increased access to and respect for sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The FBA's activities should strengthen institutional capacity for equal and democratic governance with particular focus on the security sector.

Activities will contribute to strengthening the rule of law and accountability and reducing impunity and corruption. The impact of organised crime on development must be considered. Sida will contribute to improving the central government's capacity to provide basic community services. Sida will also increase civil society's and free and independent media's capacity to participate – and the private sector's engagement – in peacebuilding. In addition, Sida will strengthen protection for human rights defenders, focusing especially on conflict-affected rural areas. Sida's activities will include support for human rights in the working life. Activities will especially prioritise indigenous peoples and the Afro-Colombian population.

Sida's activities will contribute to reducing climate impact and increasing resilience to climate change. This will include support for increased capacity for sustainable management and use of natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity. The circular economy will be promoted. Activities will promote sustainable production and commercialisation, which includes countering negative effects on ecosystems due to unregulated deforestation and expansion of illegal crops. Support for innovative solutions will be considered. Activities will promote platforms for dialogue and conflict resolution with regard to the use of natural resources and land rights.

Sweden's development cooperation will be appropriate and effective. Activities will emphasise links between long-term development cooperation, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding. Activities should also contribute to increased resilience and thus reduce the need for humanitarian aid in the long term. Activities within and between areas of the strategy must strive for

an integrated approach and seek synergies with other strategies that are relevant to the development context. Collaboration with the Colombian Government will be sought in areas that are common to Sweden's development cooperation and the Colombian Government's national development plan, as well as other peacebuilding initiatives. Sweden will promote coherent and effective development and aid coordination in Colombia, not least by seeking cooperation with relevant multilateral actors. Financial solutions that can contribute to stimulating other financial resources should be used.

Sweden's development cooperation will lay the foundation for broader relations between Sweden and Colombia, and cooperation with the Swedish resource base should be deepened. This may be achieved by creating conditions for engagement through collaboration with the private sector, civil society and other agents of change, state actors and academics. Where relevant, the potential of digital transformation and innovation will be harnessed as a tool for achieving the objectives.