



Supplementary strategy for the Folke Bernadotte Academy
Development cooperation
and peace support operations
in Afghanistan 2018–2019



Direction

The objective of Sweden's development cooperation and humanitarian aid is to create the conditions to improve the lives of people living in poverty and oppression.

Within the framework of this strategy, the remit of the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) will complement the results strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Afghanistan for 2014–2019 and help to enhance the capacity for peaceful and inclusive social development in Afghanistan. Activities with a total value of SEK 10.6 million¹ will be conducted in 2018–2019 and contribute to the following goals:

- Women have increased knowledge and stronger networks, and are better organised to take part in and influence peace efforts.
- Parties in Afghan-led peace efforts have increased capacity to identify opportunities for dialogue and mediation, and to contribute to dialogue and mediation processes.

¹ Contributions within the framework of this strategy are financed in accordance with the terms for appropriation 1:1 Development cooperation, item 4 or corresponding appropriation item in the appropriation directions concerning the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) for each financial year.

Country context

Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest countries, with almost 40 per cent of its population living in extreme poverty. Over the last 40 years, the country has been plagued by armed conflict. The serious security situation affects all aspects of life for the Afghan people and impedes sustainable development as set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Many of the root causes of the conflicts are at the local level, related to the distribution of power and resources, coupled with a weak justice system and police force. The Afghan Government is working to ensure that peace efforts are Afghan-led and Afghan-owned; this is supported by the international community. Regional disputes, corruption, organised crime and support to armed groups undermine peace efforts.

A range of Afghan, international and regional initiatives are in place that could contribute in different ways to a future peace process in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan lacks both a united civil society peace movement and a strong women's peace movement. Few women participate meaningfully in formal Afghan structures associated with conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Women's ability to contribute is limited by conservative social norms and lack of rights, and further limited by poverty, inequality and the security situation. Men's engagement and responsibility for gender equality are essential to further women's empowerment.

Activities

FBA's activities will complement other Swedish activities in Afghanistan and help to enhance the capacity for peaceful and inclusive social development in the country. During the strategy period, FBA will also examine the potential for continued long-term engagement in Afghanistan. Increased confidence in, and opportunities for, lasting and sustainable peace at local, provincial and national levels are central. Confidence-building activities that give the local perspective visibility are a key factor in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The activities could strengthen both individual and organisational capacity and should engage civil society, including women's organisations, in dialogue on lasting peace.

Current capacity-enhancing activities for strategically selected women to enable their meaningful participation in dialogue and mediation should continue and develop. Activities should primarily target women at local and provincial level. Initiatives could also target formal structures and people in decision-making positions to increase

the participation of women. Links between activities at local, provincial and national level should be sought. Procedures for managing/embedding and spreading participants' knowledge should be developed.

If conditions allow, FBA should contribute to strengthening the capacity of parties in Afghan-led peace efforts. This may include different types of activities that can increase confidence in sustainable peace and through which possibilities for dialogue and mediation can be identified. A level of preparedness should be maintained to enable flexible and time-critical initiatives, when required. A strong conflict sensitivity perspective is key to implementation.

The possibility of cooperating with formal structures such as the High Peace Council and the local peace committees should be considered.

Synergies must also be sought with activities within the framework of bilateral development cooperation with Afghanistan and with other relevant

development cooperation strategies. FBA activities will contribute to Sweden's dialogue and influence in the country and region. Wherever possible, collaboration with the EU and the UN should be sought.

The political nature of the activities and the hazardous situation require a close dialogue between the actors concerned, and a high degree of flexibility and expediency in the implementation of the strategy. Implementation of the activities may need to be adapted to the prevailing security situation in the country. The strategy will be followed up according to the principles and processes set out in the Government guidelines for strategies in Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian aid.



Ministry for foreign affairs

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