

Foreword

Human rights and democracy are important elements in Norway's development policy. Norwegian aid helps to secure the rights of vulnerable groups, promote freedom of expression, strengthen the rule of law and ensure that democratic elections are held. Norway also promotes democracy and human rights through political dialogue, normative work in multilateral forums and participation in Universal Periodic Reviews in the UN Human Rights Council.

Progress has been greatest in the area of economic and social rights. The proportion of people living in poverty is decreasing, people are living longer and more children are getting an education. The situation is more complex as regards civil and political rights. Many countries are moving in a more democratic direction. Mobile phones and the internet provide new opportunities for communication and participation. Social media and text messages were used to mobilise protesters in Tahrir Square in Cairo and Maidan Square in Kiev. At the same time, freedom of expression, freedom of organisation and women's rights have come under pressure many places. War and conflict are a poor breeding ground for democracy and human rights. At the same time, the lack of self-determination and fundamental rights is an important cause of conflict. More people are being killed in wars now than ten years ago. Not since World War II has the world seen such a large number of people fleeing from conflicts.

This year's results report contains 25 examples of what has been achieved by Norwegian aid in the field of democracy and human rights. It is important to learn from both good and bad results. We will do more of the things that produce good results. We will change or discontinue activities that are unsuccessful, and avoid repeating our mistakes. These 25 examples do not give us the whole picture, but they illustrate the breadth of Norwegian development cooperation efforts. The examples show that the lives of many individuals have been improved by Norwegian aid, and that institutions that promote democracy and respect for human rights are now in a better position to carry out their tasks. Aid must build on internal agents for change and strengthen both the authorities and civil society concurrently.

While Norad's results reports are neither evaluations of Norwegian aid nor research reports, much of their content is based on independent evaluations and international research. The report is primarily intended to contribute to informing the debate about the results of Norwegian aid.

Oslo, 11 December 2014

Villa Kulild

Director General of Norad

Key messages

1 POSITIVE TREND FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY, BUT ALSO SETBACKS

Since World War II, human rights and democracy have shown positive development. More and more countries have carried out democratic elections and introduced reforms. More than 160 countries have acceded to the UN covenants on civil and political rights and on economic, social and cultural rights. The situation is more complex as regards actual fulfilment of human rights. Many countries have seen a positive development with respect to economic, social and cultural rights. At the same time, some countries have shown a negative development in the area of civil and political rights. Rights about which there has been international agreement are again coming under pressure, particularly women's rights. This situation reflects real conflicts of values. In addition, the increase in armed conflicts and humanitarian crises is pushing human rights and the development of democracy into the background for many people.

2. ABSENCE OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF POVERTY

Poverty is more than just the lack of material welfare. The absence of democracy and human rights limits people's ability to influence and improve their own lives. In addition to being an objective in itself, the strengthening of human rights and democracy can therefore also reduce poverty.

3. DEMOCRACY IS GOOD FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

Studies that monitor developments over several decades have found that democracy has a positive effect on economic growth. Factors that contribute to democracy being beneficial for growth include a better investment climate, better education, the spreading of technology and ideas, and less social unrest.

4. REFORMS CANNOT BE BOUGHT

If aid aimed at promoting democracy and human rights is to produce results, local forces engaged in developing democracy and human rights from within must be included in the efforts. It is important that the donor and recipient have shared objectives, and crucial that aid donors understand the local context and the interests and motives of different parties. Value conflicts sometimes make it difficult to reach agreement on common objectives, in which case it is not likely that aid will produce results.

5. RISK WILLINGNESS IS NECESSARY

There is a relatively high risk that the overriding objectives for aid aimed at promoting human rights and democracy will not be attained. The road from carrying out activities to seeing effects for individuals and society can be a long one. It can be difficult to change attitudes, behaviour and institutions, particularly if such change represents a challenge to the power position of some of the parties. Progress can quickly be halted by circumstances outside the control of the aid providers. All aid measures must assess risks and attempt to organise cooperation in a way that ensures that the risk is reduced.

6. CLEAR POLITICAL REACTIONS TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ARE NECESSARY

It is necessary to react to serious human rights violations. International attention and solidarity help to protect individuals and groups at risk and let them know that they are not alone. There is no basis in research for concluding that simply cutting aid will improve the human rights situation. However, there could be other legitimate reasons for cutting, reducing or redistributing aid. Aid can make a positive contribution to supporting organisations and groups that work to strengthen human rights.

7. PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS ARE CRUCIAL TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

Most Norwegian aid in the field of human rights and democracy is spent on strengthening institutions in partner countries. Political will is necessary, but not sufficient, to bring about changes. Sufficient capacity and resources in key public institutions, such as parliaments, ministries, ombudsmen and the courts, are crucial to the proper functioning of a democracy. Aid for institutional development is only effective if there is demand for it in the country or institutions in question, if it has concrete objectives for what the institution should become capable of doing, and if it strengthens systems, not just individuals.

8. THE AUTHORITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY MUST BE STRENGTHENED IN PARALLEL

The authorities and civil society have different, but complementary roles to play. A country's authorities are responsible for securing the rights of its inhabitants and facilitating democratic processes. Civil society organisations endeavour, among other things, to hold the authorities accountable for their obligations. These organisations strengthen local participation, raise people's awareness of their rights and monitor human rights. In some countries, civil society's activities have been limited through legislation or public interventions in recent years. It represents a challenge for democracy when key political and civil rights, such as freedom of expression, organisation and assembly, are limited.

9. ELECTIONS ARE A NECESSARY, BUT NOT SUFFICIENT CONDITION FOR DEMOCRACY

Holding elections is a fundamental part of the democratisation process, and it is often an important first step on the road to a more democratic society. Elections do not in themselves ensure democratic development, however. In order for elections to confer legitimacy on the authorities, they must be perceived as free and fair. All candidates must have equal opportunities to campaign and present their election manifestos to the voters. In countries where security is inadequate, stability is fragile or there are smouldering conflicts, opening up for democratic processes and elections can entail a risk. It could exacerbate conflicts if important groups are unwilling to respect democratic rules, or when politicians have limited possibilities to meet the voters' expectations.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY: SOME DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Lack of respect for human rights and fundamental democratic principles is a violation of individuals' rights. It can cause a society's development to slow down or move in the wrong direction. This could have serious consequences for the inhabitants and the country, as well as regionally and globally. The current crises in Iraq, the Central African Republic, Syria and South Sudan clearly demonstrate this. Failure to fulfil human rights and weak democratic institutions are among the causes of conflict underlying all of these crises.

In the long-term perspective, there is a positive trend in democracy and human rights development, even though development has been uneven and at times characterised by stagnation and setbacks. The world has seen three big waves of democratisation in the past two centuries.¹ During the first wave in the 19th century, autocracy was abolished in many European countries. Norway developed into a democracy during this period. The second wave of democratisation came in the wake of World War II. Post-war decolonisation resulted in many new independent states, but only a few of them became fully democratic. The third and biggest wave took place in the 1980s and 1990s, when many countries in Latin America, Asia and, not least, countries in Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union, developed into more or less democratic societies. According to Freedom House, the number of electoral democracies in the world increased by 53 in the period from 1989 to 2013. Most regimes today hold elections and claim to be democratic, although, in many countries, they are so in name only. Figure 1.1 shows that many countries still have authoritarian forms of government.

While the development of human rights dates back to Ancient Greece and the Age of Enlightenment, it only gained momentum after World War II. When the UN was founded after the war, there was general agreement that the world needed mechanisms to ensure that history would never repeat itself. Human rights were formalised through the Charter of the United Nations and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. An international system was thereby created to safeguard these universal rights. More than 160 countries have acceded to the UN's two covenants on civil and political rights and on economic, social and cultural rights.

The situation has become more complex in recent decades. On the one hand, the level of knowledge about human rights and democracy has improved in most parts of the world. The internet and social media provide new opportunities to obtain and share information. Regimes that are not perceived as legitimate are challenged through mass protests and uprisings, for example in several of the Arab countries. On the other hand, the world is characterised by prolonged conflicts, humanitarian crises, climate change and terrorist threats. Such upheavals put the values of democracy and human rights to

¹ Samuel P. Huntington (1991) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late 20th century*

the test.

There is growing international pressure to limit human rights. A number of countries have formed an alliance to win support in the UN for restrictive interpretations and limitations on human rights. These countries refer to traditional and religious values and principles of sovereignty and non-interference. The rights of girls and women are under particular pressure.

There are large gaps between the obligations countries have taken on and their compliance in practice. There is a negative development in civil and political rights in a number of countries and regions, as well as limitations on democratic freedom of action (see Figure 1.2). In several countries, the authorities impose restrictions on the activities of civil society. Arguments relating to security and the terrorist threat are used to justify strict government control and surveillance in many countries.

Many developing countries have experienced significant economic growth. In most of them, development has been unevenly distributed, with high, in some cases even increasing, inequality between men and women, rich and poor, the urban and rural population, and between different ethnic groups. For example, while there has been a general decrease in the mortality rate for children under the age of five, the child mortality gap between the groups with the highest and lowest income has increased.² At the same time, many of the countries that receive aid from Norway have shown a positive development in the right to education, health, housing, food and work in recent years (see Figure 1.3).

Human rights conventions
<p>On 10 December 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration starts by stating that 'recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world'.</p> <p>The number of ratifications has doubled since 2000. The fact that a country ratifies a convention, however, is no guarantee that the rights of its inhabitants are respected. For each of the conventions, a committee has been created to monitor whether the states fulfil their obligations. The tasks of the committees are growing rapidly, and the number of complaint mechanisms has increased from three in 2000 to eight in 2014.</p>

² UNHCHR and CESR (2013) *Who will be accountable? Human rights in the Post-2015 Development Agenda*

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979

The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984

The Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families 1990

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006

The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance 2006

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ARE ROOTED IN VALUES AND INSTITUTIONS

Human rights and democracy are about values. The most fundamental values are the human dignity of individuals, freedom and equality. Both democracy and human rights concern the relationship between the state and the individual, and are based on the idea that everyone has the same rights, regardless of their social or economic status. Fulfilment of these values is dependent on institutions and processes that can help to safeguard them in practice.

The term 'democracy' describes a way of organising political power in a state. A common description is that democracy is a decision-making system with participation through universal suffrage and with political rights that allows for opposition and competition between organised alternatives. While there are similarities between democracies, no two democracies are identical. They are all influenced by history and culture. There is no internationally agreed, common definition of democracy.

Human rights are part of international law. The primary objective of international law is to regulate relations between states. In some cases, international law also deals with the legal relationship between individuals and states, and between organisations and states. Human rights are defined on the basis of practice in international bodies and customary law. Human rights conventions are legally binding agreements between states that have chosen to subject themselves to the rule of international law. Since international agreements impose obligations on states, it is only states that can be held accountable, i.e. in the international courts of human rights.

States have a responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. To respect means that the state itself shall not undermine these rights. To protect means protecting against third parties that could represent a threat to these rights, for example business

and industry or political and religious movements. To fulfil the rights means that the state facilitates and implements programmes capable of ensuring that human rights are fulfilled. Interpretations differ as regards the extent of the states' role and responsibilities. The human rights conventions allow for interpretation and different approaches, while at the same time laying down certain minimum standards, for example in terms of securing the population access to healthcare.

The human rights are indivisible and are mutually reinforcing, and they can be divided into different categories. The first human rights aimed to protect individuals from states' power to restrict fundamental rights and freedoms, often referred to as political and civil rights. Another set of rights is referred to as economic, social and cultural rights. Most of the human rights conventions also contain provisions on protection against discrimination on grounds of gender, ethnic background, language or religion.

Most Norwegian aid in this field goes to strengthening institutions in partner countries. Effective and legitimate institutions are important in order to achieve the objectives of democracy and human rights (see Figure 1.4). By institutions is meant formal and informal, government and non-governmental organisations, as well as norms, laws and regulations. The institutions have different roles and functions that often balance each other. Together, they will contribute to the fair and peaceful handling of the conflicts of interest and power struggles that exist in all societies.

Businesses have a responsibility to respect human rights

The UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights were adopted in 2011. These principles have helped to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of states and enterprises in the human rights area. For the first time, there is international agreement that business and industry have an independent responsibility for human rights.

OHCHR (2011) *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights*

HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY – TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

Popular participation and human rights are key aspects of democracy. Human rights include rights that are fundamental to a well-functioning democracy, such as freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Fundamental democratic principles such as participation, non-discrimination and the rule of law are closely related to human rights.

Civil and political rights are often linked to the concept of democracy, because they give people rights that enable them to influence decision-making processes and the distribution of resources. Economic, social and cultural rights are also closely linked to democracy. These are the rights that are necessary for actual participation, such as education, health, freedom of association, food and housing. While democracy is related to processes for distributing power and choosing who is to govern, human rights are crucial in relation to the content of policies and practices. It is difficult to imagine a

country that respects, protects and fulfils human rights that is not also a democracy. However, democracy is not sufficient in itself to ensure the fulfilment of important human rights. Marginalised groups are often not represented to the same extent as other groups in parliaments and other institutions where policies are formulated. At the same time, democratic governance and accountability are important preconditions for human rights being respected and fulfilled.

Good governance

The concept of 'good governance' has several different meanings in the aid context. It can be understood as effective governance, legitimate governance, governance that safeguards human rights, and governance that helps to reduce poverty. The Norwegian Government states that: 'Human rights, democracy and good governance are closely related and mutually dependent' (Proposition No 1 to the Storting (2014-2015), page 48). This result report focuses on democracy and human rights.

AID IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY – SOME KEY CHALLENGES

Few systematic studies have been carried out of the effect of aid in support of democracy and human rights. The research and evaluations that exist point in different directions.³ It is possible to identify some trends, however.⁴

The effect of democracy on economic growth

Which system of governance best promotes economic growth is a key question both in research and in the development debate. China's high and stable growth rate has highlighted the debate about whether other forms of governance than democracy can be better suited to promoting economic growth. It is claimed that authoritarian countries can more easily implement large-scale public investment projects, reform programmes and land rezoning. On the other hand, it is pointed out that democracy has other important advantages, not least in terms of promoting business development and profitable investments. The arguments are that democracies are better at spreading ideas and technology, that democracies more easily develop a good, broad educational system, and that they provide more social stability and protection of private property.

It is difficult to isolate the effect of democratisation, because several other factors than differences in form of governance influence a country's economic growth. The broadest data material is available for the period after 1960. It includes many countries that have

³ Agnes Cornell (2013) *Does regime type matter for the impact of democracy aid on democracy?* In *Democratization*, Vol. 20 (4)

⁴ Lise Rakner, Bård A. Andreassen and Malcolm Langford (2014) *Memorandum. Overview of research findings regarding aid in support of democratisation and human rights observance* (unpublished)

made the transition from authoritarian to democratic governance.

Several recent studies conclude that democratisation has a positive effect on economic growth.⁵ The size of the effect varies, but it is in the region of 0.5–1 percentage point per year. Such research findings are never indisputable, but the results give good reason to expect that democratisation contributes to increased economic growth in developing countries.

Security and stability considerations

In post-conflict countries and fragile states, peace treaties, security sector reforms and establishing rule of law can facilitate democratic development and respect for human rights. In countries where security is inadequate, stability is fragile or there are smouldering conflicts, opening up for democratic processes and elections can entail a risk. In cases where the absence of democratic values and principles form the background to the conflict, the introduction of democratic processes and civil and political rights can help to lower the level of conflict. Establishing new institutions, drawing up a new constitution and holding elections can contribute to lasting peace. It can also cause a resumption of the conflict if important groups are unwilling to respect democratic rules, or if politicians have limited possibilities to meet voters' expectations. In such situations, aid can play an important role by strengthening key institutions and ensuring that the population's fundamental welfare needs are met.

National ownership and shared objectives

National ownership is an important principle in all development work. It means that cooperation is based on the countries' own policies and priorities. In order for aid in support of human rights and democracy to be effective, Norway and its partner countries must have common objectives for what the aid is intended to achieve. The principles of national ownership and shared objectives sometimes come into conflict with each other. This can, for example, be because those with power and decision-making authority in a country are not the same people who are victims of human rights violations. There can also be a wide gap between obligations and their actual fulfilment in the partner countries. Failure to meet human rights obligations and express political objectives for democracy development can be due to partner countries not really wanting or prioritising human rights and democracy. In many countries, traditional legislation or practices that are in conflict with fundamental human rights principles are continued, despite these countries having ratified human rights conventions and thus committed themselves to integrating them into national law.

⁵ Carl Henrik Knutsen (2012) *Democracy, State Capacity, and Economic Growth*. World Development, Vol 43. See also Daron Acemoglu, Suresh Naidu, Pascual Restrepo and James A. Robinson (2014) *Democracy Does Cause Growth*. NBER Working Paper 20004

Dilemmas can arise if partner countries implement democratic decisions that are in conflict with fundamental human rights. There are many examples of decisions that discriminate against vulnerable groups, such as ethnic or sexual minorities, or limit the rights of women. If aid is to play a positive role, it is crucial that it targets actors that have the required freedom of action and will to change.

Results depend on internal forces

Regardless of whether Norway cooperates with the authorities or with civil society organisations, it is crucial to strengthen internal agents of change that endeavour to promote democracy and human rights. Research shows that the results of aid in support of democracy is dependent on the presence of internal forces supporting democratisation from within.⁶ Foreign aid can be effective when it supports internal processes. It is during the transitional phase from an authoritarian regime to democracy that it is most important to support internal forces. Long-term aid for institution-building is more important in the consolidation phase. International human rights networks have played an important part in improving the global human rights situation, because pressure from below within countries works best in combination with pressure from outside. Supporting internal agents of change often entails that we have to work with actors who generally do not share our values or objectives. Traditional or religious leaders, for example, often have the power, resources and networks necessary to effect change.

A balanced approach is most effective

It is a country's authorities that are responsible for fulfilling the rights of its inhabitants and facilitating democracy. Aid can help to strengthen the authorities' capacity, develop better and more efficient national systems, and trigger change processes. Budget support and other types of aid can help to increase parliaments' influence over budgetary processes and can help civil society to hold the government accountable for how money is spent. At the same time, state-to-state aid can in some cases contribute to cementing authoritarian power relations because aid favours the incumbent government. Such aid can also undermine the government's accountability in relation to the electorate, because the taxes people pay become less important when outside aid accounts for a substantial share of the state's income.

The multilateral support and state-to-state aid primarily helps the authorities to improve national institutions and structures. A combination of support for the authorities and for civil society can strengthen the ability of key actors to fill their roles

⁶ Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp and Kathryn Sikkink (eds.) (1999) *The Power of Human Rights. International Norms and Domestic Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

in a constructive manner.⁷ In practice, this is often challenging. A combination of lack of will on the part of the authorities and inadequate institutional capacity often makes it necessary to allocate a higher proportion of aid to civil society organisations. This is a potential dilemma for donor countries, because civil society organisations are often not membership-based, and thus have no democratic mandate. International support for civil society can contribute to weakening the organisations' support and legitimacy in the general population.

Aid targeting civil society has good effect, but limited range

There are many examples of aid for civil society organisations being effective. The observations made by Norad's Civil Society Panel in 2012 of the impact of Norwegian organisations' development work in four countries in Africa and Asia showed that the support resulted in greater social engagement, stronger sense of community across group interests, and a greater diversity of organisations. These are preconditions for strengthening human rights and democracy. The organisations' initiatives are often highly effective locally, but have limited range. It is a challenge for small organisations to scale up their programmes to the national level.⁸

When development goes in the wrong direction

Serious human rights violations or threats to democratic development make it necessary for donors to analyse the situation and consider what can best help to reverse the negative trend. The first step is often to express concern. Relevant development policy instruments include freezing or reducing aid or changing the way in which aid is organised. Withholding aid does not necessarily help to improve the situation in the long term. There is little research to indicate that negative reactions are an effective development policy instrument.⁹ On the contrary, research indicates that it is more effective to use positive incentives such as increasing aid to countries that fulfil human rights. Positive policy instruments are most effective in countries that are least economically developed.¹⁰ Aid cooperation can be important as a door-opener for dialogue with the authorities. Suspending aid can reduce the possibility of exerting a positive influence.

In some cases, it is impossible to reach agreement with the authorities on shared principles, guidelines and objectives. In such cases, it may be an option to support civil society organisations and knowledge communities. It is important to listen to the

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ Bård A. Andreassen (2014) *Legal empowerment of the poor – a strategy for social change?* In Paul Gready and Wouter Vandenhoele (eds.), *Human Rights and Development in the New Millennium. Towards a Theory of Change*. London: Routledge

⁹ Robert A. Pape (1997) *Why sanctions do not work*. In *International Security* Vol. 22, No 2

¹⁰ Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp and Kathryn Sikkink (eds.) (2013) *The Persistent Power of Human Rights. From Commitment to Compliance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

opinions of local actors and organisations. This can help to ensure as effective and realistic an approach as possible, and prevent the situation for already vulnerably persons or groups from deteriorating further.

MEASURING RESULTS OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS WORK

Measuring the results of democracy and human rights efforts is in principle no different from other results measurement. Firstly, it is important to understand and describe the starting point and the problem to be dealt with. The problem might, for example, be discriminatory attitudes and norms preventing women's political participation. Objectives are then formulated that describe the desired situation after the project has been implemented. The objective should be concrete enough for change to be measured in relation to the starting point, for example: Women participate in politics on a par with men. Indicators are often needed to assess the degree to which objectives are attained, for example the number of female members of parliament.

Several indicators are often combined to produce an index expressed as a numerical value. Democracy and human rights indexes can be useful means of comparing countries with each other or showing development over time. The selection and weighting of indicators are decisive for how different countries score on an index. It is difficult to agree on what constitute good indicators for democracy, because there is no universally agreed definition of the concept. Most democracy researchers agree that competition between different political alternatives and elections are key elements, while there is disagreement about how important public debate is. (See the discussion about the different dimensions of democracy and the Varieties of Democracy index on pages 92–93.) The democracy and human rights indexes presented in this report should therefore be used with caution.

One of the challenges of measuring results in the field of democracy and human rights is that the road from carrying out activities to seeing effects on individuals and society can be a long one. An area that is cleared of mines can be farmed immediately, and a child who is vaccinated against a disease will not become ill. In democracy and human rights work, it often takes a long time for change to manifest itself. Changing attitudes and power structures can take generations. Development is rarely a linear process, but often encounters setbacks caused by factors far beyond the aid donors' control. Results gained in the field of democracy and rights are not achieved once and for all, but must be constantly defended and maintained. Some years must therefore elapse between an initiative and its evaluation for it to be possible to assess the sustainability of such initiatives.

The fact that it takes a long time for the results to manifest themselves makes it difficult to assess the extent to which results can be attributed to Norwegian initiatives. If, for example, women and men are becoming increasingly equal in a country, that is probably not entirely the result of one project or programme that Norway has supported. The challenge associated with linking an effect to an aid initiative is often referred to as the *attribution problem*. Evaluations and research can show, or at least give an indication of, how much of the result can be attributed to a specific project.

A human rights-based approach quality assures aid

In addition to the aid that has human rights and democracy as its primary objective, Norway gives a lot of human rights-based aid. Taking a human rights-based approach means that both the donor and the development partners base their work on certain key human rights principles. In this approach, the end objective is not the only priority – the process by which the objective are reached is also important. The rights perspective endeavours both to strengthen the authorities' ability to honour citizens' rights and citizens' ability to demand them. The human-rights based approach is a form of quality assurance of aid.

On the basis of seven overarching human rights principles, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) developed PANTHER – a mnemonic for the rights-based approach to development cooperation:

Participation

Accountability

Non-discrimination

Transparency

Human dignity

Empowerment

Rule of law

SIGNIFICANT NORWEGIAN SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

Norway supports a number of projects directly aimed at strengthening democracy and human rights. Much of the support for other sectors goes indirectly to human rights and democracy efforts. This year's results report focuses on aid that has human rights and democracy as its primary objectives. The examples also include initiatives that contribute to human rights and democracy in a more indirect manner, for example budget support and core support for multilateral organisations.

Out of the total Norwegian aid of NOK 32.8 billion in 2013, NOK 4.6 billion was

categorised as aid whose main objectives were *human rights, participatory development, good governance and democratisation*.¹¹ This gives a reasonably good picture of the magnitude of Norwegian support for human rights and democracy.

As shown in Figure 1.5, more than half of Norwegian aid with human rights and democracy as its primary objective went to strengthening public administration and civil society. A quarter went to conflict prevention and peace efforts. 'Other sectors' mostly consist of projects relating to health, education, environmental protection and agriculture.

If we use a broader definition that also includes projects where human rights and democracy are either the main objective or one of several significant objectives, a total of NOK 7.3 billion of Norway's bilateral aid in 2013 was spent on projects aimed at strengthening human rights and democracy. In addition, Norway donated NOK 7.4 billion in core support to multilateral organisations and NOK 490 million in budget support. Some of this core and budget support is also spent on strengthening human rights and democracy in partner countries (see the text box Results through Multilateral Organisations on pages 24–25).

Norwegian aid with democracy and human rights as the primary objective has increased from NOK 3.2 billion in 2008 to NOK 4.6 billion in 2013 (see Figure 1.6.). The total amount of Norwegian aid has increased during the same period. The proportion of bilateral aid used to support human rights and democracy has remained stable at around 20 per cent since 2008.

High risk of corruption
An evaluation has concluded that, even though donors have increased their support for anti-corruption work since the mid-1990s, there is still significant corruption in countries that receive aid.
The donors' efforts to combat corruption have usually been in accordance with the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Support for the judiciary, an independent prosecuting authority and private sector responsibility are areas that have received little attention. Donors have helped to strengthen institutions and systems in the countries covered by the evaluation (Vietnam, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Zambia and Nicaragua), but are unable to document that this has led to a reduction in corruption. Support for public financial management and supreme audit institutions

¹¹ All Norwegian aid is categorised and reported to the OECD's Development Assistance Committee. In addition to reporting by sector, bilateral aid can be assigned nine policy markers that signify overarching topics. A distinction is made between projects for which the policy marker is the *main objective* and projects for which it is a *significant objective*. The use of policy markers is based on a discretionary assessment by a programme officer, and incorrect coding may occur. Budget support and multilateral aid are not assigned policy markers.

has produced good results, while progress has been slow as regards reforms of the judiciary. The effect of support for anti-corruption commissions was found to depend on how the judiciary functions, among other things. Restrictions on freedom of expression may have hindered attempts to campaign against corruption.

Source: Norad Report (6/2011) *Synthesis. Joint Evaluation of Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts 2002–2009*.

HOW DOES NORWAY STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS?

Over time, Norway has built up a distinct international profile in the areas of human rights and democracy. Norway has played a leading role in relation to women's rights, protection of human rights defenders and the role of business and industry in the efforts to promote rights. In addition, Norway has focused on the rights of sexual and religious minorities, indigenous peoples and children, and on efforts to combat capital punishment and torture and promote freedom of expression and free media. By emphasising the importance of both political and civil rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, Norway has built credibility in the UN.

It is a precondition for safeguarding human rights and democracy that key actors, such as the state, civil society organisations, the media, political parties, human rights advocates and business and industry, have relevant and adequate capacity and resources. Support for developing such capacity therefore has a central place in development cooperation in the field of human rights and democracy.

Head of state convicted of corruption

'I had no idea what kind of political pressure we would be under. Thanks to Eva Joly and the Norwegian Corruption Hunter Network, my team and I had the strength, advice and knowledge we needed to see the trial through,' says Juan Carlos Cubillo, anti-corruption prosecutor in Costa Rica. In the trial former president Rafael Calderón was sentenced to five years in prison for embezzlement. His sentence was later reduced to a three-year suspended prison sentence. President Calderón is one of very few heads of state to be convicted of corruption.

Corruption is the misuse of public power or money for personal benefit. Illicit financial flows from development countries are believed to amount to up to USD 1,000 billion a year. This figure is almost eight times higher than the total official aid to the same countries. As a result of illicit capital flows, developing countries miss out on huge assets that could have been invested in the school system, education, infrastructure and welfare systems for their population. It has been estimated that bribes totalling approximately USD 1,000 billion are paid worldwide every year. Illicit

capital flows can be reduced by reducing the possibility of bribes. Corruption does not just result in public funds ending up in the wrong pockets, it also undermines people's trust in democratic processes and political systems.

The prosecutor from Costa Rica is one of around 20 corruption hunters who make up Norad's Corruption Hunter Network. Norway established the network in 2005, and it provides financial support of up to NOK 1.4 million per year. The network holds two meetings a year at which representatives of prosecuting authorities, investigators and anti-corruption agencies meet to share experience and knowledge.

'The experience of other corruption hunters in the network has been extremely valuable in my work,' says Cubillo. Among other things, the network enabled him to benefit from the professional and moral support of a South African colleague who was working on a similar, highly politicised case. People will always try to conceal corruption, and the greater the amounts involved, the greater the risk to the corruption hunters. Several of them have been persecuted and imprisoned, and attempts have been made to blackmail them. 'Having informal discussions with colleagues about complicated topics in a secure environment without an audience is important to the effectiveness of the network meetings,' according to Cubillo.

For more information about Norad's Corruption Hunter Network, see:

See Juan Carlos Cubillo argue the Calderón case in court here:

Aid is one of several policy instruments

Like Norway, most of the partner countries have ratified all or several of the international human rights conventions. They have thus acknowledged a legally binding obligation to incorporate these rights into national law and to fulfil them. Norwegian aid aims to strengthen the authorities' capacity and will to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of their citizens. At the same time, Norway endeavours to increase citizens' knowledge and improve their capacity to demand that their rights are respected. Human rights are a framework for dialogue between states. By referring to rights, not charity, development projects can be guaranteed sustainability beyond covering immediate needs and interests. Norway is engaged in human rights dialogues with a number of countries. The UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Reviews give all countries an opportunity to ask critical questions and make recommendations to each other (see the text box below).

Aid can also support democracy and human rights in a more indirect manner by strengthening the public administration. This can contribute to economic growth and

more effective tax administration, thereby improving the state's resource base, increasing welfare and improving public services, for example in the areas of health, education, energy and sanitary infrastructure.

All countries attend hearings in the UN Human Rights Council

One of the most important innovations introduced when the Human Rights Council was established in 2006 was the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The objective of the UPR is to improve the human rights situation in the UN's 193 member states. The review includes specific recommendations that the country is expected to implement in the period until the next hearing four years later. Such UPRs have enabled the Human Rights Council to turn the spotlight on the human rights situation in countries that have so far been able to evade such attention. The reviews also put civil society and states in a better position to engage in targeted human rights work.

Norway uses these reviews systematically to raise demanding human rights issues in individual countries. According to the NGO UPR Info, Norway is the fourth most active country in terms of making recommendations. Before Bangladesh's second UPR review in 2013, the international network Child Rights Governance Assembly interviewed healthcare professionals, teachers, children, parents and children's rights organisations. Together, they identified issues to be given priority during the review. The issues were raised with relevant national and international parties, such as the country's ministry of finance and various embassies in Bangladesh, including the Norwegian embassy. Seventy-five per cent of the Child Rights Governance Assembly's demands were included in the final recommendations from the UPR. These recommendations are a natural part of the ongoing dialogue that Norway and other countries engage in with the Bangladeshi authorities. The next hearing will show the extent to which Bangladesh has followed up the recommendations from 2013.

Norwegian-supported exile radio station ready to move back home to Myanmar

Myanmar's military junta has been regarded as an oppressive regime that is guilty of extensive human rights violations. The radio station Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) was established in Oslo in 1992 by Burmese students and democracy advocates who had fled from Myanmar. At the time, all the news media in Myanmar were under government control, and the people had little access to balanced information. In recent years, Myanmar has introduced reforms that have taken the country in a more democratic direction.

Real democracy requires a free and independent press, the fourth estate, to hold the authorities accountable, highlight abuses of power and create an arena for political debate. Norway has been a driving force in the international effort to promote free

and independent media, particularly in areas of conflict and where democracy is under pressure.

Norway has been one of DVB's most important supporters from its inception. DVB states that the financial support has been important, but not as important as the political support that made it possible to start broadcasting from Oslo: 'Without Norway's support, there would be no DVB,' says Khin Maung Win of DVB.

Today, about five million people follow DVB's news broadcasts. DVB employs about 80 journalists in Myanmar, and it has been an important contributor to international news broadcasters, including the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK), particularly during periods when it has been difficult for outside journalists to gain access to Myanmar. DVB believes that it is now possible to work from Myanmar, and it has closed the radio station's Oslo office with a view to moving home. So far, DVB is broadcasting from Thailand pending a licence to broadcast from Myanmar.

JOINT EFFORTS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

The development of democracy and strengthening of human rights is contingent on internal forces in a country spearheading the effort. External actors can support development in some areas, but it is important to adopt a realistic approach aimed at strengthening the position of forces working to promote democracy and human rights.

Targeted initiatives aimed at supporting the authorities' development of public institutions is an important part of aid. Support can take the form of money or cooperation with ministries, the courts, parliaments, human rights commissions, supreme audit institutions and ombudsmen.

As shown in Figure 1.6, a large proportion of Norway's democracy and human rights support is channelled through civil society organisations. The role of civil society ranges from holding the authorities accountable for their obligations, strengthening local participation, for example by vulnerable groups, and raising awareness of and educating individuals about their rights, and monitoring the human rights situation. A robust and diverse civil society is a good indication of a vibrant democracy. Civil society includes human rights organisations, women's organisations, journalist and media organisations, faith-based organisations, cultural institutions, bar associations and trade unions, among others.

Partners are selected on the basis of their presence, capacity and competence, willingness to change, formal roles or mandates, expected effects, thematic focus, or whether the project in question is a long-term or short-term one. For example, up to 80

per cent of Norwegian human rights aid to Sudan, South Sudan, Angola and Sri Lanka is channelled through civil society organisations.¹² The reasons for the choice of partner are not the same in all these countries. As regards Sudan and South Sudan, the structural weakness of the official authorities is the reason why most of the money is channelled through organisations. In the case of Angola and Sri Lanka, the authorities' inadequate human rights policy is part of the reason why a lot of aid goes through civil society organisations.

There are several reasons why Norway regards the UN and other multilateral organisations as being important in relation to supporting democracy and human rights. It is through the multilateral system that democracy and human rights are established as universal principles that are binding on the member states. That is where norms are developed and states' compliance verified. These tasks cannot be carried out by one country alone. Their size, presence and support from many member countries make the UN and other multilateral organisations the most effective partners. The multilateral organisations cooperate with the authorities, civil society organisations and the private sector.

¹² Norad (2011) *Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation to Promote Human Rights*. Norad evaluation 7/2011.