



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Human Rights and Democracy
Programme

STRATEGY

Financial Year 2015-16
Human Rights and Democracy Department

PROGRAMME STRATEGY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Human Rights and Democracy Programme (HRDP) is the FCO's dedicated annual fund supporting human rights and democracy work overseas. Through targeted projects, it aims to lift the capacity of governments and civil society to promote and protect human rights.

The HRDP is a strategic programme; we therefore assess every bid we receive carefully for impact and fit with both the overarching HRDP strategy, and our human rights strategy for that country.

2. THEMATIC PRIORITIES

As a nation with global interests, the UK has motive and means to shape the international community's response to humanitarian crises, security threats and other human rights and geopolitical developments. Human rights, democracy and the rule of law are at the heart of the UK Government's foreign policy.

By funding human rights projects across eight thematic priorities, the HRDP targets areas that are important to us and where we consider we can make the greatest impact. These eight thematic priorities are:

- abolition of the death penalty
- business and human rights
- democratic processes
- freedom of expression
- freedom of religion or belief
- global torture prevention
- preventing sexual violence in conflict
- promoting women's rights

3. PRIORITY COUNTRIES

HRDP projects complement the human rights work of individual British Embassies or High Commissions across the globe. Our designated HRDP priority countries are those where we actively encourage project bids. These are countries which:

- are one of the FCO's countries of concern or country case studies, as set out in the [Annual Human Rights and Democracy Report](#) and/or;
- have particular opportunities to promote and protect human rights for one or more of our thematic priorities.

The 2015-16 HRDP priority countries are listed in [Annex A](#). The Programme does accept bids from countries not on this list. However, please ensure that project proposals from non-priority countries clearly set out a strong rationale for funding.

4. INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

The HRDP supports international human rights mechanisms, so particularly welcomes projects that encourage implementation of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations, concluding observations from Treaty Bodies, and recommendations from Human Rights Council Special Rapporteurs.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

For the financial year 2015-16, 98% of our funding must be allocated to [ODA countries](#).

6. ELIGIBILITY

The HRDP accepts project bids from civil society, governments, think-tanks, other UK government departments and strategic partners.

We encourage our Embassies and High Commissions to work closely with both local and international implementers, in order to identify potential projects that are of the greatest relevance to each priority country.

7. MONITORING & EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS

Robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is an integral part of the HRDP. The HRDP team encourages new approaches and partners, while at the same time ensuring rigorous M&E, so that impact can be measured and that poor/performance of projects can be caught early and addressed.

• PROJECT M&E

Quarterly Reports

Project implementers are required by grant contract to submit quarterly progress reports, and quarterly financial reports to the local Embassy or High Commission, or to the relevant Project Manager (for multi-country projects).

Project Evaluations

The HRDP evaluates approximately 10% of projects on an annual basis. This is to ensure that project impact and value for money is assessed, and to gather lessons learned which can inform future projects and programme development.

The programme will also consider evaluating any project valued £150,000 or over. Other considerations taken into account when choosing projects to evaluate are:

- projects which HRDP are keen to replicate elsewhere
- projects on a specific theme or area of FCO interest
- projects which had implementation difficulties

• PROGRAMME M&E

Quarterly Programme Review

The HRDP submits a quarterly review to the programme Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) on a quarterly basis. The review is intended to provide an overview of the project and an assessment of potential risks to its delivery.

Major Programme Review or Evaluation:

The HRDP is annually reviewed by internal evaluators and peer reviewers, in accordance with FCO guidelines. An internal review is currently underway to evaluate the impact of the HRDP between 2011 and 2015.

Dissemination of Evaluation Reports and Lessons Learned

All evaluations of non-sensitive projects are available [here](#).

8. THEMATIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

| Theme | Objective | Focus Issues and Indicators of Success |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1. Abolition of the death penalty (ADP): The UK strongly believes, as a matter of principle, that the death penalty should never be considered an acceptable criminal punishment, and is committed to its universal abolition. See our Death Penalty Strategy for more policy information.</p> | <p>To contribute to the worldwide abolition of the death penalty</p> | <p>A. Human rights compliant alternatives to the death penalty are promoted to policy makers, civil society, media and the public.</p> <p>B. Legislative, procedural, constitutional or policy amendments leading to a reduction in the number of offences to which the death penalty applies, or the number of sentences imposed.</p> <p>C. Greater adherence to international standards and principles in relation to the death penalty, including signature of relevant international instruments.</p> |
| <p>2. Business & Human Rights (BHR): Business investment, economic growth, development, human rights and the rule of law should be complementary and mutually reinforcing. Businesses operating in compliance with international human rights standards benefit directly from sustainable market conditions, as do host communities.</p> <p>The government's commitment to supporting UK businesses internationally is consistent with our determination to put human rights at the core of our foreign policy. See the UK national action plan on Business and Human Rights.</p> | <p>Increased State and corporate understanding and implementation of the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on Business and Human Rights</p> <p><i>(aka the "Ruggie principles" or the Protect, Respect, Remedy Framework)</i></p> | <p>A. <u>State duty to protect:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote international uptake and awareness of the UNGPs • support the development of national implementation plans of the UNGPs • work with states to help them meet their human rights obligations with respect to business <p>B. <u>Access to an effective remedy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist states wishing to develop their human rights protection mechanisms and reduce barriers to remedy within their jurisdiction • support civil society efforts to access an effective remedy, and promote the protection of BHR human rights defenders • support business efforts to provide, adopt or participate in effective grievance mechanisms. <p>C. <u>Corporate respect for human rights:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase businesses' awareness of the importance of respecting human rights throughout business operations • develop models and examples of best practice to demonstrate benefit of respect for human rights • improve business understanding of the importance of the Ruggie Principles, leading to better business practice and new or improved relationships between business, governments and civil society. |

| Theme | Objective | Focus Issues and Indicators of Success |
|--|---|--|
| <p>3. Democratic Processes (DEM): Support for democracy is integrated throughout our human rights objectives. Elections are a vital element to democracy, but also need to be considered as part of a long-term, robust approach rather than as a single event.</p> | <p>To strengthen democratic processes, improving the credibility of elections and compliance with international standards.</p> | <p>A. The quality of electoral processes throughout the electoral cycle is improved. Including the improvement of electoral management, voter registration, civic and voter education, and election monitoring. <u>Note:</u> priority will be given to projects which address recommendations from international Election Observation Missions.</p> <p>B. Participation in the democratic process for civil society, especially marginalised groups is increased. Support to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) strengthening democratic reform and dialogue, and constitution building.</p> <p>C. Coherence with democracy-strengthening interventions by other actors, especially the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.</p> |
| <p>4. Freedom of Expression (FOE): The UK promotes freedom of opinion and expression, including on the internet, as an essential building block of democracy and the knowledge economy, and an enabler of human rights, as well as an end in itself. It ensures that people can exchange ideas and make informed decisions; it supports transparency; deters corruption; and exposes human rights violations. The role of Human Rights Defenders, and the importance of space for them to operate in, is crucial to achieve these objectives.</p> | <p>To contribute to upholding freedom of expression including on the internet;</p> | <p>A. Projects that promote freedom of expression, including capacity building, better quality reporting, research and analysis, lobbying and campaigning and that lead to action <u>and</u> improved advocacy at the national, regional or multilateral level.</p> <p>B. Legislation regulating civil society, media, and the internet is brought into line with international standards.</p> <p>C. Individuals are provided with greater access to information or with the ability to express legitimate viewpoints.</p> <p>D. Effective action to tackle impunity is supported and better protection is given for those exercising or seeking to exercise, freedom of expression.</p> |

| Theme | Objective | Focus Issues and Indicators of Success |
|--|--|---|
| <p>5. Freedom of Religion or Belief (FORB): Freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief is guaranteed by many human rights treaties. Many conflicts have their roots in the tensions between different religious communities and violence against a religious group can be a forewarning of wider conflict. Upholding religious freedom is often a crucial factor in conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building.</p> | <p>Governments uphold freedom of religion or belief. Individuals targeted for exercising their freedom of religion or belief are protected. Inter-faith co-operation and voices of moderation among religious communities are strengthened.</p> | <p>A. Policies and legislation regulating freedom of religion or belief are brought into line with international standards. Projects which help to ensure that these standards are implemented - for example, removing registration requirements which focus disproportionately on smaller or less traditional religions or non-religious groups; ensuring fairer law enforcement.</p> <p>B. Tolerance, non-violence and better understanding is promoted through improved links and dialogue between civil society groups, religious leaders and religious (and non-religious) groups; or by promoting responsible journalism.</p> |
| <p>6. Global Torture Prevention (GTP): The right not to be tortured or subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment are fundamental to human dignity, as well as to democracy and the rule of law. Torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment are prohibited in international law. The UK considers torture to be an abhorrent violation of human rights and human dignity, and consistently and unreservedly condemns the practice.</p> <p>See our Torture Prevention Strategy for more information on our policy</p> | <p>To contribute to international efforts to prevent torture</p> | <p>A. Greater adherence to international human rights standards in criminal justice systems. Legal frameworks to prevent and prohibit torture exist, and are implemented effectively.</p> <p>B. Increase in political will and capacity to prevent and prohibit torture. Increased ratification and effective implementation of CAT and OPCAT.</p> <p>C. Organisations on the ground have the expertise and training they need to prevent torture. Bodies related to the legal frameworks are well-qualified to carry out their role and civil society is strengthened to support this work.</p> |

| Theme | Objective | Focus Issues and Indicators of Success |
|---|--|---|
| <p>7. Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI): The UK promotes gender equality and tackles gender based violence as a matter of principle. The Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) is concerned with the impact sexual violence in conflict has on prospects for long-term peace and stability.</p> <p>For more information, please see: information about the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, held in June 2014, here; the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict launched in September 2013, here, and the G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict adopted in April 2013, here.</p> | <p>To support the work of civil society organisations, including women’s organisations, and human rights defenders and networks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote greater accountability by national institutions responsible for tackling sexual violence; and, • Enhance community-level prevention and protection against sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict environments. • Help victims and survivors of sexual violence to get better access to justice. | <p>A. <u>Prevention:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy and action at the community and national level is taken to tackle sexual violence. Greater women’s - but also men’s - participation and engagement as partners in actions to reduce the likelihood of sexual violence taking place. For example, actions that aim to change attitudes and behaviours and aim to work with state and local institutions, such as schools, churches or national authorities. • Grassroots awareness of the issue, and how to overcome the challenges in tackling sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations (for example, outreach and training for civil society and state actors on legal and other rights), is built. <p>B. <u>Protection</u> The role of those who defend the human rights of women – and men – is enhanced, to carry out or support monitoring, fact-finding and documenting cases of sexual violence and empowering victims to access justice.</p> <p>C. <u>Accountability</u> Promotion of greater accountability of national justice and other institutions and bodies through advocacy and action.</p> |
| <p>8. Women’s Rights (WR): The UK promotes gender equality and tackles violence against women and girls as a matter of principle. Societies are likely to be healthier, more prosperous and more peaceful where women’s rights are enjoyed and protected.</p> | <p>To address the structural causes of discrimination and violence against women and girls to ensure their equality before the law, and their participation in political and public affairs, in accordance with international standards.</p> | <p>A. Discriminatory laws and policies are reformed or removed. Constitutions, legislation and policies tackling violence against women and girls developed in line with regional and global commitments.</p> <p>B. The structural causes of violence against women and girls is tackled, in particular by challenging societal attitudes, behaviour and practice; as evident in the 2014 Girl Summit Charter.</p> <p>C. Increased participation of women in political and public affairs.</p> |

ANNEX A: 2015-16 HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY PROGRAMME PRIORITY COUNTRIES

| 15/16 Priority Country | ADP | BHR | FOE | PSVI | WR | DEM | FORB | GTP |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|------|-----|
| Afghanistan* | | | | | X | | | |
| Bahrain* | | | | | | | | |
| Bangladesh* | | X | | | | | | |
| Belarus* | | | | | | | | |
| Bosnia | | | | X | | | | |
| Brazil | | X | | | | | | |
| Burma* | | | X | X | | | | |
| Central African Republic* | | | | | | | | |
| China* | X | | | | X | | | |
| Cambodia | | | X | | | | | |
| Colombia* | | X | | X | | | | |
| Cuba* | | | | | | | | |
| Democratic People's Republic of Korea* | | | | | | | | |
| Democratic Republic of Congo* | | | | X | | | | |
| Egypt* | | | | | X | | | |
| Eritrea* | | | | | | | | |
| Ethiopia* | | | | | | | | |
| Fiji* | | | | | | | | |
| India* | | X | | | X | | | |
| Indonesia | | X | | | | | | |
| Iran* | X | | | | X | | | |
| Iraq* | | | | X | X | | | |
| Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories* | | | | | | | | |
| Kenya | | X | | | | | | |
| Kosovo | | | | X | | | | |
| Libya* | | | | | | | | |
| Malaysia | | X | X | | | | | |
| Mexico* | | X | | | X | | | |
| Mozambique | X | X | | | | | | |
| Nepal | | | | X | | | | |
| Nigeria* | | | X | | | | | |
| Pakistan* | | | X | | X | | | |
| Qatar | | X | | | | | | |
| Russia* | | | | | X | | | |
| Rwanda* | | | | | | | | |
| Saudi Arabia* | | | | | | | X | |
| Somalia* | | | X | X | X | | | |
| South Sudan* | | | X | X | | | | |
| Sri Lanka* | | | | | | | | |
| Sudan* | | | X | | X | | | |
| Syria* | | | | X | | | | |
| Tanzania | | | X | | | | | |
| Tunisia | | | X | | | | | |
| Turkmenistan* | | | | | | | | |
| USA (ADP only) | X | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | | | |
| Uzbekistan* | | | | | | | | |
| Vietnam* | | | X | | | | | |
| Yemen* | | | | | X | | | |
| Zimbabwe* | | | | | | | | |

There are currently no HRDP priority countries for these thematic priorities

*= 2013 FCO country of concern or country case study in the [Annual Human Rights Report](#)