



Denmark and Zimbabwe 08-10-2014

Recommendations: Review of the DK-ZIM Partnership Policy

This paper presents recommendations by civil society organisations in Zimbabwe and their Danish partner Afrika Kontakt for the necessary review of the Denmark-Zimbabwe Partnership Policy 2013-2015. A policy that the Danish Foreign Ministry has decided to continue unchanged without a revision after 2015.

How the political situation has changed in Zimbabwe since the formulation of the policy:

▲ Weak Opposition Parties

The main opposition political party; Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai is disintegrating into several smaller factions as they fail to cope with the electoral shock of the July 31 electoral result that saw a majority ZANU-PF win.

▲ Weak Civil Society

Civil society has been left weakened by a lack of both a coherent strategy to mobilise and organise the people against ZANU-PF dominance in the face of splitting in the major opposition party (MDC), and limited funding from development partners. This is notwithstanding the fact that the new constitution has brought with it new opportunities that the people could use to demand an accountable and transparent state.

▲ Ineffective Majority Government

The aftermath of the July 2013 election saw a majority ZANU-PF government formed (ZANU-PF constitutes 2/3 of the parliament), which to date has proven ineffective as they fail to implement the new constitution and drive policies for reconciliation, national healing and reviving the economy. Reports by independent institutions indicate that the unemployment rate is above 80%.

▲ No action on new constitution

The broad political consensus in the run-up to the referendum on a new constitution, could have provided the basis for a more democratic society. But with ZANU-PF victory in the elections the implantation of the new constitution is not part of the political agenda in Zimbabwe.

⤴ **Violence**

The declining use of direct violence, has not removed the freer in the demoniac movement.

⤴ **Renunciation of the Zimbabwe question at SADC and AU levels**

The appointment of Mugabe as current chair of SADC (2014/2015) and subsequent chair of AU (2015/2016) implies that the legitimacy question over Mugabe's leadership and Zimbabwean political-economic issue is no longer an issue at both the SADC and AU levels. This presents a serious dilemma to the pro-democratic movement in Zimbabwe, as it will take probably thrice the effort to rally regional and international stakeholders against President Mugabe's poor human rights record. It does however presents opportunities for testing his leadership on other SADC countries with a worse off human rights record such as Swaziland.

Priority areas to best strengthen the DK-ZIM Partnership Policy:

1. Implementation of the new constitution

It is currently not in the interest of ZANU-PF to implement the new constitution seeing as their interests are more secured in the old constitution. The ruling party is therefore not focused on implementing the rights as stated in the new constitution. The Danish Strategy towards Zimbabwe should focus more on building a culture of constitutionalism as this would result in a more democratic, transparent and accountable government and better livelihoods for Zimbabweans.

2. Increased and broadened support directly to civil society

- In the face of a weak opposition and an ineffective, less transparent, less accountable majority government, there is a need to build more and stronger social movements. These movements will play the watchdog role, giving people more room to recognize and challenge the state.

- The general Danish support to civil society as well as through the Danish embassy in Zimbabwe needs to acknowledge the complimentary role of small and community-based organisations to the broader social justice movement in Zimbabwe and therefore strive to strike a better balance between supporting both the big NGOs (networks) and the smaller organisations.

- We also encourage that Danish funding to civil society becomes more flexible and tailor-made to equally benefit youth and women organisations that directly work with these socially marginalized groups in their localities



3. Broaden civil society consultations in developing countries' strategies

There is need for more active involvement and consultations with civil society in Zimbabwe in defining priority areas of intervention by the partnership policy and strategy

4. Mechanisms to address corruption

This area has to be more embedded in the partnership between Denmark and Zimbabwe. Civil society in Zimbabwe is not seeing this point being practiced currently. One approach to combat this issue could be to remodel and thereby strengthen a fairer taxation system so that not only groups of vulnerable individuals are taxed but also larger corporations.

5. The support through multi-donor funds

Denmark must take ownership of the projects supported through multi donor funds and ensure that these projects are measured also at the output level - whether they deliver the results as agreed. In this context, civil society in Zimbabwe is important. They would, if invited, be able to monitor the output part of an action, so that no funds disappear in the supply chain.

Kind Regards

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