

Environmental integration contributes to strategy goal fulfilment

Learnings from Sida's Helpdesk for Environment and Climate Change

Sida's partners confirm successful results in their final reports from the strategy period, many of which can be derived from their work with environmental integration. Persistent work and patience have led to improved strategy goal fulfilment, also beyond the scope of environment. These are the Helpdesk's collective learnings from various types of support with environmental integration to Sida's partners within civil society, during the time Sida's CSO-unit was called CIVSAM.

The Helpdesk's Support

The Helpdesk has over the years provided various types of support with environmental integration to Sida's partner organisations from civil society. These are the collective learnings from this support.

The Helpdesk's key findings from the assignments:

- **Linkages between environmental integration and strategy goals exists for all types of organisations, but those with less obvious linkages had to dig deeper.** Organisations working with for example democracy and human rights could find entry points to environmental integration when looking at risks from environmental degradation or climate change affecting their target groups. The connections were thus found in relation to improved resilience, which can be seen as kind of a future proofing.
- **Sida's, CIVSAM's, persistent and systematic work for environmental integration was key for partner organisations' increased work with environment and was further fuelled by environmental momentum from society.** For some organisations, Sida's efforts really initiated the work with environment and climate change. Those already active became more intentional and systematic in their work.
- **CIVSAM's intentional work with and focus on environmental integration led to clear results among the partners, where 70 % of them moved from policy marker "0" to "1" for environment.** CIVSAM did not stop at "do-no-harm" but institutionalised a transformative way of working. Dialogue questions for example went from rather vague to specific and contextual, often based on the partners' environmental assessments.
- **Which of CIVSAM's measures that were most effective varies between Sida staff and the partner organisation's staff.** Sida staff highlighted measures related to the steering, for example the development of measurable goals and dialogue issues included in the agreement. The partners highlighted clarity in Sida's communication, clear guidelines, the "environmental spotchecks", and the coaching.

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The Helpdesk's key takeaways from the assignments:

- **Environmental integration can contribute to strategy goal fulfilment also beyond the scope of environment and climate change.** Some of the partners within the CSO-strategy have shared results that contribute to strengthening the rights of their primary target groups at a general level, as well as general programme achievements across several outcome areas.
- **Environmental integration is a pre-condition for poverty reduction. And people living in poverty are also those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.** Environmental integration is relevant for all organisations, also those not working specifically with environment and climate change.
- **A combination of measures and persistence over time is key for successful and goal-oriented environmental integration.** Start early, be strategic, persistent, patient and focus on the opportunities with environmental integration instead of only looking at risks. Find connections between environmental issues and the organisations' strategic goals. Remember that environmental integration is not a cost but a gain.

CIVSAM's work with environmental integration

Some years ago, at the time Sida's CSO-unit CIVSAM, increased its ambition to integrate environmental considerations in contributions and work systematically with their partner organisations. Over the years, they implemented eleven different measures to strengthen environmental integration.

CIVSAM's 11 measures for environmental integration

1. Strengthened environmental integration a strategic priority
2. Dialogue meetings on environment/climate with partners
3. Narrative emphasising the scale and urgency
4. Thematic environment/climate "spot checks" + support to partners
5. Guidelines stating Sida's requirements for environmental integration
6. Early dialogue (one year before application)
7. Portfolio analysis (=> baseline)
8. Measurable goals for environmental integration
9. Support to programme officers
10. Dialogue questions in all new interventions
11. Contractual requirements in new intervention agreements

Contact the Helpdesk to learn more

Are you interested in learning more about the Helpdesk's assignments on environmental integration?



Contact us at:

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Visit our website:

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