



EVALUATION OF THE DANISH ARAB PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME 2003 – 2014

EVALUATION SUMMARY

2015.05

The Danish Arab Partnership Programme (DAPP) has contributed to the promotion of reforms and democratization in the region as well as strengthened dialogue and mutual support between Denmark and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The DAPP has proved to be a flexible and effective instrument and has succeeded in adapting to a dynamic political context and thereby maintained its relevance. These are the conclusions of an independent evaluation published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA) and conducted by the Danish consultancy firm NIRAS jointly with British Integrity Research.

Since 2003, the DAPP has been a central pillar of Danish foreign policy towards the MENA region.

The programme has a double strategic objective of addressing democratization and reform as well as Danish-Arab dialogue. The DAPP has supported initiatives within the areas of human rights and good governance; women's empowerment and gender equality; knowledge-based societies and economic growth and job creation in 11 countries in the region.

Danish-Arab partnerships have been the central modality of the programme, which in the later years of the DAPP has been supplemented by support through international and multilateral institutions. The total financial frame for the DAPP since its inception has been approximately DKK 1.5 billion.

Background

The DAPP was launched in 2003 as part of a wider Danish policy initiative towards the MENA region. A number of global events, particularly 9/11 and the subsequent strengthened focus on the war against terror led to a growing focus in the West on the need for dialogue and cooperation with the MENA region. The DAPP was therefore one of a number of initiatives launched by the European Union, other European countries and the US in the period. The assumption was that through support to democratic reform, education and human rights, democratic development would take root and thereby undermine fundamentalist forces in the region.

The DAPP has supported initiatives in 11 countries in the region with a main emphasis on support to Egypt, Yemen, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, Syria and Libya. The total financial frame since its inception is approximately DKK 1.5 billion channeled through four thematic areas: human rights and good governance (38 percent

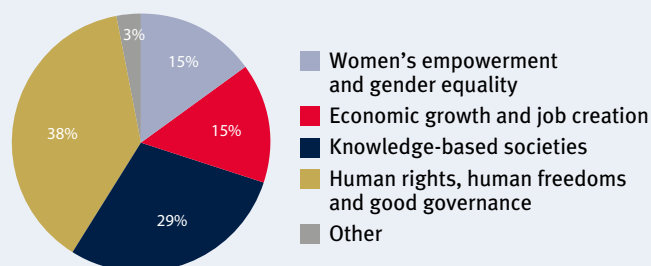
of disbursements); women's empowerment and gender equality (15 percent); knowledge-based societies (29 percent) and economic growth and job creation (15 percent). While the first three areas were inspired by the 2002 Arab Human Development Report which pointed to these as the main obstacles to development in the region, the latter was added after the "Arab Spring" in 2011. The Arab Spring also meant a sharp increase in DAPP funds, from 100 million DKK annually to 275 million DKK annually.

Establishing partnerships between Danish civil society organisations and Arab organisations has since the inception been a central element of the programme. These partnerships have generated long-term relationships between Danish and Arab actors, and the presence of a wide range of partners in the region has given Denmark a unique opportunity to maintain regular contact to regional actors and closely follow regional developments.

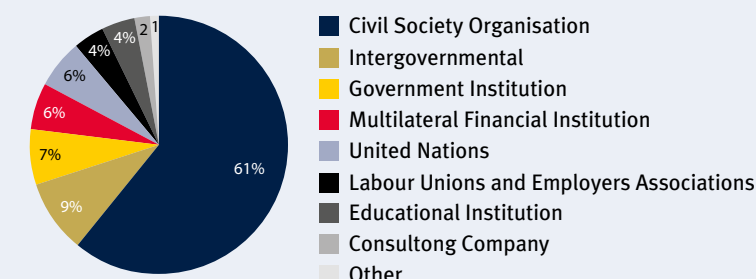
Results

The Evaluation finds that the DAPP has been a relevant and adaptive foreign policy instrument as well as an effective development programme. The choice of thematic areas has been relevant and the DAPP has succeeded in supporting key initiatives within these areas with notable results. The DAPP has moreover managed to respond timely and focused to challenges and opportunities which have arisen in the region. This has particularly been the case during and after the Cartoon Crisis in 2005-2006, where Denmark actively utilized its contacts to partners established through the DAPP to influence the perception of Denmark in the region. In order to spread positive messages about Denmark. The DAPP was likewise an important platform during the "Arab Spring" in 2011-2012 where the DAPP was able to quickly adjust its focus and expand to support the political changes in the region. The adaptability of DAPP is a key quality of the programme, which is notable given the significant changes and dynamic context of the MENA region during this period.

DAPP COMMITMENTS BY THEMATIC AREA 2003 – 2014



DAPP COMMITMENTS BY TYPE OF PARTNER 2003 – 2014



The Evaluation considers the double strategic objectives on reform and dialogue a particular strength of the programme. The programme has facilitated interactions, cooperation and knowledge-sharing between Danish and Arab partners. The Evaluation concludes that there has been a strong demand for support within the four thematic areas of the programme, and the Evaluation moreover concludes that the strong focus on dialogue and cooperation has enabled the DAPP to be an important political instrument for Denmark. Denmark has through the DAPP and its partners maintained a significant presence in the region and is seen in the region as a visionary and flexible partner.

Dialogue as an integral part of the cooperation has been highly valued by partners, according to the Evaluation. Partners from the region find that they have learnt new

and innovative ways of working, and Danish partners point to the dialogue as an important factor for obtaining knowledge about the MENA region. Especially dialogue initiatives between youth from Denmark and the region have contributed significantly to strengthening the understanding of "the other".

Overall, the Evaluation concludes that projects supported through DAPP have contributed to reform and democratisation processes in concrete areas in the countries or contributed to laying the foundation for future reform processes. The level of ambition in the DAPP with regards to supporting political reform is very high, given that such processes are long-term and dependent upon the context outside the control of the DAPP.

EVALUATION METHOD

The Evaluation team has had access to all relevant documentation related to the DAPP, including documentation on the 100+ projects implemented under the DAPP. The Evaluation selected 60 projects in 4 countries: Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco and a selection of regional projects. These projects have been assessed in-depth by the Evaluation Team and together with field visits; interviews with a large range of stakeholders and programme documentation constitute the basis for the Evaluation findings.

Human rights and good governance

The Evaluation finds that the DAPP has contributed positively in promoting human rights within the region. Activities under DAPP have been most effective when authorities either locally or nationally have been engaged in the process and where the cooperation has resulted in changes in the legal framework. In Tunisia, the DAPP has yielded positive results in combatting torture, and these experiences can be used in other countries in the region. Moreover, the DAPP has contributed to strengthening democratic transition processes both at the local and national level and supported the inclusion of women in these processes. The DAPP has moreover contributed to strengthening young people's participation in decision-making processes.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

- Strengthened capacity of judges in handling torture-cases (Tunisia)
- Support to voter-registration campaigns in Morocco
- Support to the establishment of a unit to monitor and investigate torture and torture cases (Tunisia)
- Increased public participation in decentralisation processes (Tunisia)
- Mobilisation of young volunteers in and around refugee camps in Jordan
- Increased inclusion of youth in dialogue on democracy in Egypt

Women's empowerment and gender equality

The DAPP has successfully supported legislative initiatives which have contributed to the promotion of gender equality. Projects under the DAPP have focused on strengthening women's political and socio-economic participation and on prevention of gender-based violence. Many DAPP interventions have focused on the lack of knowledge about women's rights and have worked to convene public authorities, the private sector and civil society to jointly secure these fundamental rights. Especially interventions directed at gender-based violence have proven effective resulting in an increased focus on establishing the foundation for reducing violence against women, for example through the establishment of national networks and the strengthening of legal capacity to handle cases of this nature.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY

- Establishment of a legal support center for women in Morocco
- Inclusion of women in the drafting of the new constitution in Egypt encompassing decentralised hearing processes
- Dissemination of information about conventions on women's rights (Jordan)
- An increased share of female candidates in local elections (Egypt)
- Support to women's participation in the drafting of the constitution in Tunisia

Knowledge-based societies

The DAPP has contributed to strengthening press freedom in the region. Support has been provided to the elaboration of a legal framework for media and the DAPP has contributed to the development of critical journalism in the region. The DAPP has supported innovative pilot initiatives, which have subsequently attracted funds from other donors. The DAPP has also supported independent academic research through support to a number of universities and enabled independent and critical debate in these academic institutions. Furthermore, a range of exchange programmes has been implemented between Danish and Arab students, and the DAPP has supported initiatives to promote inter-religious dialogue in the region.

This area has also been assessed in-depth by the 2013 Evaluation of Media Cooperation under the DAPP.

KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETIES

- Establishment of a regional network which has facilitated increased inter-religious understanding between religious leaders in the region
- Facilitation of a dialogue forum for students in Denmark and Jordan
- Increased activity by DAPP-supported independent media in Egypt

Economic growth and job-creation

As part of an effort to curb the widespread unemployment in the region, which was a contributing factor to the outbreak of popular uprisings in 2011, economic growth and job-creation has been added to the DAPP as a thematic area. The DAPP has supported a range of initiatives working to promote labor-market reforms and

social dialogue as well as support to small and medium-scale enterprises. The Evaluation finds that especially social dialogue is an area where Denmark has a comparative advantage and the Evaluation therefore recommends that the DAPP should engage public authorities in the region to a larger extent in order to increase the use of this form of dialogue.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION

- Knowledge-sharing in the dairy sector in Tunisia
- Technical assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises in countries in transition through support to IFC
- Support to job creation through ILO in Egypt
- Support to dialogue between unions and employers in Morocco and Tunisia

Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, the Evaluation concludes that the double strategic objective of promotion of dialogue and democratic reform is a strength of the programme and should be maintained. The Evaluation emphasizes that there is a need to be realistic about the level of ambition of the programme with regards to what Denmark can achieve with its support through the DAPP, given its scope and size and given the complex dynamics of the region. The Evaluation recommends that Denmark clarifies how best to support reform processes through a stronger focus on what drives these processes. The Evaluation notes that the DAPP has seen a stronger focus on documenting results during the last few years and recommends that work towards strengthening documentation of results is continued.

The Evaluation finds that the partnership approach has proven to be particularly effective for the DAPP. The strategic partnerships established through the DAPP enables DAPP to have a strong presence in the region and this presence generates important contacts and information about the region and the political situation.

At the same time, it is a valuable tool for establishing close and long-term relationships and cooperation between Denmark and the Arab partners. The Evaluation therefore recommends that the DAPP continues to engage with partners as a key element of the programme, and furthermore recommends strengthening cooperation between Danish public authorities and authorities in the region. This would complement the support provided through civil society organisations and thereby work towards reform at several levels.

The Evaluation recommends that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should clarify the relation between the DAPP and other Danish and international foreign policy tools vis-à-vis the MENA region and ensure that these initiatives complement each other.

The Evaluation finally concludes that the DAPP would benefit from an enhanced involvement of embassies and the DAPP technical advisors (TAOs) in the region in decisions regarding the DAPP and its strategic focus. This would strengthen knowledge-sharing and synergy between partners and ensure a strong platform for the political dialogue in the region.

RESPONSE FROM MFA

This Evaluation of the DAPP is the first evaluation conducted of the DAPP as a whole. The Evaluation is timely with regard to the ongoing work with formulating the next phase of the DAPP. The MFA agrees to the overall conclusions of the Evaluation and notes that the Evaluation emphasizes the strategic partnerships as an effective tool to promote dialogue and reform in

the region and between Denmark and the region. The MFA welcomes the Evaluation's conclusions that the DAPP is flexible and adaptive and takes note of the recommendation to maintain the double strategic focus of the programme, and work towards clarifying how the activities are contributing to achievement of the overall objectives.

The MFA furthermore notes that the Evaluation recommends that the DAPP clarifies the relationship between DAPP and other Danish and international policy initiatives. The MFA will take these findings and recommendations forward in formulating the next phase of the DAPP.