

PMU's policy for democracy

Focus: Establishing and designing a structure for equal participation in discussion and making decisions concerning development cooperation.

Key words: equal participation, dialogue, diversity, rights-based approach

"So the twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them." This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit..."(Acts 6:2-5)

"The apostles and elders met to consider this question" ... "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts. 15:6,28)

Background and purpose

The Bible describes the values within God's Kingdom and its view of how individuals and communities should live together. PMU desires to contribute to a structure that contains equal opportunity for dialogue and decision-making. This structure would include the relationship between organisations and various arenas in society. The kind of democracy that PMU wants to promote is primarily focused on informal democracy but can contribute to the shaping of formal democracy as appropriate. While formal democracy focuses on the principles of representation within a legislative system, informal democracy is concerned with an open process where many voices can contribute together. Informal democracy focuses on forming mutual good solutions through dialogue.

Policy

True democracy is based on the supposition that every person can and should contribute to shaping society. Therefore PMU aligns itself with the general content and principles for citizen and political rights.

- Work for democracy should stimulate a spirit of development in a society characterised by respectful discussion, should promote a societal structure that encourages and prioritises people's participation, and people generally should have the possibility to mutually see, listen and understand one another. PMU desires to strengthen people's identity, self-esteem, engagement and ability to organise themselves so that democracy is built up from the grassroots level. People should be able to contribute to an analysis of their situation and be allowed to choose the direction they wish to go.
- Every project and process within PMU should work using a rights-based approach that leads to cooperation between individuals, communities and institutions.
- PMU desires to contribute to a vibrant, democratic and diverse civil society that collaborates with various groups within itself and outwardly with the state and business sector. Leadership qualities such as transparency and responsibility towards those they lead should be encouraged.
- PMU is convinced that churches and organisations play an important role in encouraging people's active participation in democratic processes which is why projects containing organisational and competence development are given priority. The development of decision-making structures and working methods make it possible to influence central administration.

Scope of the policy

The policy applies to all projects that are financed by PMU. All components within PMU's projects must consider issues concerning democracy, both internally within the implementing organisation and externally in shaping different ways of strengthening people's possibility to participate and influence issues and decisions that affect themselves.

Implementation of the policy

Implementation of the policy takes place in all stages of project development from project idea and contextual analysis to project design and follow-up and evaluations. The policy should also portray PMU's process of learning and networking with Swedish and global partners

Responsibilities and execution

All who work within PMU are responsible to make sure they receive regular updates of the policy and reflect over how the policy is to be practically implemented

Follow-up and evaluation of the policy

Execution of the policy is continually followed up by PMU's Leadership Team or by a person appointed by The team. This is carried out annually in the form of a Workshop.

Indicators:

- Policy and guidelines are written to describe decision-making processes
- People's participation and involvement in decision-making.
- Formal structures for democracy (representative or direct)
- Channels for expressing and influencing opinions.
- General definition and view of democracy.
- Opportunities for dialogue.