

# PMU's Policy on Democracy Development

Approved by PMU's management team 17/12/2020

This policy describes the guiding principles for PMU's efforts to contribute to democracy development.

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PMU breaks down the concept of democracy into two parts: *democratic culture* and *democratic governance*. Both are needed in a functioning democracy, and they influence and are affected by each other.

- According to PMU, **democratic governance** (often called *formal democracy*) is about the structural level, e.g., free and fair elections, freedom of speech and press, law enforcement, legal security and equality before the law, inclusive and responsive governmental institutions, an exercise of public authority based on integrity and free from corruption, and public authorities' respect for and protection and provision of human rights for everyone, including minorities and groups with a special need for protection of their rights.

- According to PMU, **democratic culture** (often called *informal democracy*) is about the interaction between people and the extent to which society is characterized by mutual respect, inclusion and the possibility for different voices be heard, tolerance and diversity, dialogue and an openness for compromises that can be accepted by all parties, participation and influence, equality and non-discrimination, the acceptance of people's rights/obligations, and the will to find common solutions acceptable to all parties involved. Here, the level of trust and social capital plays a major role.

In the following sections, we describe how PMU wants to work with democracy development at different levels. The foundational values and the points of departure of this policy are described on pages 3-4.

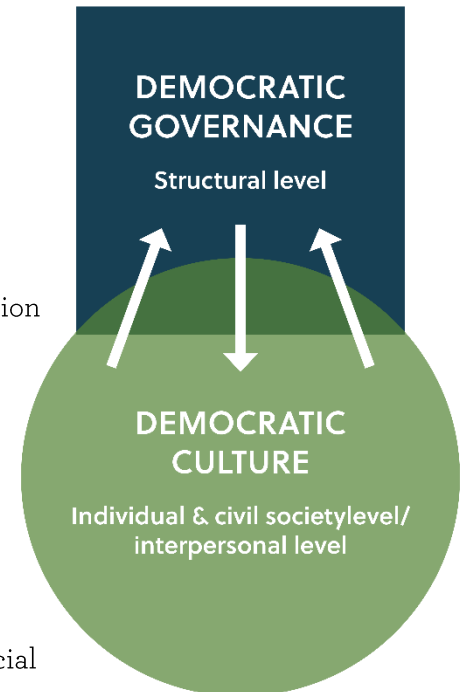
*PMU wants to support the development of a democratic culture and a democratic governance in the following ways:*

## *At the individual level*

- Identify, include and support the most vulnerable groups, with a focus on children, people with disabilities, and ethnic and religious minorities, so that their voices can be heard, and their perspectives taken into account.
- Focus especially on the active and meaningful participation of women in democratic processes.
- Promote the possibility for people to participate in societal life on an equal basis and ensure that democratic values and the respect for everyone's human rights permeate society.

## *At the civil society level*

- Support capacity building of civil society actors to take action and to cooperate, and to use this capacity in order to contribute to a democratic development and to everyone's human rights, as well as to influence the democratic culture and the democratic governance at different levels of society.
- Support the development of a stronger democratic culture and internal democracy within PMU's partner organisations as well as other actors of civil society, so that these can be role models for the rest of society.
- Encourage and develop the large potential existing primarily within the Pentecostal/Charismatic church movements, as well as in other churches and Christian organisations, so that these in turn can support the development of a democratic culture and government and the mobilisation of different networks in the struggle towards everyone's equal value and rights.



*Democratic governance and democratic culture are both necessary and influence each other. Actors of the civil society have a particularly important role to play in contributing to a good democratic culture.*

- Strengthen civil society and train people to work with advocacy and influencing public opinion in order to, among other things, put pressure on authorities so that they fulfil their duties, as well as train people to work with conflict prevention.
- Support civil society actors in creating and developing venues and platforms where rights holders can make their voices heard and where they can associate with others and exert influence in issues that affect them.

#### *At the structural level*

- Promote the capacity and the readiness of authorities, people in power and leaders (including religious leaders with political power and traditional rulers such as leaders of ethnic groups and village chiefs) to fulfil their obligations, to respect everyone's rights and to create the right conditions for individuals and groups to participate in democratic processes.
- Support interventions characterized by democratic principles, cooperation and transparency in order to contribute to a good governance, decreased levels of corruption, a functioning judicial system, and that human rights are respected, protected and provided by those in power at various levels.
- Support interventions that influence the democratic governance by creating channels and platforms for dialogue and cooperation between those in power and the civil society.

#### *Within the organisation of PMU*

- Work continuously and thoroughly, together with our partners, to address the areas included in PMU's work for democracy development, both on a theological and on an ideological level, as well as support local partners' work in these areas.
- Tap into and share the knowledge of local partners and other religious actors concerning local religious contexts, in order to contribute to the understanding of religion and religious life (what PMU calls religious literacy), especially among institutional donors.
- Ensure that PMU's work and interventions are characterised by a rights-based approach (RBA), as described under *Foundational values of PMU* and in the *PMU Policy on a Rights-Based Approach*.
- Maintain an approach based on partnership, in accordance with *PMU's policy on partnership*. A good partnership includes cooperation in areas of common interest and for mutual development. The different parties have different roles and responsibilities, but everyone contributes with resources and competence based on their conditions.
- Work in accordance with the *Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS)* and encourage PMU's partners to do the same.
- Continuously strengthen the democratic culture and the internal democracy within our own organisation, so that PMU can serve as a role model in the contexts where we work.
- Promote the development of partnerships between civil society actors in Sweden and other countries, as well as the possibilities for global actors to cooperate around common challenges in connection to the development of a democratic culture and governance and the fight against all forms of poverty and exclusion.
- Actively seek cooperation across borders, whether geographical, thematic or religious, or having arisen between civil society, state and market, for the objectives of Agenda 2030 to be obtained.
- Generate resources for PMU's operations and contribute to an increased knowledge of and a stronger commitment to, the development of a democratic culture and governance through communication, influencing public opinion and advocacy, in Sweden and in Europe.

#### **Scope of the policy**

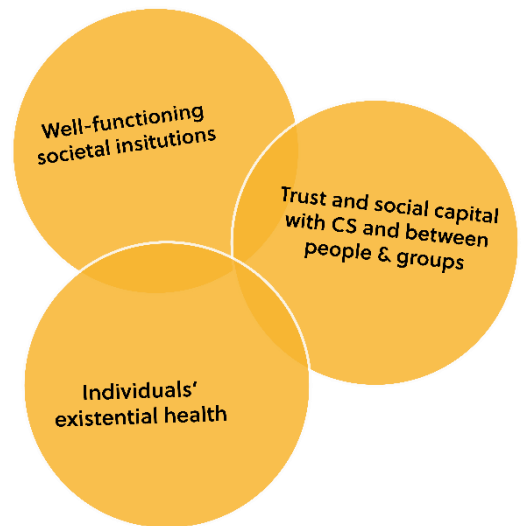
The policy applies to all PMU-supported interventions and shall influence the strategies, global programs, guidelines and templates created by PMU. It shall have an impact on the learning processes and the networking of PMU, as well as our communication and fundraising. The policy applies to PMU's development activities, humanitarian activities, and communication and fundraising activities.

# Foundational values and points of departure of the policy

## Foundational values of PMU

For PMU, the key factors in bringing about change are the following:

- taking a human rights approach in all fight against poverty.
- acknowledging that the people and local communities are capable and have their own driving force and knowledge to be able to change their situation if conditions are favourable, even though additional knowledge and resources must sometimes be provided. The primary change actors are therefore the people who are living in poverty and our local partners.
- understanding that the real potential for change arise when people come together as a group and act collectively.
- having a holistic view of poverty, where access to resources, influence and security are key – as is the promotion of existential health. It is also important to bridge short-term and long-term processes (humanitarian interventions and long-term development interventions).
- making sure that external support is always based on local ownership – building on change processes that are already under way among target groups and people concerned.



PMU is a rights-based and a faith-based organisation. A rights-based approach (RBA) has a strong focus on raising public awareness, advocacy and the autonomy of each individual, and on the responsibility of duty bearers towards rights holders. As a rights-based organisation, PMU works according to the principles of non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability. The faith-based foundation is about core values, driving forces and an approach characterized by a hope for and belief in the future, justice, righteousness, care for others, reconciliation and the conviction that all people are created in the image of God, with the same value and the same rights. According to PMU, a cooperation based on a good democratic culture and governance is that which best expresses the basic idea of people's equal value, rights and responsibilities/duties that can be found in the Bible, as well as reflects the way in which Jesus related to people he met.

## Points of departure of the policy

The democratic development of a country is closely linked to the respect, protection and provision of human rights. Many factors interact so that a good democratic development is obtained. This policy is thus connected to many of PMU's other policies.

The number of democracies in the world have more than doubled in the past 40 years, but now the political rights and civil liberties as well as the space of action of mass media and civil society are decreasing in many countries. The situation varies between different countries in which PMU works, but also between different contexts in the same country. Therefore, PMU's support must be adapted to be relevant in the context of each local partner.

Social capital is an important factor for democracy development. It is often defined as the number of contacts multiplied by the level of trust in these contacts and can be divided into two parts: *bonding social capital*, which builds on resemblances between people and strengthens the internal cohesion of a group, but can lead to disagreements between groups, and *bridging social capital*, which reduces conflicts between groups and links people from different groups. Research within political science and sociology points to the importance of trust and bridging social capital in a society to pave the way for a good democratic development. In this development, the civil society plays an important role. High levels of trust and social capital, creating links between people from different societal groups, lead to a better functioning democracy, higher economic growth and better public health. Different levels of society – individuals, the civil society and societal institutions – are interlinked and influence each other.

Individuals with a great trust in others contribute to the creation of social capital between people and in civil society. A vibrant and viable civil society with different kinds of actors can often play a determining role in putting pressure on societal institutions from beneath and impel them to improve their services. Functioning societal institutions characterized by the rule of law, an impartial exercise of authority and a good provision of public services without fraud and corruption will, in turn, strengthen trust at all levels of society and contribute to an increased social capital between individuals and groups. Conversely, a poorly functioning civil society and institutions characterized by inequality and corruption damage trust and lead to decreased levels of social capital in society.

#### *Religion and the role of religious actors*

In most parts of the world, the practiced religion is extremely important. The Church and other faith-based actors have an important role to play and is an influential voice in many countries, both in civil society and in society in general. Consequently, PMU believes that development actors must possess an understanding of religion, religious language and life to be able to maintain a constructive dialogue on societal development.

The cost to reach the global objectives of Agenda 2030 exceeds the total aid budget of the world. Therefore, a support from different kinds of actors is needed for the goals to be obtained and for every person everywhere to be included and benefit from development. In this work, churches and other faith-based actors have a large potential to contribute to societal development through an efficient use of development funding and through their own contributions to societal development without the use of external funds.

PMU's local partners have established networks both with people that live in poverty or that live close to these, and with authorities and other local actors. This is important in order to be able to act as bridge builders between decision makers and people living in vulnerable situations, and to achieve a good effect from implemented interventions.