

Sida Supported Master of Science Program by Distance Education in Mozambique, Vietnam, Cambodia and Namibia

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Sida Evaluation 00/26

**Department for Democracy
and Social Development**

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations

Executive Summary	1
I. BACKGROUND	6
1. Introduction	6
<i>A. Organization of this Report</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>B. Origins of the Sida Program</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>C. Objectives of the Program</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>D. Target Group</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>E. The Four Country Projects</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>F. Postgraduate Programs</i>	<i>10</i>
2. Sweden's Support for Economics and Financial Management	10
3. Counting the Costs of Distance Education	11
<i>A. The Teaching and Learning Process</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>B. Costs of Administrative Routines</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>C. Costs per Student</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>D. Costs of Instructional Material</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>E. Cost-Effectiveness of Distance Education</i>	<i>13</i>
4. The Need for Training in Finance economics	14
II. PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY	15
1. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation	15
2. Methodology and Work Plan	15
<i>A. Basic Design</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>B. Goal Hierarchy</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>C. External Conditions at Effect Level</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>D. Impacts</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>E. Work Plan</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>F. Inductive Reasoning</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>G. Sources of Information</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>H. Output and Quality</i>	<i>20</i>
3. The Tracer Study	21
<i>A. Sample</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>B. Data Collection Instruments</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>C. Interviews</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>D. Limitations</i>	<i>22</i>
III. COUNTRY FINDINGS	24
1. Mozambique	24
<i>A. Students</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>B. Program</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>C. Costs</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>D. Benefits</i>	<i>25</i>

2. Vietnam	27
<i>A. Students</i>	27
<i>B. Program</i>	27
<i>C. Costs</i> 28	
<i>D. Benefits</i>	28
3. Namibia	29
<i>A. Students</i>	29
<i>B. Program</i>	30
<i>C. Costs</i> 31	
<i>D. Benefits</i>	31
4. Cambodia	32
<i>A. Students</i>	32
<i>B. Program</i>	32
<i>C. Costs</i> 33	
<i>D. Benefits</i>	34
IV. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS	36
1. Students	36
2. Program	36
<i>A. Tutors</i>	37
<i>B. Results</i>	37
<i>C. Curriculum and Textbooks</i>	37
<i>D. Quality</i>	38
<i>E. Alleged Plagiarism</i>	38
<i>F. Quality of Theses</i>	39
<i>G. Quality Variation</i>	39
<i>H. "Thesis Packs"</i>	40
<i>I. Cultural Differences</i>	40
3. Costs	41
<i>A. General Description</i>	41
<i>B. Economic Analysis</i>	42
4. Benefits	44
<i>A. Benefits of DE and CBE Compared</i>	44
<i>B. Use and Application of Knowledge</i>	45
<i>C. Improved Economic Policy</i>	46
<i>D. Institution Building</i>	46
<i>E. Personal Benefits to Students</i>	47
5. Cost-Effectiveness: A Comparison of DE and CBE Approaches	48
6. Performance of SOAS	49
7. Sida's Role and Performance	50
<i>A. Tendering Procedures</i>	50
<i>B. Investment on Development of Distance Education Methodology</i>	50
<i>C. Use of Non-Swedish Institution</i>	51
<i>D. Sida's Role Changed from Active to Passive</i>	51
<i>E. Cost Reporting</i>	51
<i>F. Division of Competence between DESA and UND</i>	52
<i>G. Decentralization</i>	52
<i>H. Sweden's Six Overall Development Goals</i>	52
<i>I. Rationale for Extending the DE Program</i>	54
<i>J. Sustainability</i>	55

V. SUMMARY	56
A. Organization	56
B. Impact	56
C. Cost-effectiveness	59
D. Effects	59
E. Outputs	60
F. Inputs and Activities	60
G. The Participants	61
VI. LESSONS LEARNED	62
1. Costs	62
2. Project Monitoring	63
3. Participants	63
4. Institutions	63
VII. RECOMMENDATIONS	65
A. Namibia	65
B. Vietnam	65
C. Cambodia	65
 Appendix 1 Terms of Reference	 67
Appendix 2 Country Information Mozambique	72
Appendix 3 Country Information Vietnam	92
Appendix 4 Country Information Namibia	118
Appendix 5 Country Information Cambodia	143
Appendix 6 Acknowledgements	165
Appendix 7 Persons interviewed	166
Appendix 8 List of references	171

List of Tables

Table 1: Basic Information about the M.Sc. Program in Four Countries	10
Table 2 Relative Costs of Teaching Material for One Hour of Instruction	12
Table 3: Goal Hierarchy, Targets, Indicators, and Assumptions	19
Table 4: Unit Costs in Vietnam (SEK '000)	28
Table 5: Unit Costs for the M.Sc. Program in Four Countries	43

List of Diagrams

Diagram 1: Total Cost Comparison DE and CBE	13
Diagram 2: Goal Hierarchy of the M.Sc. in Economics Program	18

Abbreviations

CBE	Campus based education.
CDRI	Cambodia Development Resource Institute.
CIEE	Center for International Education in Economics.
DE	Distance education.
DEP	Diploma in Economic Principles.
IMF	International Monetary Fund.
LU	London University.
MSEK	Million Swedish Crowns.
NEU	National Economics University (Vietnam).
PFP	Policy Framework Paper.
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies (London University).
UNAM	University of Namibia.

Executive Summary

Program. Starting in 1991 Sida financed a graduate program in finance economics implemented by the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at London University (LU) by distance education methods in Mozambique, Vietnam, Namibia and Cambodia. The overall objective was to strengthen government's capacity for macroeconomic management, policy analysis, and for designing economic reforms. The target group were public servants in strategic positions who could not be removed from their jobs for extended periods of time. A second main objective was to build up the institutional capacity of the respective host institutions. Knowledge in market economics, especially finance economics, was in critically short supply in the countries making the transition from centrally planned to market economy.

The first program was initiated in 1991 in Mozambique. In 1993 the program was extended to Vietnam, with the National Economic University (NEU) as host institution. In 1995 similar programs were started in Namibia (co-funding with Ford Foundation), and in Cambodia with the Economics Department of the University of Namibia and the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) as local counterparts. In total 237 persons were admitted to the program, and to date 147 have completed the M.Sc. degree. The total cost has been SEK 74 million.

The four country programs have been implemented well and according to CIEE standards. The Residential School in London has been a successful part of the program, but also quite expensive. Overall, the students and their employers express great satisfaction with the program. The SOAS tutors have generally performed well, but the contact between SOAS and local tutors was limited. There was little briefing by London as to how SOAS wanted the local teaching to be performed, and no communication between SOAS and local academic staff regarding the performance of students. Integration of locally and centrally based tuition could have been better. From its modest start 10 years ago, the SOAS distance education (DE) program has developed successfully to an operation with 1,200 students in 70 countries, which can be seen as an indication of the quality of the program. The Mission has found only one instance where the quality of the program has been compromised, namely when the thesis requirement for the second cohort in Namibia was dropped.

Purpose of the Evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation was to analyze the results of the program in terms of capacity-building and cost efficiency; assess the institutional motivation for this method of education, and examine whether it is a recommendable way to enhance capacity in the economic area. The assignment was for a three person evaluation team which visited each of the four countries, spending 5–8 working days in each. The team also visited the SOAS headquarters in London. A tracer study covering a samples of participants was carried out, and interviews were made with students, tutors, employers, ministries and banks, Sida, other donor agencies, etc. In addition the team has gone through all available project files both at Sida in Stockholm and the respective Swedish embassies.

Results. The results of the program vary among the countries. In Mozambique 51% of the students enrolling for the Masters Degree have successfully graduated. In addition a number of students received diplomas at lower levels. In Namibia the results of the first cohort were deplorable. However, after a number of changes were made in Namibia, the second cohort can be expected to perform considerably better. The results of this cohort will be published only in December 1999. In Cambodia and Vietnam the results are impressive indeed, with completion rates of 96% and 88%. Part of the reason for this success can likely be attributed to a strict screening process for selection of students.

Cost Efficiency. The total number of students that have followed the M.Sc. program is too small to reach cost-efficiency. Furthermore, the number of students in each country was too small to warrant the separate administrative units for each country that were set up in SOAS London headquarters. There were too many add-ons to the cost, such as audio and video cassettes, etc. With its large component of classroom teaching and tutoring, the SOAS DE program is really a mix between classical DE and conventional campus-based education (CBE). The administrative as well as academic costs of the central headquarters in London are high for all four countries, implying that there were no scale economies from adding new countries to the program. While each student in the Sida-financed program had cost Sida upwards of SEK 300,000, the fee for individually recruited students is only about SEK 80,000, according to CIIE's catalogue. In the Mission's opinion, as new cohorts were added to the program, Sida should have been able to renegotiate the financial arrangement with SOAS.

Curriculum and Textbooks. The composition of courses is well balanced and contains all elements which, according to current economic science, should be taught in a graduate program in financial- and macroeconomics. The choice of textbooks is well within the range of variation used by any other high-quality graduate school in Europe or the United States. A weak point regarding the thesis, in the Mission's opinion, is that SOAS presents the students with "thesis packs", containing ready-made thesis topics with tips, descriptions and basic statistics needed. Some students in this way got all of their data needs satisfied. This, in the Mission's opinion, is not conducive to developing research capability and independent critical thinking. By not having to choose and develop their own thesis topics, the students missed an important learning element.

Quality. The design of the program is based on sound and tested approaches to distance education, and the material is of high quality. However, in the estimation of the evaluation team, the quality of a Master of Science degree earned in this DE program, on average, is not as high as one earned after regular, full time CBE. This is also a view expressed by most people interviewed. A full time on-campus graduate acquires a more profound as well as wider knowledge in the economic science. He or she learns more English, and will also have learned much more of Western society and of the market paradigm. Despite allegations to the contrary, the Mission has not found any plagiarism or cheating of any significance, or beyond what one would find in any university in any part of the world. The examination and control procedures applied in the DE program are more stringent than e.g. those applied at the University of Stockholm. The theses display a wide variation in quality. The marking system is safe, however, with three markers reading and marking each thesis independently.

Use and Application of Knowledge. The majority of graduates in all four countries are making good use of their M.Sc. knowledge in the tasks they perform in their work, and these tasks are relevant with respect to their government's economic policy work. Most of the SOAS students are still in the government. The donors objective at the effects level has thus been attained in all of the four country programs. In all four countries, government's analytic capacity and knowledge in finance economics has improved dramatically, albeit in varying degrees, but the level still remains low. Ministries still display important gaps of knowledge and analytic capability. Because of low pay scales, governments face difficulties in competing with private industry for the few high quality graduated economists there are. This is a problem that will likely worsen with the current growth of the private sector. Because of lack of a rational personnel policy, many of the graduates are not in jobs where they could make *optimal* use of their newly acquired knowledge. Many graduates also have side jobs to supplement their incomes, which diminishes their capacity to focus on their main tasks.

Improved Economic Policy. The Mission believes that the programs objective of contributing to enhanced economic policy making and better economic performance, has largely been achieved in all four countries. This is a conclusion arrived at by *inductive* reasoning based on three points. First, at the output level we have found that the graduated students have acquired understanding of macroeconomics and finance economics. Second, most of the students, including a dozen or so persons in high positions, are applying their knowledge in carrying out relevant tasks in their jobs. Third, it is obvious that the fact that governments today are carrying out analysis and economic policy-making based on the market paradigm, is an important reason why the economic performance of these countries has improved. It is therefore assumed that the SOAS knowledge must have contributed.

Institution Building. The program's impact on institution building has been generally weak, but displays a mixed picture. In Mozambique little or no impact has been achieved with respect to institution building. There was no real co-operation of the SOAS program with the economics faculty. Nor did it act as a real host institution for the SOAS program. The economics faculty has been in great disorder throughout the project period. If the main objective of the program was to transmit knowledge in economics to the government, which urgently needed it, this was not compatible with an objective, as stated in the Decision Memorandum, of simultaneously building up a university institution. The necessary preconditions were lacking.

In Vietnam the degree of institutionalisation of the program at the National Economics University was marginal during the first two cohorts. Most of the teaching and tuition were performed by expatriate experts. However, already in the first cohort, NEU had recruited three of its lecturers and in the second cohort there were two lecturers following the program. As a consequence, a significant degree of competence transfer to NEU has taken place. In Namibia there has been very little institutional impact at the university faculty so far, but there is a fair chance of a lasting impact, provided a donor offers continued funding to UNAM. In Cambodia, at the start of the program in 1994/95, the necessary preconditions for the faculty of economics to take responsibility for and manage the SOAS program were not present. By choosing CDRI as the implementing agency, it should have been clear from the start that there could be no institutional effect from this program in the sense of building up an institution which could in the future run the program without the intervention of SOAS.

Personal Benefits. In all four countries, the students reported that the M.Sc. program has been beneficial to them in terms of improving their performance, increasing their self-confidence and chances of promotion, introducing them to new ways of analyzing problems, and contributing to change in their working environment. It is difficult to ask for more impact of an educational program on a personal level. Interestingly, many students who did not complete their degrees also agree to many of these observations. A number of interviewed students in Cambodia, however, expressed frustration and felt that they could not use their knowledge due to lack of opportunity. About 36% of the sampled graduates had changed employer during or after the M.Sc. program. The private sector is still in its emerging phase in these countries and does not yet provide the kind of security that the public sector does. In any event, as graduates they have increased their chances to engage in income generating activities outside the government.

Economic Profitability and Cost-effectiveness. On the *cost* side, the average *direct financial cost* per student of the Sida financed SOAS DE program tended to be just as high as that of regular full-time studies abroad. The *opportunity cost* would have been much higher in the case of full time students than for DE students, who were able to remain on the job. There is some opportunity cost even for DE students, since they must attend classes and exams and spend one month in London.

In Mozambique, where a large share of the students were high level decision makers, the opportunity cost to the government would have been extremely high if these students had been away on fulltime studies abroad – so high as to outweigh the larger benefit associated with CBE as compared to DE.

On the *benefit side*, the outcomes in the form of economic benefits to the government are probably considerably higher from a graduate who earned a degree in full-time studies abroad than from one who earned a degree through distance education. Given the high opportunity costs of the participants in Mozambique, it is judged that the DE model in Mozambique was very cost effective, that is, the ratio of benefits to costs was very high.

In contrast with the situation in Mozambique, in the other three countries, the students tended to be less senior. The opportunity cost of sending these students abroad should not have been very high, because they could have been replaced by others, perhaps without much loss. Since the costs of the DE program is about the same as the cost of the CBE program, the decisive element in determining cost-effectiveness would be the benefits. The total package of benefits from CBE, we believe, are much higher from full time studies abroad than from distance education. The Mission believes that the cost effectiveness of the DE programs in Vietnam, Namibia and Cambodia was lower than in Mozambique. It might well have been more cost-effective if Sida had used the funds instead to send government officials for full time studies abroad.

Sida's Role and Performance. Sida's monitoring of this program has not been very active. Possible adjustments in the program could have been made *en route* if a dialogue between the donor and the university responsible for the program had been established. The Mission has found Sida's cost reporting lacking. Only in Mozambique did there seem to be a complete record of costs related to the M.Sc. program, although there was little detail concerning the activities that incurred the costs. Since this is an education project that is being managed by the department for administrative aid, DESA, there is reason to raise the question of division of competence. In Namibia, program responsibility had been decentralized to the embassy, a decision apparently taken without safeguarding an alarm system whereby the expertise within the professional department, DESO, is called for if needed. In the department responsible for the M.Sc. program, DESA, there is today no one with an overall responsibility for all the four country programs.

Sweden's Overall Development Goals. The objective of economic growth is obviously eminently well served in this program. Indirectly, the program has an important effect on environment. Better understanding of price theory will increase the transparency of the actual cost to the economy of pollution, which will enhance the country's chances of addressing the pollution problems. In the long run, increased knowledge in economics of large groups of people in the ministries will work towards more decentralized decision making, which can be seen as a contribution to the democratization of society. Gender impact is assured through the successful completion of the program by women working in areas and levels of public management and administration in which men usually predominate. Indirectly and in the medium- to long-term future, the program can be expected to have an impact on equality, poverty eradication, and independence in the countries' economic development. Indeed were it not for the anticipation of such impacts, the programs would not have been justifiable.

Cost-Effectiveness. The program has been highly relevant in all the four countries, because they have delivered a product which was critically needed at the particular time – namely knowledge and analytical capacity based on market economics. Cost-effectiveness, however, is based on a comparison of the costs and benefits of the distance education approach of this program are com-

pared to the costs and benefits of the campus-based alternative. The cost-effectiveness of the distance approach is quite clear for Mozambique, but less clear for the other three countries. This is largely because in Mozambique the participants were high level officials who could be released for studies only at great cost to the nation. In the other countries, lower level officials participated, and the opportunity cost to the government and the country would not have been as great as for Mozambique.

Sustainability. Although there is variation between countries, our general conclusion is that not much effort was devoted to institution building in this project, and little has been achieved. In none of the host institutions, with the possible exception of Vietnam, is there today any capacity to assume responsibility for continuing on its own with the training and graduation of M.Sc. science degree students in economics. In none of the countries is it possible to see how the respective institutions would, without the help of foreign donors, find the funds that would allow them to continue to finance a distance education program in finance economics.

I. BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

A. Organization of this Report

1. **Four Countries – Four Unique Cases.** This report covers the evaluation of a program carried out in four countries. The aim of the report is not only to evaluate the program in a narrow sense, but also to identify lessons learned and where possible to draw generalizations about the use of distance education (DE) approaches for the delivery of high levels of education and training of government employees in developing countries.

2. Sida has provided support for DE programs in Mozambique, Vietnam, Namibia, and Cambodia. Each of these applications represents uniqueness in time and space. The cost-effectiveness of using a DE approach, as opposed to a traditional campus-based education (CBE) approach is critically dependent on context-specific variables. The program concerns the education of relatively high-level government employees with responsibility for making decisions that require an understanding of economic policy in a market economy. In each country, special circumstances need to be taken into account in evaluating cost-effectiveness. Mozambique, Vietnam, and Cambodia were emerging from planned economy to market economy, and new understandings of economics were needed by government officials. Namibia was emerging from an *apartheid* regime to a liberal regime. The effective and smooth transfer of power in government posed urgent demands for a good understanding of finance economics within a new corps of civil servants.

3. The *urgency* of the needs makes a difference in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of a DE *versus* CBE approach. If there is *no urgency*, a CBE approach might possibly be the best alternative because of the presumed marginal benefits of the campus experience. If there is *urgency*, a DE approach might be the best alternative because of the high opportunity cost of removing medium- and high-level officials and civil servants from their work.

4. The aim of the above explication is not to demonstrate that the DE approach is or is not justified by the present circumstances. It is rather to show that it is important to take into account the particular historical circumstances in each country in making such a judgment. At a more prosaic level, it also explains why this report is organized around “country reports”. Some readers may feel a sense of *déjà vu* as they read through the Executive Summary, Chapter III (Country Findings), with the details of the four countries, one after the other, Chapter IV (Comparative Analysis), and Chapter V (Summary). We believe, however, that country-level reporting is important, as circumstances do vary between countries.

5. **Logic of the Study.** The evaluation was designed from the beginning on a relatively tight inferential logic. The issues raised in the Terms of Reference (TOR) were translated into a logical “goal hierarchy”, which was used to structure the data collection and analysis, as described in Chapter II (Purpose of Methodology). As part of the data collection, a tracer study was carried out in each of the four countries, in order to obtain feedback from participants, on the utilization of the learning outcomes from the program, among other things.

6. Chapter II (Purpose and Methodology) describes the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the methodology used in the study at large, and the essential details of the tracer study. Chapter III (Country Findings) presents the findings for each country, following the logical format outlined in Chapter II. Chapter IV (Comparative Analysis) juxtaposes and compares the four countries on each

of the major variables identified in the methodological discussion. Chapter V (Summary) summarizes the overall findings, organized in accordance with the specific issues posed in the TOR. Chapter VI (Lessons Learned) presents general conclusions of a more substantive nature about the cost-effectiveness of DE as compared with CBE within the context studied here. Finally, Chapter VII (Recommendations) makes specific recommendations for the programs in Namibia, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

7. The Annexes. The country studies and the tracer studies provided a lot more material than can be reported in the main body of the report. As a result, the report has been divided into two parts. Part I: Report contains the most essential material on which the conclusions are based. Part II: Annexes includes detailed reports of the evidence on which the findings are based for each country. This evidence includes the results of the tracer studies, which are reported in detail in the Part II.

B. Origins of the Sida Program

8. The program evaluated here is the Sida financed training of Master of Science program in finance economics implemented by the Center for International Education in Economics (CIEE) of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London University, using DE methods in Mozambique, Vietnam, Namibia and Cambodia. The following courses were contained in the program:

- (1) Core course in finance economics (“aimed specifically at the reforming Ministry of Finance”);
- (2) M.Sc. course in financial management (“focussing on economic and management techniques needed for those working in commercial banks, investment funds, also applicable to those working in central banking”);
- (3) M.Sc. in development finance (from 1996) (“aimed at those in international agencies, development economists, etc.”); and
- (4) Diploma in economic principles (DEP) (“a conversion course for graduates wanting to move into economics”; developed at the behest of Mozambique with financing from the World Bank).

9. The idea of distance education in finance economics came originally from the Mozambican government, which approached Sida with a request for financing. The civil war was still going on, and while a very tough structural adjustment and economic stabilization program supported by the IMF and the World Bank demanded dramatic economic policy decisions to be taken by the government. Mozambique had fewer academically trained people than any other country in Africa. The capacity of the local University of Eduardo Mondlane to train economists at an academic level was almost zero.

10. An enhanced knowledge of market economics in general and finance economics in particular was needed in order for the government to manage its macroeconomic policy. Economic policy makers in the government had to learn how the IMF, the World Bank, and other “Western” economic institutions think and analyze issues. Otherwise, the government would be hindered in discussion and negotiation with these institutions.

11. The Government of Mozambique specifically asked to receive for its civil servants training in neoclassical economics and that this training be in the language of the Bretton Woods and the international economic community, namely English. Sida then approached the Open University in London, which was then reputed to be the first university in the world to have taken up DE. A feasibility study was prepared by a consultant, which was later used as a conceptual memorandum (*idépromemoria*) in the Sida decision-making process.

12. Sida then agreed with the Open University to invest a total of about MSEK 12 for the Open University, specifically with Professor Laurence Harris and his group, to develop a course fitting the specifications of the Government of Mozambique. Financing came from Sida's Mozambique country frame, but part of the money (around MSEK 5) was later reallocated to Sida's budget for methodology research (FOM). Already by that time, Sida was aware that this was something that could potentially benefit many other countries than Mozambique.

13. Sida required that the course be approved by the London University General Academic Committee and that a thesis be part of the program. Early on, the initiative by Sida was criticized for not having any institutionalization element by way of their own research. Sida claimed this to be the first initiative to try to introduce an element of institutionalization into DE. Mainly this seems to have been done through introducing a heavy component of tutoring in the course.

14. Subsequently Prof. Harris and his staff left the Open University to take up a professorship at the London University (LU). The special Masters of Science degree program to meet the needs for public sector economists, developed by the Open University and financed out of the MSEK 12 Sida grant, was not yet finished. Through an agreement between Sida and the Open University, the courses were transferred to the Center for International Education in Economics (CIEE) at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at LU.

15. The course developed by Sida contained a core of economics of finance, aimed specifically at the priorities of a reforming ministry of finance. Since then, CIEE has developed an M.Sc. course in financial management, focussing on economic and management techniques needed in commercial banks, investment funds, etc. These techniques are also applicable in central banks. In 1995, CIEE also developed a Diploma in Economic Principles (DEP) program, which is a conversion course for graduates wanting to move into economics from other subjects. The program was designed at the request of the World Bank for Mozambique.

16. Later SOAS has also used the course developed under the Sida grant for other students not connected with Mozambique or Sida financing. The same course is presently being given to the Finance Committee of the South African parliament. Today there is tremendous competition among donors to finance courses and education programs by way of the DE model. In 1996 LU received the Queen's award for this course.

17. There are today 26,000 students studying by distance education worldwide in all subjects, of which SOAS accounts for 1200.

C. Objectives of the Program

18. The overall objective of the Sida in financing the four separate country projects has been to build up and strengthen the financial economic and macroeconomic capacity in the targeted ministries and institutions to improve macroeconomic management, sharpen policy analysis, and design appropriate policy strategies for economic reforms. It aimed to provide individuals with strategic planning and negotiating capacity.

D. Target Group

19. The program was designed to target public servants employed in strategic positions in the recipient countries' public finance sector. It was assumed to be necessary to provide high quality education without removing them for extended periods from their workplaces. For this reason, the program used a DE delivery system.

E. The Four Country Projects

20. **Mozambique.** The first program was initiated in 1991 in Mozambique to develop and support economic management capacity, primarily in the Ministry of Finance (MOF). The program included strengthening the Ministry's capacity and competence to negotiate the reform programs suggested by the international financial institutions. In this context, the program was developed and delivered in English. Subsequent courses have had a wider range of coverage, although MOF has remained the local counterpart organization.

21. **Vietnam.** In 1993 the program was extended to Vietnam, where it has been implemented by the National Economic University (NEU). This program had two main objectives. First, to support Government's economic reform policy, "*doi moi*", by strengthening economic management and decision-making capacity within the ministries and other institutions. Second, to strengthen NEU in its role as a higher education institution. A longer-term objective was to build up NEU's capacity to conduct the M.Sc. program by itself. Sida funding has been extended until June 2000.

22. **Namibia.** In 1995 a similar program was initiated in Namibia, where the local counterpart institution is the Economics Department of the University of Namibia (UNAM). The program was co-funded by the Ford Foundation. The objective of the program was to strengthen economic analytic and management capacity at targeted ministries to attain macroeconomic goals, to narrow the gap between expatriate advisors and local counterpart personnel, and to develop and support post-graduate education and capacity at UNAM.

23. **Cambodia.** Also 1995 a program was initiated in Cambodia, where the local counterpart institution was the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI). The objectives were: (a) to meet the shortage of qualified finance economists to support economic reform programs, and (b) to contribute to the development of the training capacity of CDRI.

24. **Evolution of the Program.** Prior to 1995, Sida funded students to study a Qualifying Course and English language instruction as preparatory for the M.Sc. program for those who did not qualify directly to the program. It was taught on a face-to-face mode in each country by a UK lecturer. The course was specially designed to cover the main theory and applications of macro- and microeconomics, mathematics, and statistics that would be covered by the M.Sc. program.

25. The Qualifying Course was taught in Mozambique for the first two presentations, in Vietnam for three presentations, and once in Cambodia. Then with the introduction of the DEP in 1995, Mozambican and Namibian students who were not eligible to go directly to the M.Sc. program took the DEP as a prerequisite.

26. Using DE methods, students were provided with all the necessary materials, including specially written course units that guided the students through their studies. These materials took the place of face-to-face lectures. In addition to the materials supplied, arrangements were made whereby local or resident tutors were appointed to lecture from time to time and to supervise the students. In Mozambique and Vietnam, previous M.Sc. students have been employed as tutors. In Namibia a lecturer from UNAM has been appointed. In Cambodia and Vietnam, bilateral and associate experts were appointed as resident tutors. In Vietnam this task has been taken over by NEU for the last two presentations.

27. Table 1 shows some basic data about the M.Sc. program for each country in relation to the number of students admitted in the program and number of M.Sc. graduates.

Table 1: Basic Information about the M.Sc. Program in Four Countries

Country	Year	Number Admitted	Women N	%	M.Sc. Graduates N	%	Total Cost SEK ('000)
Mozambique	1991–98	112	20	18	61	54	33,648 (a)
Vietnam	1993–99	64	31	48	56	88	22,230
Namibia	1995–99	37 (b)	14	38	7 (c)	19	10,123 (d)
Cambodia	1995–97	24	1	4	23	96	7,826
Total		237	66	28	147	62	73,827

Notes:

(a) This cost includes also disbursements by Sida from 1989 to 1991.

(b) This number is excluding DEP.

(c) At the time of the study, 15 students were awaiting final exam results, so the number of M.Sc. graduates is likely to change since these 15 students have been performing well.

(d) In Namibia the costs of the program has been split about 50–50 with the Ford Foundation.

F. Postgraduate Programs

28. Postgraduate Diploma in Economic Principles: This program is designed for students who have a first degree but not in economics and want to change career or study paths to economics. Successful completion of this Diploma will enable students to progress onto the M.Sc. Program.

29. Postgraduate Diploma in Finance economics, Financial Management, or Development Finance: These programs are designed for students who have an academic background in economics but not sufficient for registration onto the M.Sc. directly. The courses studied on these Diplomas are exactly the same as the Part I of the M.Sc. program.

30. Students registered on one of these Diplomas are required to pass the Part I level to the Exam Board's satisfaction before being able to upgrade their registration to M.Sc. level and then to continue with Part II. Similarly, if students who are registered onto the M.Sc. in the first instance do not complete Part I at a satisfactory level, then they are not allowed to continue to Part II but instead graduate with a Diploma.

2. Sweden's Support for Economics and Financial Management

31. The projects are financed under a Sida program which has become an increasingly important component of Sweden's development cooperation in the last decade, namely, *development of state institutions central to democracy and the protection of human rights*. This program is managed by the Division for Democratic Governance (DESA), which is one of four divisions comprising Sida's Department for Democracy and Social Development.

32. In three of the four countries benefiting from the Sida support to Master of Science education in finance economics there are currently also other programs supported by Sida under the same or related budgets.

33. In *Mozambique* in 1998, Sida disbursed MSEK 19 in support of a capacity and institution building program that focused on budget, accounting, and internal audit functions of the Ministry of Planning and Finance. It also disbursed MSEK 8 to public personnel administration, general capacity-building, and a twinning arrangement between the cities of Beira and Gothenburg.

34. In *Namibia* about MSEK 10 was disbursed to support institutional cooperation in the areas of state finance, state audit, and statistics.

35. In *Vietnam*, apart from the MSEK 7 to the M.Sc. program, a total of MSEK 32 was disbursed to support tax policy, administration, and the General Statistics Office. It also disbursed MSEK 35 in support of land administration, a business school, an economic policy institute (CIEM), personnel administration, environment management, state organization, and planning and follow up.

36. In addition to the Swedish support under Sida's budget for institutional development, there is also some support from Sida's Education division to three of the four countries benefiting from the M.Sc. program in finance economics.

37. In Mozambique, in 1998 some MSEK 19 was disbursed in support mainly to the primary education and to vocational training. In Namibia MSEK 47 were disbursed during fiscal 1998, of which about 30 was for primary education, MSEK 3.4 to secondary education, and 10 for adult education. In Cambodia MSEK 11 were disbursed in support of a program to rehabilitate flooded primary schools implemented by the UNICEF.

3. Counting the Costs of Distance Education

A. The Teaching and Learning Process

38. In principle distance education may be a vehicle for distribution of courses in most academic and professional subjects to people who have basic literary skills. Successful dissemination of distance education rests upon specific approaches in terms of applied pedagogy. Regardless of which media are chosen (printed material, video, CD-ROM, Internet, etc.), it is essential that the tutor functions as a motivator and counselor to the students. The focal point of the tutor must always be to guide the students so that their understanding of the subject matter is deepened through the learning process. This approach has far-reaching consequences regarding the design, organization, modularization, and ultimately the way in which the subject matter is being presented (layout, graphics, etc) together with the assignments.

39. When a distance education course has been developed according to the broad criteria referred to above, adults tend to learn as well through participating in a distance education course as they do in a more traditional learning context.

40. DE provides an opportunity to deepen ones understanding, to internalize the subject matter by working on one's own, together with a tutor and often with fellow students, and to solve problems by working out responses in written assignments, which are commented upon by their tutor. The best results are often achieved when the students are able to relate the subject matter to their own personal experience.

41. In settings in which thousands of students are being "processed", this implies very thorough and careful planning concerning the choice and presentation of assignments. The distance education learning environment is very demanding on the part of the teacher. A successful DE program will therefore often need significant "training of the trainers" course before the distance education project itself is being launched.

B. Costs of Administrative Routines

42. For any formal education program to be effective, it is necessary to have an administrative body that operates smoothly and effectively in relation to students, tutors, authorities, and co-operative partners. Information about the course must flow effectively to all potential students. Conditions for active student participation in the learning process must be established. Effective counseling services must be set up.

43. For distance education, the logistics around enrolment procedures, tutoring schedules, distribution of teaching material, and the follow-up of students academically and administratively is more demanding than is generally understood. Everything must be tested as thoroughly as possible before the courses are being distributed. Insufficient planning in any of these areas lead invariably to unacceptable student dropout rates, and consequently to a less effective project.

44. Compared to conventional education, the distance education courses will also need quite different administrative routines to be run efficiently. This is mainly because of the logistics related to the distribution of material, the handling of assignments, and the administration of distributed examinations. The costs of setting up the necessary administrative unit must also be regarded as an investment that is part of the distance education provision.

C. Costs per Student

45. Because of the high cost of the initial investment for the development, in order for a DE program to be cost-effective, a large number of students must be recruited over its life span. However, once the program has been developed, the marginal cost of each new recruit should be relatively low. That is, each new recruit would add relatively little to the total expenditure in the form of teaching costs and administrative overhead. The fixed costs are relatively high and independent of the number of students, whereas the variable costs are relatively low.

46. For CBE, the initial investment is relatively small (once the overall structure is in place). Each new class or each new student (depending upon the tutor intensity of the program) involves its costs for physical facilities. A reasonably well run private school will always be able to tell the number of students needed for a new class to break even. The fixed costs are relatively low, whereas the variable costs are relatively high

D. Costs of Instructional Material

47. In distance education, it is common that programs are organized into courses, which are subdivided into modules and study units of a specified amount of study time. This overall design will only work when the necessary number of high quality study guides are developed. These guides are written by specialists (often by teams of specialists), and they contain not only lectures and guides to the books on the reading lists; but also exercises and assignments. The study guides are designed to be integrated with other learning inputs. The manuscripts undergo later the same treatment as manuscripts that are accepted by a professional publisher. The Open University, UK, estimates that they need at least between one to two years to put a new distance education course on the market. The cost of developing DE material, such as TV programs, can be substantially higher than the cost of materials for CBE programs, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Relative Costs of Teaching Material for One Hour of Instruction

Medium	Unit Cost
Face-to-face	1
Audio cassette, radio	2
Televised lecture	2–5
Computer communication	2–52
Print	2–10
High quality TV program	20–50
Educational software (for PCs)	20–50
Video disk	50–100

Source: Prof. Chris Curran, National Distance Education Centre, Dublin City University (1998)

E. Cost-Effectiveness of Distance Education

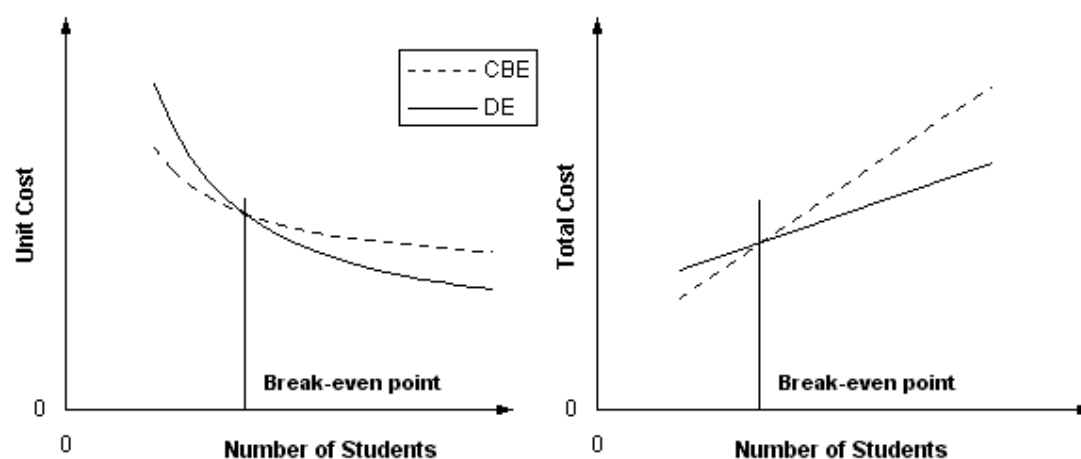
48. The concept of cost effectiveness is not merely a matter of costs and benefits for DE and CBE. It is rather the *relationship between ratios of benefits to costs for alternative delivery modes*. To be specific, letting B represent the sum of benefits and C the sum of costs, and letting subscripts d and c represent DE and CBE, respectively, if

$$B_d/C_d > B_c/C_c,$$

then DE is cost-effective relative to CBE. In other words, the most cost effective approach is not necessarily either the cheapest or best. It is the approach with the highest ratio of B/C.

49. The distance education mode is often preferred because of its inherent cost-effectiveness for particular target groups. The main difference between CBE and DE in terms of cost structure is that with DE there is a *relative high initial investment cost and low marginal operating cost*.¹ The initial investment covers study guides and student support as well as setting up an efficient administration to run the program. The relative difference between CBE and DE in unit costs (including initial investment) and total cost is significant, as illustrated in Diagram 1. Below some total number of students for a given course or program, traditional face-to-face instruction has lower unit costs and total costs, but above the “break even” point, distance methods have lower costs. Where the break-even point would lie would depend on very particular circumstances related to the cost structure of the respective programs.

Diagram 1: Unit Cost and Total Cost Comparison of DE and CBE



¹ For further reading the following articles and books may be of interest:

Chris Curran, “Factors Affecting the Costs of Media in Distance Education,” in *Media and Technology in European Distance Education*, Edited by A.W Bates, European Association of Distance Teaching Universities, 1990.

Grevill Rumble, *The Management of Distance learning Systems*, UNESCO, 1992

A.W. Bates, *Technology, Open Learning and Distance Education*, Routledge Studies in Distance Education, 1995.

Asian Association of Open Universities, *Economics of Distance Education*, Conference Book, Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong, 1993.

Danish Ministry of Education, *Technology-supported learning (Distance Learning)*, Report no 1253. See chapter two, “The Economics of the Education System in the Nineties.”

Greville Rumble, “The competitive vulnerability of distance teaching universities,” in *Key Issues in Open Learning*, edited by Alan Tait, Longman, 1993.

50. The three points below represent the main conclusions of an internal and critical analysis of the costs of distance education project at the NKS Distance Education, Oslo. The outcome of this analysis is in line with the experience of other open universities and distance education institutions, and it suggests that the distance education-mode is cost-effective provided that:

- The number of students is relatively high;
- The learning model is effective and simple to administer; and
- Only a few different modes of instruction are being used in each program.

51. It is well known that the introduction of add-on technology in distance education programs not only increases the investments needed to complete the overall study program, but it also complicates the logistics of the operation.

4. The Need for Training in Finance economics

52. Beginning in the middle or late 80s, the pressure on third world governments, mainly on part of foreign aid donors but also from within the countries, to reform their economies toward a more liberalized market model became very intense. Many of the African countries that had brought their economies to ruin while applying a centrally planned economic model gradually began to reform. Some countries had gone much longer on the path of a pure Marxist economy than others. In some cases, the decision to reform was more dramatic than in others.

53. Three of the countries (Mozambique, Cambodia, and Vietnam) were embarking on a dramatic transition to a market economy, with the support of the World Bank and the IMF as partners. These institutions, supported actively by virtually all donors, were offering substantial aid packages, on condition that the governments implemented far-reaching reforms, in terms of both economic stabilization and restructuring of the entire economy.

54. Twenty years of experience with foreign aid had shown that in order to implement economic change effectively, it is not sufficient that the recipient government be *willing* to reform. It must also *share the goals* of the intended reforms and actively participate in bringing them about. This requires substantial knowledge in market economics in general and in macro- and finance economics in particular. This kind of knowledge was in critically short supply in these countries at the time Mozambique suggested this program to Sweden.

55. Sida's objective of transferring knowledge and analytical capacity in market economics to the governments in question, was seen as very relevant and timely and was supported by all donors. It was not obvious, however, that this had to be done by way of the distance education methodology, as this evaluation will argue.

56. Ministers and their senior staff need to have at least elementary knowledge and understanding of economics in order for them to understand if and when various economic reforms are needed. It is also needed in order to ask for the advice and assistance of advisers such as Harvard Institute of International Development (HIID) or other agencies or consultancies. Such advisers can cost around SEK 2 million per year.

II. PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

1. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

57. Sida has decided that an overall evaluation of the four country programs should be carried out, although the respective country programs are at different stages. For the projects that are in the phase of being taken over by the local counterpart, there is a need to analyze the results of the program in terms of capacity-building on an individual as well as an institutional level. For the ongoing programs, it is of importance to analyze cost efficiency and the individual and institutional motivation for this method of education. In general, there is an interest in examining the provider institution's capacity to deliver advanced level education and at the same time take country specific characteristics and language difficulties into consideration. For the future it is of interest to examine whether this method is a recommendable way to enhance capacity in the economic area, as well as in other relevant areas on the institutional level (e.g. public administration).

58. The primary targets of the evaluation are the governments of the countries concerned, and within this framework, the public institutions whose institutional capacity has been affected by the program, and the individuals attending the program.

59. The **scope** of the evaluation is thus given by the following "General tasks":

- Analyze the results of the program in terms of capacity-building on an individual as well as an institutional level;
- Analyze cost efficiency;
- Assess the individual and institutional motivation for this method of education;
- Examine the provider institution's capacity to deliver general advanced level education and at the same time take country specific characteristics and language difficulties into consideration; and
- Examine whether this method is a recommendable way to enhance capacity in the economic area, as well as in other relevant areas on the institutional level, e.g. public administration.

60. **The assignment.** The assignment was for a three-person evaluation team consisting of one senior economist as team leader, one senior educational expert, and one junior education expert. In addition, professional backstopping services were provided by a project manager in the consultant's home office in Stockholm. The team visited each of the four countries spending an average of 5–6 working days in each.

2. Methodology and Work Plan

A. Basic Design

61. The following facts, given in the terms of reference for this evaluation, are the points or departure for our methodology design:

Problem: "Shortage of trained economists has threatened sound economic management, growth and development /of these countries/".

Need: "To Reinforce economic management capacity within the public sector".

Objective of Program: “M.Sc. program provided by the CIEE of the SOAS will *build up and strengthen financial, economic and macroeconomic management, sharpen policy analysis and design appropriate policy strategies for economic reform*”; The target group will acquire “strategic planning and negotiating capacity”.

Target group: Public servants already employed in strategic positions in the recipient country’s public finance sector.

Mode of delivery: The *distance education* model is employed because Government would not want to remove participants from the workplace for extended periods of time, and also because it is generally believed to be substantially cheaper per student.

B. Goal Hierarchy

62. Based on an analysis of the contents and the objectives of the program to be evaluated, and the questions posed in the terms of reference, the Mission has defined the following targets at five different levels of a goal hierarchy.

Inputs: Curricula, books, teachers, PCs, etc;

Activities: Delivery of teaching and training; Selection of suitable and *relevant* candidates.

Output: Students have *consumed* the training, i.e., the teaching activity has actually been delivered. The target group has acquired and possesses knowledge and capacity in *financial, economic and macroeconomic management*.

Effects: Through the acquired knowledge, students have contributed to *building up and strengthening financial, economic and macroeconomic management (in the Ministry or the Government,*

63. The knowledge is being applied to produce:

- Sharpened policy analysis;
- “Appropriate” policy strategies for economic reform;
- Enhanced strategic planning; and
- Enhanced negotiating capacity.

C. External Conditions at Effect Level

64. Students stay on in their jobs, i.e. there is no brain drain abroad. Brain drain to other Government institutions or to the banking sector or even to some private sector entities is assumed to have a substantial positive impact also on the Government’s capacity.

D. Impacts

65. Impacts of the program would be:

- There are visible signs and results that the listed effects (namely sharpened policy analysis, design of appropriate policy strategies for economic reform, enhanced strategic planning, and enhanced negotiating capacity) have contributed to, or impacted on, a “*sound economic management, growth and development of these countries*;
- Strengthening of the relevant national (university) institution in its higher education role, and to enable it in the longer term to run the M.Sc. program itself; or
- Personal benefits for the students unrelated to Government capacity enhancement.

66. The various chains of causes and effects in the programs can be summarized in the goal hierarchy shown in Diagram 2. The information can be schematically shown in the following *Logical Framework Analysis* (LFA) matrix in Table 3.

E. Work Plan

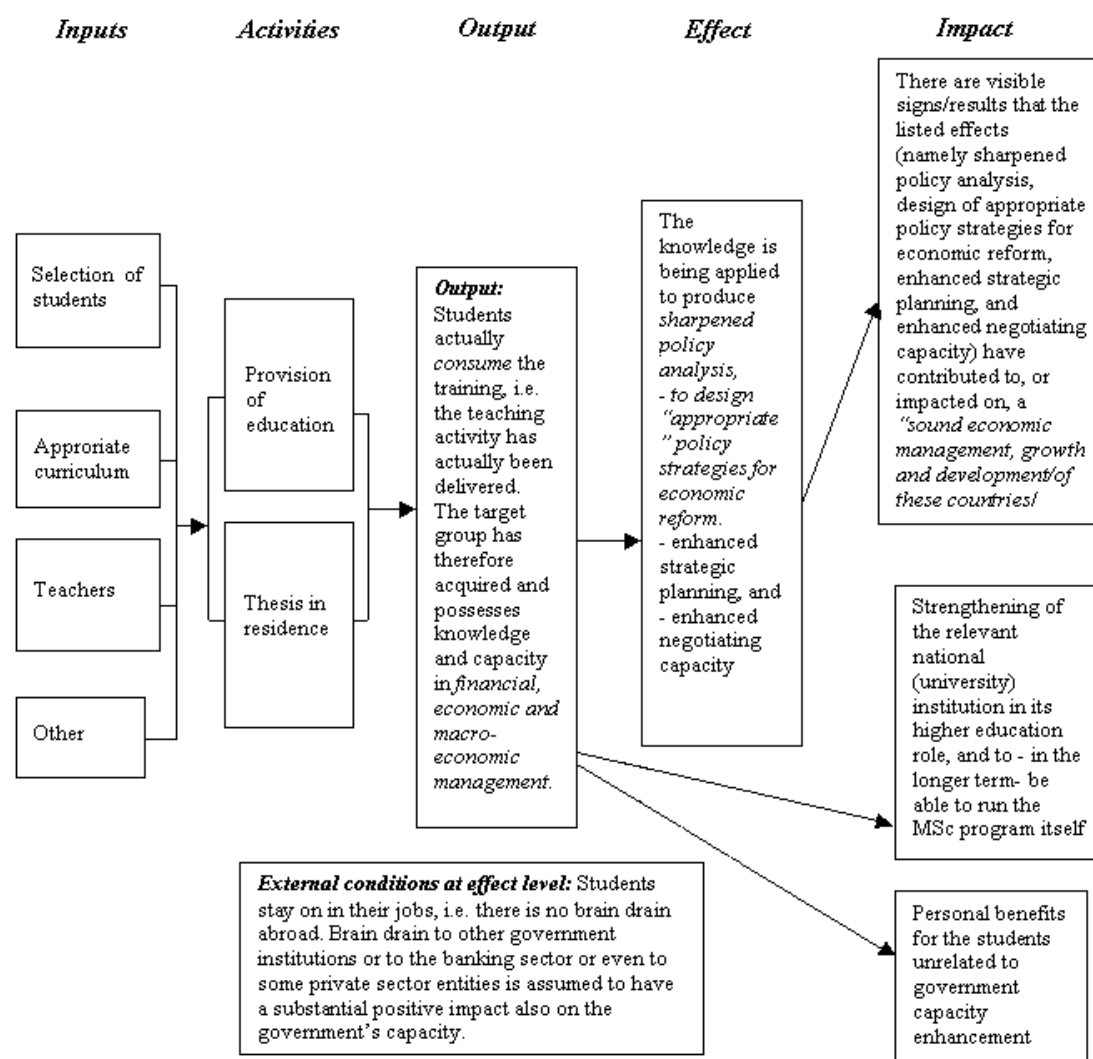
67. The analysis of this evaluation covers all the targets listed in the above logical framework matrix, and makes use of the indicators listed therein. In addition, the institutional and financial sustainability and the relevance of the programs are analyzed.

68. All the specific questions posed directly or indirectly in the terms of reference are in our opinion covered by the points contained in the LFA matrix. However, for the added convenience of the reader, Chapter V (Summary) is organized so as to provide brief answers to each individual question posed.

F. Inductive Reasoning

69. In countries such as Vietnam, where the students selected are quite young, where thousands of officials are trained in market economics in shorter and longer courses, and where there are so many other influences on economic understanding, the connection between output, effects, and impact is largely theoretical. It is not possible to determine that the knowledge acquired specifically in the Sida financed SOAS training actually leads to tasks being performed which could be identified as having a crucial impact on enhanced economic performance of the country. While still keeping the respective boxes in the goal hierarchy of the project, it is necessary to apply an inductive type of reasoning in order to ascertain whether the output of our project had any bearing on the impact being achieved.

Diagram 2: Goal Hierarchy of the M.Sc. in Economics Program



70. Logically the lines drawn in the goal hierarchy from *output* to *effect* and from *effect* to *impact* represent causal relationships. It is clear from the outset, however, that this relationship is extremely difficult – if not impossible – to identify or observe in practice. Moreover, if it can be observed, it is very difficult to know whether the particular observed effect or impact has been caused by the output of the project or by other factors.

71. At the *effects* level, the Mission has in several cases rather unambiguous information showing that a student, having successfully acquired the knowledge (which is the output of the project), is today actually applying this knowledge in his or her work. In many of the cases, however, it cannot be reliably determined that the enhanced knowledge emanates specifically from the Project.

Table 3: Goal Hierarchy, Targets, Indicators, and Assumptions

Level of goal hierarchy	Target	(Verifiable) indicators	Assumptions regarding external conditions
Impact (1): National economy	The acquired knowledge has contributed to, or impacted on, a “sound economic management, growth and development”	Economic statistics Opinion of representatives of IFI’s and others	
Impact (2): Institutional strengthening	Strengthening of the relevant national (university) institution in its higher education role, and to - in the longer term- be able to run the M.Sc. program itself.		
Impact (3): Personal economy	Personal benefits for the students unrelated to Government capacity enhancement		
Effect	Students have through the acquired knowledge contributed to building up and strengthening financial, economic and macroeconomic management in the Government. The knowledge is being applied to produce - sharpened policy analysis, - to design “appropriate” policy strategies for economic reform. - enhanced strategic planning, and - enhanced negotiating capacity		Students stay in their jobs, i.e. there is no brain drain abroad. Brain drain to other Government institutions or to the banking sector or even to some private sector entities is assumed to have a positive impact also on the Government’s capacity.
Output	Students actually consume the training, i.e. the teaching activity has actually been delivered. The target group has therefore acquired and possesses knowledge and capacity in financial, economic and macroeconomic management.		
Activity (1)	Delivery of teaching and training		
Activity (2)			
Activity (3)			
Input (1)	Curricula		
Input (2)	Books		
Input (3)	Teachers		
Input (4)	PCs, etc		
Input (5)	Selection of suitable and relevant candidates		

72. Since the effects cannot be unambiguously attributed to the project, use is made here of reasoning by inference or inductive instead of deductive reasoning. We reason that *if* we have concluded that the output level of the project has been successfully accomplished (the student has acquired and possesses the relevant knowledge), and *if* the student is today active in a job (be it the old one or a new one) where he is actually making use of economic knowledge in tasks that are deemed as relevant for the institution in question, *then* we will infer that our projects output has caused that effect or at least contributed to it. To assume differently would seem to be unreasonable.

73. At the *impact* level the reliance on inductive reasoning becomes even stronger, but the same reasoning applies. *If* it can be determined or observed that students who have successfully finished the M.Sc. training are active in jobs where superior economic knowledge is needed to perform tasks which we can observe are in fact being performed, and *if* it can be determined that the government's or the country's performance in relevant respects has actually improved, *then* it may be assumed that the effect caused by the output of the project has at least contributed to achieving the impact. To assume otherwise under the given conditions would be unreasonable.

G. Sources of Information

74. The methodology used here is based on a study of available documentation, tracer studies in all four countries, and interviews with students, supervisors and employers. In addition, a visit was made to SOAS for interviews with responsible persons. Interviews were held with responsible persons at the Sida headquarters in Stockholm.

H. Output and Quality

75. Regarding the quality of the education, interviews with the teachers in SOAS, especially the ones who were responsible for examinations and theses, are a very important source of information. Interviews with academic personnel in the respective countries who have knowledge and opinions on the quality of the distance education provided by SOAS have also been a valuable source of information. Interviews with the students themselves give their own opinion as to the quality of their acquired knowledge. Finally the questionnaires give quite a lot of information.

76. At the *effects* level we will measure and analyze if there are tangible indications that the knowledge acquired as an output of the training, has in fact resulted in, or contributed to initiatives in the government that represent “*sharpened policy analysis, design of ‘appropriate’ policy strategies for economic reform, enhanced strategic planning, and enhanced negotiating capacity*”. As for the impact level, there can be no clear – let alone quantitative – evidence regarding this effect. Insight will have to be gained by intensive and extensive interviewing of as many knowledgeable people within the government as possible. Some information relevant for the effects level can probably also be derived from the answers given by the students in the questionnaires.

77. *Impact on economic management, growth and development* is thus a proof that the acquired knowledge (measured at output level), which has been applied (measured at effects level), has in fact been successful, and actually resulted in, or contributed to better negotiations, better policy and better economic performance and development, etc. Obviously, no clear evidence can be had on this impact. Any conclusions will have to be based on speculative reasoning, based on qualitative information. The only way how to get this type of information would seem to be through interviews with the foreign counterparts (WB, IMF, and other donors), and with well placed, knowledgeable (and hopefully objective) individuals in the government itself. Use interviews with representatives of the international finance institutions to investigate changes in negotiation and dialogue capacity in the countries concerned.

78. An important source is obviously to read IMF and all other available documentation regarding the macro-economic stabilization and restructuring reforms. Conclusions regarding *Impact on relevant national institution* will be based on the same interviews, and mainly the same sources as for the activity and output levels below. Information for *Impact on personal economy* will come mainly from the questionnaires and from personal interviews.

3. The Tracer Study

79. In each of the four countries, a tracer study covering a sample of participants in the M.Sc. program was carried out. The aim of the study was to obtain selected information from an unbiased sample of 30 participants in each country with the exception of Cambodia², in accordance with two data collection instruments developed for the purpose. The questionnaire was sent, together with a list of sample participants, a checklist, and instructions for completing the questionnaire, to the local consultant in each country. The local consultant had the following tasks:

- Take contact with the participants in the initial sample, and, using any means available, gather at least enough information to fill in the checklist;
- In cases in which there was no contact, if possible, select a replacement case in accordance with the sampling instructions;
- For the requisite number of sample cases, complete the questionnaire; and
- Transmit the questionnaires to the Swedec headquarters.

80. This work was done prior to the field visit by the team, so that a sample of students to be interviewed could be based on their response to the questionnaire. However, this was not possible in the cases of Mozambique and Namibia, where the selection for interviews was made randomly and according to availability of participants.

A. Sample

81. The aim of the sampling procedures was to obtain an unbiased sample, stratified to assure representativeness by gender, starting date for the program (cohort), ministry of employment, and other essential features of the program. Because of differences in the management and administration of the program in the different countries, the sampling process was done somewhat differently for each of the countries. For all countries the initial sample was drawn in Stockholm based on SOAS participant list according to the following criteria:

- For Mozambique and Namibia, the sample was stratified so as to make it more representative of different cohorts, ministries, and student status and gender.
- For Vietnam, the sample was done by choosing each second or third student on the list.
- For Cambodia, the sample included the whole student population (24).

B. Data Collection Instruments

82. The data collection instruments³ were developed especially for the purpose of collecting information on how effective the program has been in achieving its goals. There were two data collection instruments, namely the Checklist (CL1) and the Participant Questionnaire (PC1).

83. The Checklist contained the names and telephone numbers of the initial sample of participants. It also provided space for two key variables for the study: Utility of the Course, and Sector. The local consultant was to obtain information on these two variables for the original sample by any means possible, from the participant if possible, otherwise from other persons knowledgeable about the participant (employers, colleagues, family, etc). The unique advantage of this approach is that bias resulting from missing data due to non-response is minimized. In the event that the information is provided by person(s) other than the participant, the reliability of the data is reduced, but the greater risk would be bias resulting from missing data.

² In Cambodia, there was only one presentation of 24 students. It was decided to include the whole population in the study.

³ The data collection instruments are shown in Appendix

84. The questionnaire (PC1) sought to yield information on the current job positions of the students and whether or to what extent these students were using the knowledge and skills acquired in the M.Sc. program. The questionnaire was addressed to former and present students of the program. It was written in English and consisted of 7 sections as follows:

- Personal information;
- Initial work situation (before beginning the M.Sc. program in economics);
- Participation in M.Sc. program in economics;
- Current work situation;
- Utility of the M.Sc. program (even if not graduated);
- The distance education approach (how the program has worked and level of satisfaction in relation to different aspects); and
- Other comments about the M.Sc. program.

C. Interviews

85. Interviews were conducted in order to complement the questionnaire and increase the accuracy of the answers in the questionnaire. They were also conducted to gather further information on issues related to the program and not covered by the questionnaire. The interviews were done in English, but in some cases they were done with the help of an interpreter, as in Vietnam and Cambodia. The interviews included the following target groups:

- Students;
- Tutors;
- Students' employers;
- Management staff of the program;
- Concerned people at different ministries and banks, including respective human resource departments;
- People at Sida in Sweden and in the four countries;
- Other donor agencies; and
- People working with similar projects in the four countries.

D. Limitations

86. *Language.* In some cases, language has been a hinder to communication with interviewees, mainly in Cambodia and Vietnam. In cases where the interviews were conducted with the help of interpreter, the information disclosed was not complete. Language was also a hinder in the questionnaire.

87. *Employers.* It happened that the few employers met were not very well informed about the program and therefore could not provide any relevant information. The interviews with the employers in Vietnam were very limited because they were conducted having the student as interpreter.

88. *Respondents.* There is also the usual problem of subjectivity of responses due to omissions or responses partially truth. SOAS provided neither the necessary information on expenditures nor part of the data on the students as requested by the team.

89. *The Questionnaire.* By the time the stay in Maputo was over we had received 24 forms (a response rate of 80%) which must be considered satisfactory. It is possible that we must allow for a positive bias in the questionnaire since the forms asked for full names, date of birth etc. An anonymous

response may have given slightly different results. Another aspect is that the questions were phrased taking into consideration *one* program in economics at M.Sc. level. Unfortunately, it was not discovered until the field-work was under way and the questionnaires had been distributed that there were two possible terminal points⁴, namely (a) Graduate degree M.Sc. in either Finance economics or Financial Management, and (b) Post-graduate Diploma in Finance economics, Financial Management, *or* Economic Principles.

90. The existence of an intermediate terminal point, not anticipated in the data collection instruments, undoubtedly led to some confusion, especially in the section on participation in the M.Sc. program. Because of this problem, it has been particularly difficult to trace how far the students have gone in their studies, specifically in Mozambique.

91. *The interviews.* The intention was to interview handpicked students based on their responses in the questionnaire. However, this strategy did not work in all the countries (Mozambique and Namibia) because the data collection and data processing were not completed on our arrival. We therefore had to simply interview as many students as possible during our stay, regardless of their responses in the questionnaire. We do not think this interferes very much with the general impressions that the students may have.

⁴ More information is found in the Appendix on the programs.

III. COUNTRY FINDINGS

92. This chapter draws together findings, conclusions, and analysis from the four country reports: Mozambique, Vietnam, Namibia and Cambodia, which are presented as Annexes 1 through 4.

1. Mozambique

A. Students

93. Based on the figures obtained from SOAS in London the total number of enrollees in the M.Sc. program over the years 1991–1998 is 112. The students have primarily been recruited from the Ministry of Finance, the Bank of Mozambique, and a few other ministries. The first cohorts comprised mainly students from the Ministry of Finance, whereas new cohorts included students from broader target groups – the financing and banking sector as well as other ministries. The output at master's level is altogether 61 candidates, i.e. 51% of the admitted students in the program. Another 25% of the students admitted completed the Diploma in Finance economics. Thus the total output of diplomas and degrees in Mozambique must be seen as satisfactory.

94. The students were initially selected by the host institution (Ministry of Finance) and a list of potential candidates was sent to SOAS. They were first interviewed and then had to attend a Qualifying Course that has been later developed into a Diploma in Economic Principles. The selection to the master's program was based on the overall performance in the qualifying course. Close to 80% of the students had already completed a university education at undergraduate level upon entering the program.

B. Program

95. *General Quality.* The provision of the DE master's program has been the standard SOAS curriculum in financial economy. The DE provision has been supported by a considerable amount of local tuition.

96. *Tutoring.* The general opinion about the local tutoring was negative although it may have helped some students a little. The reason mentioned is that most of the local tutors did not have teaching experience, had limited knowledge and limited themselves to following the manuals. In addition, the sessions should be conducted in English. Since the local tutors did not master the language this caused some difficulties. The positive aspect of the tutorial sessions was the contact among the students themselves.

97. The students' attendance was very irregular, though. Many students didn't get permission to leave the work for studying because the internal regulations of their institutions were not clear on this regard. As stated by a student "The program has good quality but bad regulations because it doesn't take into account that the students are in the first place employees." English has been another barrier for a number of students, especially for the older ones. Although, they considered the English course useful because they learned the technical vocabulary, they still had difficulties in following and understanding the subjects, as for example the videos, and were unable to express themselves.

98. *Materials.* The materials provided were considered very good and relevant, specially the manuals. Although some students believed that the material from CIEE were sufficient, many still felt the need for more reference books to accomplish both the thesis and some of the assignments. According to some students in this study, subjects like international finance and macroeconomics should be

extended. They felt that there was need for more video sessions to stimulate discussions, and they considered the sessions with SOAS tutors too short. These students also pointed to the fact that there were a limited number of optional subjects in Part II.

99. *Assignments.* In general the students got good and detailed comments on the assignments in two weeks time. The opinion about SOAS tutors was that they were excellent, experienced and patient but very demanding. For delays they would discount 10 points/week. Some students felt, though, that the contacts with the tutors were not so easy, that sometimes they would need to have more contact with them.

100. *The Residential School in London.* The Residential School in London was seen as a very useful part of the program. In particular students praised the tutors and the library facilities. The purpose of the Residential School was to supervise and coach the writing of dissertations.

101. *Administration.* The administration of the course has been done by individuals based in different places. This has caused some problems in the flow of information. It seems that SOAS regulations were not so clear to a number of students. For instance, that it was possible to cancel the registration and continue later when the time was more convenient was not known by a number of students.

C. Costs

102. For the Mozambique program we believe that the data made available to us by the Sida office in Maputo is exhaustive and reliable. Bearing in mind the difficulties in comparing costs over many years (given fluctuations in the exchange rates, inflation, etc), the cost per degree at different levels is:

- One M.Sc. Degree: SEK 311,405
- One Postgraduate Diploma: SEK 123,349
- One DEP Diploma: SEK 65,302

103. The cost of the master's degree delivered as distance education is about the same, or even somewhat higher, than the estimated costs incurred by studying full-time abroad.

D. Benefits

104. *Use and Application of Knowledge Gained.* Almost all students in the sample (23 of 24) found the course "rather" or "very useful" for carrying out their duties at their current work, and the courses had helped them make changes in their work. But only 13 stated that they have been able to apply changes in their respective organizations. Some had been commissioned to undertake special tasks by their employers where they could use more of their new competence.

105. Most of the SOAS students are still in the government, and many of them have received better jobs. One SOAS graduate interviewed, a director at the ministry of finance, testified that "For me and colleagues the course was very important. The courses gave us many tools to analyze the economy, and to understand how financial issues can help the country's development."

106. At the Ministry of Finance the capacity and knowledge for economic policy analysis and formulation and negotiations with the Bretton-Woods is today much better. There is considerably more opposition and constructive critique raised from the Mozambique side, and the government has an important role in preparing the draft for the macro-economic Policy Framework Paper (PFP). Today the matrix of conditionality and all statistical data are prepared by the government.

107. Because of the much higher salaries in the private sector, the government is disadvantaged in competing for the best economists, and is continuously in search of highly qualified persons.

108. Both political will and economic knowledge are essential to reform the society towards a modern market economy. Both exist in the Government of Mozambique today. Since 1992 the government has been genuinely convinced of the need for liberal market reform, and today the market liberal model has taken over completely in Mozambique, but there are still some pockets of opposition. Today Mozambique is comparatively well off when it comes to knowledge and capability of macroeconomics and financial analysis. This is of course not solely a result of the SOAS DE-training, since there are many other graduates in economics apart from those of SOAS. There is still a shortage at the highest level, however. The Harvard Institute for International Development, HIID, has had a team of four senior economists at Ph.D. level stationed full time in the ministry of finance for the past three years.

109. *Improved Economic Policy.* The Mission believes that that the programs objective of contributing to better economic performance, has been achieved.

First, at the output level, we have found that the graduated students have acquired knowledge and understanding of macroeconomics and finance economics.

Second, interviews and direct observations have convinced us that most of the students, including a dozen or so persons in high positions, are applying their knowledge in the jobs – old or new ones.

Third, we know that Government's economic performance is today much better than it used to be. Therefore, even if we can not prove that the SOAS knowledge has verifiably contributed to the improvement, we assume that the SOAS knowledge must have contributed. To assume otherwise would seem unreasonable.

110. In Mozambique, some of Government's most important persons with respect to economic reform, including the Governor of the Central Bank, the Deputy Finance minister, and the prime minister, have taken the course. From this fact alone one can probably conclude that the SOAS training has had a great importance for the country's economic reforms.

111. *Institution Building.* We find it clearly established that little or no impact has been achieved with respect to institution building at the national university. There has been no real cooperation between the SOAS program and the economics faculty. Nor was there any real host institution for the SOAS program. In the beginning, the program used office space in an insurance company. The economics faculty has been in great disorder all through the project period. It is difficult to say if Sida would have had a realistic chance of achieving any important or substantial institutional effect of their program had that been a primary concern. There was no foundation on which Sida could have created an institutionalization project, since there was nothing in the economics faculty on which to build.

112. *Conflicting Objectives.* In order for Sida to achieve its *impact on economic management, growth, and development*, there was no realistic way it could also have achieved *impact on relevant national institutions*. In fact, given the circumstances in the country, one may see the two objectives as incompatible. The main objective of the program was to transmit to the government knowledge in economics that it urgently needed. It would not have been practically possible to build up a university institution at the same time, because the necessary preconditions were lacking. Similarly, if the resources had been devoted to building up a national institution for this level of training in economics, the investment would *not* have yielded the benefits in the form of economic management, growth, and development *in the short- to medium term*. Therefore it is surprising that this objective was not ex-

pressed in a more general manner, e.g. that the program should be implemented, *if possible*, so that it helps build up future capacity and knowledge at the local university.

113. *Personal Benefits to Students.* The students in the sample were of the opinion that the M.Sc. course is of good quality, and considered the knowledge acquired useful in their work. This was said also by the students who completed only Part I of the course. The M.Sc. degree gives them new opportunities and the advantage of being able to work in many different institutions. In addition, it has helped them to improve their performance at the job. As mentioned by a student, “I enjoy more respect from other colleagues and institution. I feel more comfortable to work with any team in economics. The quality of work I am doing is more appreciated.” However, the students didn’t see a direct relation between the M.Sc. and their professional career, i.e. salary raise and promotion. Some have been promoted but they attributed that to other factors than solely the M.Sc. degree. It should be noted, though, that the students with M.Sc. degree who entered the Bank of Mozambique, started in a higher professional category. At the individual level, the students felt more confident, and they felt that they gained a better understanding of economic matters.

2. Vietnam

A. Students

114. The students had all applied to the NEU and had undergone test in English language proficiency and economics before they were admitted to the qualifying course. The selection process was quite competitive in that hundreds of applicants were allowed to sit for the initial tests and only a small number of the best students were admitted to the Qualifying Courses. Out of these the 14 most successful were admitted to the first cohort of the master’s program, 24 and 25 students continued to the second and third cohort respectively. The selection of students has been much more rigorous from an academic point view than it was e.g. in Mozambique. The majority of the students were recruited from the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Ministry of Finance, NEU, the Ministry of Industry, and the State Bank of Vietnam.

B. Program

115. *General Quality.* The provision of the master’s program has been according to the curricula and standards of CIEE. Although the Vietnamese students have a high regard for the program, most of them would have preferred an on-campus provision. The task of handling a part-time distance education master’s program, while at the same time managing their professional and social obligations was very hard on many of the students. This sentiment prevails in spite of the documented support of the employers.

116. The tracer study and the interviews reveal also that the students were not impressed by the technical support they have received. They complained in particular about limited access to PCs and that the available software made was out-dated by the time they received it. They thought that the CIEE was too slow in returning the assignments. It was the norm rather than the exception that the students received their comments from the UK based tutors only after they had already sent their next assignment to London.

117. *Administration.* The NEU was designated as the host institution and local administration of the program. The Postgraduate Division has been responsible for organizing most of the local tuition and classroom teaching. As of the third cohort, the NEU also took responsibility for the delivery of the Qualifying Course. That they have performed well is a general impression that is also substantiated by the Vietnamese student survey. The combination of full-time secondments of bilateral academic experts to the program and a rigorous selection process may in part explain the very high degree of program completion by the Vietnamese students.

C. Costs

118. In Vietnam, there has been a distinct drop in the unit cost (costs per student per completed program) over the years. The estimated costs for three cohorts for the Qualifying Course and the M.Sc. Degree program are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Unit Costs in Vietnam (SEK '000)

Cohort	Qualifying Course	M.Sc. Program
1	54	456–500
2	31	290
3	6	265

Source: Final Draft of the Project Document NEU, July 4, 1997

119. The above figures do not take into account the costs of the bilateral junior experts providing instructional assistance in the local instruction. Taking these costs into account, of course, would substantially increase the cost figures. In the short term (two or three years), the inclusion of these costs would probably not show any marginal effect, but in the medium- to long term, their inclusion would show a declining marginal cost effect, as local scholars take over the tutoring functions.

120. One main reason the unit costs for the M.Sc. degree have fallen is that the number of students increased considerably from the first to the next two cohorts. It is also typical that from the moment the NEU took over the responsibility of the Qualifying Course, the cost per student in this part of the program became a fraction of what it was for the earlier cohort.

D. Benefits

121. *Use and Application of Knowledge Gained.* In the majority of cases, the students today serve in positions where their newly acquired knowledge in market and finance economics is needed and therefore relevant for Government's tasks. The majority of the students in the sample (28 of 29) found the program "very useful" or "rather useful" in carrying out their duties at present work and for making changes in their work. This view was also supported by the employers. Responsible persons at the State Bank of Vietnam expressed the opinion that the SOAS graduates effectively made use of their knowledge in their jobs, and that they worked with relevant tasks.

122. The projects has thus achieved its objective that the knowledge acquired through successful completion of the SOAS training should be applied in relevant tasks of Government. Only three students have changed employer from the public sector to the private sector.

123. There is today a lot of economic analysis and economic policy making going on in the ministries. There is general agreement that the analytic capacity and knowledge in finance economics in particular and macroeconomics in general has improved dramatically since 1992 in the government as a whole. The political control exercised today, however, is an obstacle to rapid development of capacity and quality. There are today a large number of middle level people in the key ministries who are quite competent to discuss technical matters regarding the economic and financial management of the country with the IMF.

124. Looking at the file of Government letters and memos sent to the World Bank, the fruit of dramatic learning process can be seen. The issues and the arguments the government brings up are today quite professional. Often an officer in Government will know his limited topic very well but lack the overview how it fits in with other issues and areas. According to several policy makers interviewed, staff who have been trained abroad have a better overview of the area to be analyzed and a more systematic way of analyzing it than staff trained in Vietnam.

125. *Improved Economic Policy.* All donors representatives interviewed seem to agree that the government today carrying out, on a wide scale, analysis and economic policy-making based on the market paradigm. They are also in agreement that this is one important reason why the economic performance of the country has been so successful in recent years. During the period 1991–1996 the country’s annual growth rate was 8% a year, and during 1996–1998 it was 6–7%.

126. We have determined that the expected output level of the project was attained. That is, students have acquired at least the intended level of knowledge and understanding in market economics. We have also determined that economic methods are applied in the work of the ministries and that this seems to have contributed to the country’s good economic performance. Following the inductive reasoning discussed above, we conclude that the Sida-financed project did in fact contribute to achieving the impact of enhanced economic performance.

127. *Institution Building.* The degree of institutionalization of the program at NEU was marginal during the first two cohorts. Most of the teaching and tuition were performed by expatriate experts. However, already in the first cohort, NEU had recruited three of its lecturers and in the second there were two lecturers following the program. Consequently, a significant degree of competence transfer to NEU has undoubtedly taken place.

128. In addition, the administration of the NEU has over the years become more confident in running distance education courses, as the SOAS run DE program gives valuable experience for the NEU to develop its own distance education model. The combined effect of academic staff development, the building of a library, new administrative confidence, and the on-going process of translating the SOAS material into Vietnamese are significant elements of the institutionalization effect of the program.

129. *Personal Benefits.* Very few students in the sample (only 11) reported that they had changed employer as a consequence of having received their master’s degree. Since the official salary system in Vietnam does not make any provision for increments in salaries for people with university degrees, only two interviewed students could report such increases. One had been promoted in public sector, although with small salary increase, and the other had moved to private sector. The ones who were employed by government institutions reported to have a salary between USD 30–50 per month. One of the students of the first cohort reported that he had risen in the hierarchy of the Ministry of Finance, but he is now (since 1998) a director of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. His monthly income remains uncertain. It is common, however, that people have other sources of income in addition to their jobs at the ministries. With the M.Sc. degree, the students increase their opportunities to get other jobs.

130. Other personal benefits indicated by the interviewed students included improved reading ability in English, analytical skills; improved knowledge, and recognition by others. As stated by one student: “The course enhanced my analytical skills and provided good knowledge for my working field.”

3. Namibia

A. Students

131. *Selection.* The selection of students in Namibia has been far less rigorous (in an academic sense) than in Vietnam. For the first cohort, the selection was based on the performance of students in the course Diploma in Economic Principles (DEP). For the second cohort, employees of certain ministries with impact upon the fiscal policies have been recruited to the program provided they had a B.A. in economics or a related field.

132. *Results.* The output of the first cohort was disappointingly low: out of the 26 students who started DEP, only eight were awarded with M.Sc. degree. The performance was not very good in terms of commitment of the people and to some extent of the government. The employers did not release people for studying. Some students had even to take personal leave to sit the exams. As a result, a number of changes were made in the provision of the program for the second cohort. There is presently great optimism regarding the output of this cohort. However, the final results of this cohort will only be made public in December 1999.

B. Program

133. *General Quality.* The quality of the course was good. It is structured in a way that covers all aspects of economics. For example, the interviewed students considered the subjects on banking, finance, and econometrics meaningful input in their work. These subjects helped them understand financing in developing countries as well as methods how to quantitatively analyze the data. The subject on macroeconomics gives also an understanding of how the institutional set up works on the macroeconomic level and even a critical view of how the WB and the IMF works. The students thus found that the course has many applications. However, they found it unfortunate that Part II of the course was limited in terms of choice. The tutors could not expand themselves and the students were constrained because they could not choose what they wanted.

134. *Materials.* In general, the students found the course material well structured and easy to follow. However some articles and books were considered abstract and therefore difficult to read. Some of the students still use the materials as references in their work, specially the software for econometrics.

135. *Tutoring.* The local sessions were held twice a week and when needed on Saturdays as well. They were held in the form of lectures and provided useful services. Sometimes the materials were too abstract and through consultation, the students could get to understand them. The interaction between students and tutors made the course much more meaningful. It helped to contextualize since the tutors could bring in real cases from Namibia and other countries for discussions. In general, the students found that the local tutors were updated and very sharp. They also found the tutorials from SOAS very useful in that they help to structure the materials to study.

136. *Assignments.* The students complained on the overlapping of assignments. Sometimes, one assignment had not been returned by the time they had to submit the next one. Nevertheless, most of time they received very useful comments. The comments helped on the examinations since these usually reflected the subject matters covered on the assignments. The tutors were thought to be very strict in marking.

137. *Dissertation.* The first cohort received the standard master's degree program in finance economics, including the thesis, whereas the second cohort has been through a master's program, where the thesis requirement has been taken out. This decision has caused some frustration among both students and local staff. The students felt that, by dropping the thesis, they were compromising their application, and the quality has automatically been dropped. As one student said:

“Funding is narrowing the choices and not making it as beneficial as it should be. The aim is to develop capacity, but at the same time, they are constraining the research capacity. If I want to continue and do a Ph.D., I have to start from scratch. They could find another alternative if the residential school is so expensive. They could bring some SOAS people here instead”.

138. *Residential School.* For the 1995/96 cohort the three-week residential school was useful for preparing for the thesis. It provided opportunity for the students to have personal contact with the supervisor, as well as good guidance and good exposure. Interaction among the students was also useful.

C. Costs

139. In Namibia there are great uncertainties regarding the expenditure relating to various activities. The following estimates are based on available material, mainly obtained from the Sida office in Windhoek.

140. The cost per graduate is calculated at SEK 512,500 for the first cohort. The second cohort is considerably cheaper, because the DEPS course was considered unnecessary, and the Residential School in London was also dropped, substituting the thesis by a third course in the second part of the master's program.

D. Benefits

141. *Use and Application of Knowledge.* Eighty-five per cent of the students reported that the program was "very useful" in carrying out their job duties. There are several examples in which, in a tangible way, SOAS graduates have applied methods and procedures that could not be used prior to their education. One example is the use econometric methods as a regular tool in their jobs. In general, everyone agrees that the research methodology applied within the Central Bank is much better today than before. One of the Finance Ministry's deputy directors completed the SOAS course, and with his newly acquired knowledge, he transferred to a position of economic policy making and advice. He did not get a higher salary as a result of the new degree, however. There was no incentive structure in the government personnel policy that would yield benefits from learning by the distance education.

142. Economic knowledge in the government is comparatively poor at higher levels, but there are many bright young people in lower echelons. There is in the government a constant stream of additional tasks that need economically trained economics graduated to take care of them. The Finance Ministry's advisory department has not enough staff trained to handle important responsibilities of advising the Minister of Finance. There is a serious need for economics graduates in the government and in the country as a whole. The situation is more serious in the public sector than in the private sector. Because of low salaries, ministries have difficulty in keeping the best and most qualified economists. The type of economists that the government needs and wants could get up to three times higher salary in the private sector. It is not easy for donors to make use of the salary topping up mechanism as there is a very active and powerful Public Service Commission that would object.

143. According to Namibian law, all government employees are obliged to remain in Government service for a specified period of time if they participate in a Government funded education. Sida was aware of these contracts.

144. *Improved Economic Policy.* The tracer study as well as the interviews conducted with students and others have shown that most students actually make good use of their knowledge in their jobs. By virtue of our inductive reasoning we can therefore conclude that this knowledge – since it is found to be relevant for the tasks of Government – also has contributed to enhancement of Government's economic policy and to improved economic performance.

145. In Namibia however, the relation between the programs output and effects on the one hand, and a direct impact on the country's economic performance, on the other hand, is more theoretical. This is because: (a) the program involved only a quite small number of students; (b) most of the students were not holding high positions in the government, and (c) in Namibia there are other programs whereby government officers are trained in economics. It is therefore not practically possible to identify the lines of relation as depicted in the goal hierarchy model defined for this program.

146. *Institution Building.* In *Namibia*, there has been very little institutional effect at the university faculty so far, but there is a fair chance of a lasting impact provided a donor offers continued funding to UNAM. The funding ought to be designed to be phased out over a period of three to four years in step with the five-year plan of the Department of Economics at UNAM.

147. On a short-term basis the sustainability and localization of the program appears to be in jeopardy if further funding is being held back. Likewise, there is at present nobody to fill the role of Prof. Toukhy, should he choose to go back to Egypt. The prognosis for a lasting impact at UNAM at this point must be judged as very uncertain. In the five-year plan of the Faculty, there is a plan to launch a M.Sc. run wholly by UNAM, but the department needs international co-operation and also to belong to a network of highly recognized universities.

148. *Personal Benefits.* In the opinions of the students themselves, the course has “deepened their knowledge in the field of economics”, “helped them to get the present work”, “expanded their minds”, and “given them more confidence in being able to get other jobs”.

149. As regards salary increases, three of the interviewees stated that the course had helped them to get the present job and a better salary. One student who had been promoted did not attribute this directly to the course, but only indirectly through his better performance in work. Another student, who kept the same position but had some added tasks, stated that the course had helped her a lot and she saw herself as a potential candidate to salary raise and higher position.

150. One can conclude that the course has brought some kind of benefit to the students as individuals, be it in terms of general gains or specific work-related advantages. As one student pointed out “The course was a big change in my life. It helped a lot with the research work.”

4. Cambodia

A. Students

151. Recruitment was open to potential candidates from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Trade and Commerce, the National Bank of Cambodia, and the Cambodian Development Council. It was announced by letters to the ministries and announcements in the newspapers and television. Flyers and leaflets were also circulated in the ministries. In addition, Cambodia Development Research Institute (CDRI) talked with the ministries to make sure that they would release the students to attend the program. CDRI agreed to report on students’ progress to the ministries each year in order to get their commitment on paper.

152. A recruitment committee was set up at CDRI to screen the students. The committee included a senior staff member from the Ministry of Education, a representative from Royal University of Phnom Penh, an economist from the Institute for Democracy and several staff from CDRI. Initially, they received 65 applications, including only three women. After the test examinations in English and Mathematics, only 36 were admitted to the Qualifying Course.

B. Program

153. *The Qualifying Year.* The program was delivered according to the standard schedule and input as set out by SOAS. In 1995 the qualifying program was delivered jointly by the CDRI and the Center of International Education in Economics (CIEE), University of London. The program lead to a Certificate in Economic Principles.

154. However, in Cambodia the input of classroom teaching was increased considerably compared to Mozambique and Namibia. This year has been analyzed critically by CDRI in a comprehensive

report (dated 25.08.97). The main point of that report is that the qualifying program ought to be strengthened by a better integration of the language and computer training with the academic content of the courses in economics and calculus. According to the students, this had been a well-organized and very useful experience.

155. *The M.Sc. Courses.* This part of the program was delivered over the period 1996–97 according to the standard SOAS inputs and it was strengthened by local classroom teaching twice a week at sessions of three lessons. In order to run the program as planned Sida recruited tutors from Sweden to be able to offer high quality local tuition. In an evaluation report⁵ CDRI sums up the overall impressions of the program in August 1997 by stating that:

CIEE has done an outstanding job of delivering the program and packaging quality master's level courses for the purposes of distance education. Problems arising from the CDRI's perspective are related not to content quality but to flexibility within the program to accommodate country specific needs.

156. The overall impression of our evaluation is also that the students have been working extremely hard to meet the obligations of the program, and that they are very satisfied with the quality and contents of the program. However, the quote above also suggests that CDRI and CIEE has not seen eye to eye on all aspects of the program. The main issues of discussion have been related to the role of the visiting and expatriate tutors *vis-à-vis* the role of CDRI, and in some cases the possibilities for making changes in the academic program of SOAS. CDRI advocated a shift in focus from courses in Econometrics to more on Development Economics, and it was partly successful in this pursuit.

157. Clearer role definitions at the outset of the program between CDRI and CIEE, on the one hand, and CDRI and Sida, on the other hand, could have resulted in a smoother relationship between the parties involved. It is understandable, however, that SOAS would be reluctant to make substantial changes to the academic content of a distance education program on short notice, given the very careful and resource-demanding preparation necessary to secure quality in such a program. Nor has any solid written documentation been put forward by CDRI that would justify the need for such amendments in the program.

C. Costs

158. CDRI is the only institution that has produced audited reports regarding the total expenditure of the program. Based upon these documents, we have an accurate picture of the expenditure in Cambodia over the period 1995–1998:

Qualifying Course: USD 4861 or SEK 39,000 per student

M.Sc. program: USD 32,500 or SEK 260,000 per student

159. However, the costs of the bilateral junior professional experts are not included in this estimate. If the total cost of these experts is estimated to SEK 1.3 million, the cost per student in the M.Sc. part of the program would have to be increased by another SEK 54,000 per student.

⁵ Jane Williams Grube, 25.08.97

D. Benefits

160. *Use and Application of Knowledge.* The tracer studies and our interviews with the students show that most graduates are using their knowledge in their jobs. However, because of a lack of a rational personnel development policy in the government, many of the graduates are not in positions where they can make use of all their newly acquired knowledge in finance economics. Many of the graduates today have side jobs to supplement their incomes, which diminish their capacity to focus on their main government tasks.

161. In the last few years, there has been a vast improvement in Government's knowledge and analytic capacity in market economics in general and financial- and macroeconomics in particular, but the needs are still huge. ASEAN membership poses big demands on policy analysis and formulation. According to knowledgeable observers, the preparation work in the Cambodian Government regarding the PFP and other documents has become much better. Today Government's participation in the PFP process is much greater.

162. The general state of specialist economics knowledge is low both in the government and in the Ministry of Finance. Very few people have the knowledge or experience to provide advice or to prepare economic policy. Also in the central bank there is a lack of a core of well-trained economists in market economics.

163. *Bonded Contracts.* As a national policy, the government does not demand that *bonded contracts* be signed by the students going abroad for study. Every ministry today has its own policy. Other instruments and incentives are used to persuade students to stay. Bonded contracts may not always be effective since the civil servants often have many jobs. Often they will formally stay in their Government job, but in practice work most of the time in the private sector. Also, it is not easy morally to force a student to stay on when his work place has no personnel development policy and often cannot offer the graduate a relevant job.

164. An important task on Government's agenda for reforming its administration is to establish a personnel development policy and management in order to promote young people who have acquired education, to receive relevant and proper jobs. For future cohort of SOAS students, it might be a good idea to attach conditionality regarding personnel and career planning for the SOAS graduates. It is important, however, *not* to attach conditionality on personnel policy related to utilization, placement, or pay.

165. *Improved Economic Policy.* In line with the inductive reasoning applied in the other country programs, the Mission concludes that the output target of graduating students acquiring knowledge and analytic capacity in financial as well as macroeconomics has indeed been attained. Most of the students are using at least some of the acquired knowledge in their jobs, even though several of them have not been able to advance to posts which better correspond to their graduate degrees. In recent years, the Cambodian government, in spite of the present "off-track" status of its program with the IMF and the World Bank, has produced a vastly improved economic policy and economic management. This has led to the country attaining record growth rates of its economy.

166. On the basis of these points and the methodology described above, the Mission can conclude that the output produced by the Sida-financed M.Sc. program in finance economics has indeed contributed to the country's enhanced economic performance. We note, however, that this contribution could have been even greater if government had had a more rational personnel policy which would have enabled the SOAS graduates to serve in posts more relevant to their enhanced knowledge in finance economics.

167. *Institution Building*. In 1994/95, it was not an option that the faculty of economics would take the responsibility for and manage the SOAS program. By choosing CDRI as the implementing agency for the M.Sc. program, it should have been clear from the start that there could be no institutional effect from this program. At least not in the sense of building up a national institution which could in the future take over the responsibility for the program and run it without the intervention of SOAS.

168. Since most aid programs to Cambodia were of a disaster relief character, it was typical until 1994/95 the objective was the *efficient delivery* of goods or effects or benefits. At the time donors had no time to concern themselves with institution building. Therefore, there was nothing strange about choosing a project and a mode of delivery which was not expected to have any positive institutionalization effect. The objective of institutionalization, however, was prominently written into Sida's decision memorandum.

169. *Personal Benefits*. The students lacked knowledge on international economic issues and had difficulties in understanding economic terms like stock markets due to lack of references in the country (there is still no established stock market law in Cambodia). In this sense, the program has provided them with a good understanding of market economy issues. The majority of the graduates indicated that they have better understanding of financial market, and they perform better at work and have better command of English. Nobody talked about salary raises or increased job opportunities, perhaps because the private job market is practically non-existent in Cambodia. It is emerging and maybe in a near future there will be more job opportunity. These students are already today attractive within the public sector, but this does not necessarily imply increase in the salaries.

IV. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

1. Students

170. The main information regarding of the four country programs can be seen in the Table 1 above.

171. The enrolment and selection of students was performed by two somewhat different approaches. First, selected employees in strategically chosen institutions like the ministries of finance, trade and commerce, and the national banks were invited to apply. This was the most common approach in Mozambique for the first two cohorts, in Namibia for the first cohort, in Cambodia, and in Vietnam. In Vietnam the recruitment of students has also been targeted towards the strengthening of competence in financial economy at the NEU. For later cohorts the target groups have been extended to other groups as well, but the main target group has all the time been ministerial and banking staff.

172. Second, the above approach was combined with a rigid selection of the academically most qualified people through screening tests upon large numbers of applicants. This is typical of the selection process in Cambodia and Vietnam, and this is a contributing factor in explaining the differences in output between the various countries.

2. Program

173. With exception for one cohort in Namibia, the master's program has been in accordance with the curricula and standards of CIEE. The Mission has found only one instance where SOAS has compromised the quality of the distance education program, namely when the thesis was dropped for the second Namibian cohort. Even if the situation in which this decision was made was difficult and by no means created by SOAS, the consequence has been the provision of a second best alternative in Namibia.

174. From a *benefit* perspective, academically as well as socially, all the students and most of the tutors consider the Residential School in London as a very successful part of the program. The stay in London as been very useful both as an introduction to Research Methods and to decide on the topics of the dissertations. Nevertheless, from a *cost* perspective, this has been a very expensive part of the program, and doubts have been raised as to the value of this cost. Some argue that the same could have been achieved at considerably reduced cost in the respective countries.

175. The overall impression from all four countries is that the students and their employers express satisfaction with the program, and they emphasize that the institutions the students work with have great need of their competence. There are, however, in all countries several examples of students who report to not having had much chance of using their new competence. This impression is perhaps more prevailing in Cambodia than in the other countries. One might perhaps have expected that more of the students had received higher posts and reached the managerial level after having completed their master's degree. In Mozambique, however, a large number of the students were already in relatively high positions upon entering the program. There are no automatic provisions for personal wage increments or promotions because of receiving a M.Sc. degree in any of the countries.

A. Tutors

176. The SOAS tutors have been handling the students' assignments well. In general, the students are satisfied with the comments they have received. The local tutors assigned to the program were – to relatively many of the students – somewhat disappointing. To a large extent, they seem to have been regurgitating the material that the students have already received. There are too few discussions in the classrooms, many students have not seen one handout prepared by local tutors themselves, and relatively little has been done to introduce the local economic and financial context into the classrooms.

177. The contact between SOAS and local tutors has been very limited. We have only seen one case of “Train the Trainers” course for local tutors. There has been very little briefing by London as to how SOAS wanted the local classroom teaching to be performed. In addition, the local tutors have not been informed of the assignments of the students. There has been no communication between SOAS and local academic staff regarding student performance. There could have been far better integration of locally and centrally based tuition, and this ought to have been rectified at an early stage. This is a weakness in the DE model applied, as the academic staff at SOAS has admitted.

B. Results

178. The results of the program vary among the countries. In Mozambique the output of M.Sc. is relatively high, 51% of all students who were enrolled in the Masters Degree program have successfully completed their education. In addition, a number of students received diplomas at lower levels. In Namibia, the results of the first cohort were deplorable. However, a number of changes were made in Namibia for the second cohort and there is now a feeling that the students of this cohort will perform considerably better than the first one. The examination results of this cohort, however, were to be published in December 1999.

179. The results of the cohorts in Cambodia and Vietnam are impressive indeed: its completion rates of 96% and 88%, respectively, are remarkable in any master's degree program. Some of the reasons for this success must be attributed to the selection procedures that were applied in these countries. It should also be mentioned that from its modest inception in 1990–91 (the first Mozambican cohort), the SOAS program has developed into a distance education success story with 1,200 students registered in 1999 in 70 different countries. This is also an indication of the quality of the program.

180. As opposed to the case in the four country programs financed by Sida, normally SOAS students all over the world follow the program on an individual basis without the support of local tuition.

C. Curriculum and Textbooks

181. In any educational project the curricula and textbooks used are obviously of central importance to the relevance and success of the program. In this report, there is no systematic analysis of curriculum and textbooks, because the inspection revealed that both the curriculum, (i.e. the composition of courses making up the two year graduate program) and the choice of textbooks are well within the range of variation used by any other high quality graduate school in Europe or the United States.

182. This is not to say that there may not be important (marginal) differences in the choices SOAS has made as compared to other graduate schools. A thorough analysis by the evaluation team, however, would have nothing meaningful to contribute. There are many marginally differing compositions with respect to standard curricula and textbooks among high quality university graduate programs.

183. In the context of this evaluation, it is sufficient to determine that the curriculum appears to be well balanced and to contain all those elements which, according to current economic science, should be taught in a graduate course in financial- and macroeconomics, and that the textbooks selected are among those generally recognized as the best in the field. On both of these counts (textbooks and formal curriculum) the choices made by SOAS are entirely satisfactory.

D. Quality

184. The overall design of the program is based on sound and thoroughly tested approaches to distance education, and the material developed by SOAS must be said to be of high quality. The general quality of the academic program is good. To Sida, it was important not only that relevant knowledge in finance economics be attained by the target group, but also that this knowledge be of a high academic quality

185. It is not clear to the Mission whether Sida expected the quality of graduate degrees by DE in infrastructure- and resource-poor developing nations in Africa and Asia to be as high as that of regular full time CBE graduate studies in developed countries. In the estimation of the evaluation team, the quality of the SOAS DE program, on average, is probably lower than a degree earned after full time CBE. This picture emerges from the very many interviews made on the quality issue. It perhaps should come as no surprise to people knowledgeable in comparative educational techniques. Notwithstanding the quality aspects of textbooks and formal curriculum, virtually everyone interviewed – from Government officers or supervisors of students, to teachers and staff at the universities and research institutions, and the students themselves – expressed the view that both the content and quality of DE education degrees are lower than those of regular CBE degrees program.

186. In comparing the quality of the SOAS DE studies with CBE studies, the interviewees suggested the following differences:

- A full time CBE graduate acquires a more profound as well as wider knowledge in the economic science.
- The student learns the English language in a way far better than with DE studies.
- The graduate, after spending two or three years abroad, will come home with not only superior knowledge of economics and English, but also with a good understanding of Western society and of the “Western paradigm of economics”, in away which the DE student has no possibility to do.

187. This should not be seen as detracting from the largely positive effects and impacts that the training has had. Even if the quality of the M.Sc. degrees earned in DE programs cannot generally be deemed to be as high as in CBE studies, they still have largely attained their expected objectives, namely to enhance the economic policy making in the government and to contribute to the country's improved economic performance.

188. The overall grades for the M.Sc. degree achieved by the students in the four Sida-financed program are on a respectable level, although somewhat lower than grade point averages achieved by students in Europe or Hong Kong or Singapore. The minimum grade for pass in the programs offered by the SOAS M.Sc. degree is 50%, and for distinction 70%. For the Diploma, it is 40%. So far, only students from Hong Kong and Singapore plus one student from Vietnamese have received distinction for the overall M.Sc. degree.

E. Alleged Plagiarism

189. There have been allegations of plagiarism in assignments as well as in thesis work, and even cheating during exams. The Mission spent substantial effort investigating this matter. While visiting

SOAS in London, a considerable amount of time was spent reading and browsing through the theses submitted by the students. Both in London and in the respective countries, the Mission inquired about the procedures used at exams.

190. The Mission has *not* found that any plagiarism or cheating of any significance, or beyond what one would find in any university in any part of the world, has taken place in the Sida-financed SOAS program. It appears that a certain amount of “co-operation” did happen in a few cases. The examination and control procedures applied by London University are quite stringent (compared with, for example, those applied at the University of Stockholm). We do not believe that these cases of “co-operation” were of such a type or volume as to put in question the high standards that characterize the SOAS program in general.

191. There were nine reported cases of plagiarism in Vietnam in 1996. These concerned essays, not dissertations. Six of the essays were marked “0”, but the students were allowed to continue in the program. Five of the students appealed in letters sent to SOAS.

192. It is obvious from the files that not only was SOAS aware of the allegations of cheating and plagiarism, but also that SOAS had followed them up and taken them seriously. Even with this rigorous examination control, it is not possible to rule out plagiarism. Some level of collaboration in writing among fellow students has been acknowledged by the students themselves, and is probably entirely legitimate, at least to a point.

193. As for the allegations concerning cheating at exams, we have not had any information base to be able to analyze further. In any case these allegations have been very limited in extent and cannot put the overall quality of the program in question.

F. Quality of Theses

194. Each thesis is read by three persons: two markers who read and mark the thesis independently of each other, and one examiner who reads all the theses of one and the same residential school and marks all of them. This means that the master’s level theses in London University can be said to be examined more thoroughly than, for example, at the University of Stockholm, where in practice only one person will actually read a thesis, and where there is no residential requirement attached to thesis writing.

195. Part of the examiners’ job is to read and grade the theses of other “regular” or “internal” students at the University. So the examiners’ grading benchmarks will also be influenced by students other than third world students.

196. In summary, the Mission believes that three factors make the quality control exercised by SOAS for theses writing safe. First, three people read each thesis independently. Second, the examiner works also with other student groups and will thus not risk being “blinded” so that he would inadvertently lower the requirements for third world students. Third, there is the residential school, and during the residential period, a close working relation that develops between the student and the tutors.

G. Quality Variation

197. Reading the theses, we found that, just as one would expect at any other university in the world, there was a mix with respect to quality. Some very few were very good, another group were quite good but displayed certain serious mistakes or shortcomings. Most of the theses seemed to be just average or mediocre. Quite a few were of low quality, and a not so small group were quite bad. There were also large differences in the number of pages of theses, with some as short as 15–20 pages counted on single space, others up to 80 pages.

198. This is all as one may expect anywhere. The important point, however, is that we could ascertain that the markers had carefully read and marked all the theses. When, in our opinion, a thesis deserved a mention, either for being good in some respect or for containing serious mistakes or shortcomings, in virtually all cases we could report that the markers had indeed discovered these points, that it had been duly noted on the markers sheet, and that it had also duly influenced the grade given by the marker. Generally, there were very good and constructive criticisms given by markers to the various theses. It is a safe system with three people reading the theses independently. The marking scale, on a scale of 100, applied for grading theses is effectively 30–75, sometimes as low as 20–25, and sometimes up to 80.

H. “Thesis Packs”

199. A weak point in the program’s thesis work, in the Mission’s opinion, is that SOAS presents the students with “thesis packs”. These are ring-binders containing 7–8 prepared and ready-made thesis topics with tips, description of the topic, and some basic statistics in the form of “start-up data”. Some of the students in this way got all of their data needs satisfied. More important is however that the student does not have to develop his own thesis topic. This, in the Mission’s opinion, is not conducive to development of research capability and independent critical thinking of the students. By not having to choose and develop their own theses topics, the students missed out on an important learning element, namely the experience and insight gained from having to analyze a topic and together with the tutor discuss and develop an appropriate thesis subject. One observer remarked that “The course has given the students a good knowledge in financial and macroeconomic science, but it has not to a sufficient degree developed their critical thinking”.

200. The “thesis packs” offered to the students represent additional assistance and coaching which these third world DE students get as compared to other students. At the end of the course, however, the academic requirements for conferring the degrees are the same for everyone.

201. Recently the University of London has contracted an expert whose task it is to introduce a quality assurance program for the external distance education programs. This expert represented a quality assurance agency which issued codes of practice and guidelines. SOAS had some flexibility in and authority to make policy and procedural changes without asking the University, but only regarding some aspects.

I. Cultural Differences

202. Some observers have received the impression that many of the SOAS graduates do not possess any real understanding of economic analysis, and that they are unable to apply independent critical thinking. Some have speculated whether the students might have memorized the course contents so as to be able to pass the exams and the thesis. Others have explained an apparent lack of understanding of the subject matter by the fact that many of them do not really use the knowledge in their jobs.

203. According to several knowledgeable observers, there is in Vietnam and Cambodia a genuine difference in culture between Asia and the West regarding ability and willingness to engage in independent critical analysis and discussion. This is a factor that some people feel could go a long way in explaining a perceived incompetence on the part of some students. According to the argument, in the traditional Asian culture there is nothing which has prepared a person to discuss issues openly or critically, least of all issues concerning the decisions of high government officials. On top of the purely cultural heritage comes, in some countries, the effects of decades of political terror. During the Khmer Rouge regime, one could be thrown in jail or even killed for discussing anything.

204. It is argued by the proponents of this view, that even after a student has passed the exams, written the thesis, and received the degree, he or she will be reluctant or unable to discuss economic issues openly or critically. This reluctance or inability may sometimes be incorrectly interpreted as lack of understanding of the topic.

205. It is of course not easy for an evaluation mission to ascertain how much validity there is in this cultural difference theory. Indeed the Mission has seen several examples in the interviews of students having displayed understanding of the topics on some occasions and on other occasions appearing not to know anything. Even though the argument is speculative and lacks concreteness, the team concludes that it has some merit, and that it could possibly explain at least part of the apparent lack of knowledge of graduated students which has been reported by others and observed by the team itself.

3. Costs

A. General Description

206. A distance education program that contains print, video, and audio material, and a significant number of tutorial sessions, as well as a residential school, is likely to be very expensive, both during the development and the operational phase. When the numbers of students is relatively small, the cost-efficiency of the program can suffer considerably.

207. In an economic sense, the DE model of SOAS runs against much hard-earned DE experience by other institutions:

- There were too few students in either of the countries to warrant separate administrative units in SOAS for each country. One small unit covering all four countries should have been sufficient;
- A total of less than 237 students have followed the M.Sc. program and other related programs supported by Sida. This number is in itself too small to reach cost-efficiency in DE program at master's level;
- There were many costly supplementary materials or "add-ons" (audio cassettes and video cassettes), the cost of which was spread over too few students;
- The SOAS model introduced a substantial element of tuition and classroom teaching – a cost-factor that DE teaching is normally supposed to avoid in order to achieve cost-efficiency;
- The residential school in London for the M.Sc. students is another factor that adversely influences the cost-efficiency of the program, each three-week school representing a total cost of about SEK 1.0 million.

208. The SOAS DE programs have included a lot of tutoring, and they are therefore really a mix between classical DE and conventional teaching. CIEE staff admit that they were aware that the DE programs were very expensive, especially for Mozambique and Namibia. Our cost calculations indicate that the program has been very expensive also in Vietnam and Cambodia.

209. A striking feature of all the SOAS budgets is that the administrative and academic costs of the central headquarters in London are high for all four countries. This is contrary to what could have been expected of a distance education operation. Upon analysis, the entry in the budgets referred to as "Fees" is around 50% of the whole budget for all cohorts and in all countries. This means that there has been no large scale benefits by having chosen the DE mode for additional countries. The administrative costs of the CIEE have been kept at the same level as for the first cohort in Mozambique for all cohorts in all four countries. The explanation for this is found in the way CIEE has organized the DE operations in the four different countries. Not only have separate administrative

units been set up for each country, but each unit has also been costed with a considerable (50%) administrative overhead.

210. Contrary to the budgets of SOAS, the Mission would have expected to see the administrative costs drop substantially over the years and as more countries are included in the program. While each student in the Sida-financed program has cost Sida upwards of SEK 300,000, the fee, according to CIEE's catalogue, for individually recruited students to the program is only about SEK 80,000 for the same degree. In 1991 CIEE had no DE program at all, but by 1999 it was a well known and established DE institution with more than 1200 students all over the world. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that this expansion of volume at SOAS, and in particular at CIEE, led to any reduction in the costs of the Sida sponsored programs.

211. In the Mission's opinion, as new cohorts were added to the program, Sida should have been able to renegotiate the financial arrangement with SOAS in order to improve the cost-efficiency of the program.

B. Economic Analysis

212. To assess the economic profitability of pursuing graduate training in finance economics by way of distance education as compared to full time study abroad, the main elements of our economic analysis are discussed below.

213. Financial Expenditures. This is the cost for the student to pay for tuition, books, living expenses, housing, plane tickets, etc. As is shown elsewhere in this report, it has been difficult to calculate the actual cost of the program, partly due to inconsistencies in cost reporting, and partly because of difficulty in defining the share of total project cost should be held against the objective of producing master's degree graduates as compared to the objective of building up the institution.

214. As regards the cost of pursuing full-time graduate studies abroad in general, there is of course rather high variation, depending on country (the cost of the travel), type of university (private or state, etc) and other factors.

215. We thus have to make a strong reservation with respect to the true level of those costs. Our calculations over project expenditure seem to suggest, however, that the average financial cost per student of the Sida-financed SOAS DE program tends to be just as high as various estimates we have of the average cost of regular full-time CBE graduate studies abroad. The mean unit costs for the program are shown in Table 5. In examining Table 5, it should be borne in mind that the different degrees and diplomas have different unit costs.

216. *Opportunity Cost.* This is the economic cost incurred by the government (or the nation's economy) from doing without the officers who are studying instead of functioning in their jobs. Obviously this cost is much higher for the CBE students than for DE students who remain on the job, although there is also some opportunity cost for DE students, since they must attend classes and exams and spend one month in London.

Table 5: Unit Costs for the M.Sc. Program in Four Countries

Country	Year	Number Admitted	Graduated	Total Cost (SEK '000)	Unit Cost Admitted	(SEK '000) per M.Sc. Grad.
Mozambique	1991–98	112	61	33,648	300	552 (a)
Vietnam	1993–99	64	56	22,230	347	397
Namibia	1995–99	37 (b)	7 (c)	10,123 (d)	274	460
Cambodia	1995–97	24	23	7,826	326	340
Total		237	147	73,827	312	502

Notes:

(a) This cost includes also disbursements by Sida from 1989 to 1991.

(b) This number is excluding DEP.

(c) At the time of the study, 15 students were awaiting final exam results, so the number of M.Sc. graduates is likely to change since these 15 students have been performing well. The estimated unit cost per graduate assumes that all 15 will graduate.

(d) In Namibia the costs of the program has been split about 50-50 with the Ford Foundation.

217. The opportunity cost can be expected to vary in proportion to the seniority of the person who is absent for studies. Thus the opportunity cost to the government of a minister not being able to perform his strategic functions while he is away studying must be much higher than for junior officials. If Government, because of the absence of crucial officer, is unable to make important decisions or if it makes bad decisions, then the opportunity cost would be many times higher than if amore junior person is absent. From the perspective of this program, the opportunity cost in such a case must be treated as “infinite”. Thus the only feasible way to organize the educational program in Mozambique, where the governor of the central bank and other key officials were among the students, was through a DE approach, regardless of the cost of such a program.

218. *Risk*. Finally, there is on the cost side a *risk* associated with campus based overseas studies, namely “brain drain”, the risk that the student, having obtained a quality “Western” education, will not return home⁶. This risk can be expected to be higher in the case of full time studies abroad than in the case of distance education with a short period abroad.

219. The risk of brain drain must be considered in an economic analysis. Of course, risk is not the same as cost. Risk needs to be converted to “expectation”, which is a function of the *probability of brain drain* times the *cost of brain drain if it occurs*. The relevant issue, of course, is not how much brain drain *did occur*, since the CBE approach was not used, but rather how much there *would have been if the CBE approach had been used*. This study provides no evidence at all about the amount of brain drain that generally occurs with CBE at the graduate level, but it is likely to be non-trivial, and the cost can be quite high. In the case of permanent residence abroad, the cost to government is represented by the *present discounted value of lifetime benefits* (earnings in a market economy, otherwise value of service to government) that the individual *would* have delivered *if* he/she had returned to the home country.

220. The “brain drain” risk associated with the CBE approach is probably *inversely* related to seniority. That is, younger students are probably more likely to seek employment abroad and fail to return to the home country than more senior persons, who have more at stake in terms of income, position, family, and other commitments.

⁶ On the issue of “brain drain”, see Marie Yeo. “Australian Development Scholarships: A Tracer Study of Australian Development Scholarship Graduates Returned from Australia”. Phnom Penh: AusAID. May 28, 1999. The Mission did not search specifically for studies of “brain drain”, but this study was found concerning Cambodian students awarded Australian scholarships for campus based studies in Australia. The study found that since 1994, 88 percent of awardees ADS Scheme had returned to Cambodia, and 12 percent had “overstayed”. This does not necessarily imply “brain drain” on such a scale, but it does suggest that the issue is not trivial.

221. *Summary of Costs.* In summary, three conclusions emerge about the cost of graduate level education with the DE approach as compared to CBE approach. First, the financial cost is approximately the same for both approaches. Second, the *opportunity cost* of being absent from the work place would vary substantially among the four countries. The opportunity cost would usually be determined largely by level of position in government held by the students. The higher the position in government held by the students, the higher the opportunity cost to government of them being absent from work. The opportunity cost could be so high as to outweigh *any relative benefit that might be associated with CBE as compared to DE*. Third, the “brain drain” risk associated with the CBE approach is probably *inversely* related to seniority. That is, probably younger students would be more likely to seek employment abroad and fail to return to the home country than more senior persons, who have more at stake in terms of income, position, family, and other commitments.

222. In Mozambique, with its high level officials as students, distance education was clearly the only feasible approach. From the dramatic economic situation in the country and the prospect that high level officials would be among the students, the DE model was the relevant choice, almost regardless of cost. The opportunity cost of an sending a ministers abroad for full time studies would be “infinitely” high.

223. In Vietnam, Namibia, and Cambodia, it seems that the seniority of the students is much lower; possibly the level of seniority in Vietnam was the lowest level of the three. Typically, there are a handful of director level persons in each of the countries. In Namibia, there was also a permanent secretary. For we would thus conclude that the government’s opportunity cost of sending these students abroad was probably relatively lower than in Mozambique, for they could without much loss have been replaced by others. Since the total costs would be lower, the decisive element in deciding between CBE and DE approaches would be the economic benefits accruing from the graduates’ services.

4. Benefits

A. Benefits of DE and CBE Compared

224. The main benefit for the government is the enhanced economic growth and development which result when master level graduates from high quality foreign universities start making better economic policy decisions. Neither the DE approach nor the CBE approach is a self-evident choice *in the absence of contextual factors*. The Mission finds the governments’ benefits from graduates returning from full time studies abroad have probably been higher *in some ways* than those from DE students. The assumed benefits of the CBE approach over the DE approach have been described by many people in all four countries.

225. First, the average CBE graduate students, having spent two years abroad, probably come home with better and deeper knowledge in economics, even if formally the same degree is received with the same quality as that of SOAS DE degree. This is because of the more “academically rich” environment on campus compared with a ministry. However, although the campus is more “academically rich”, it would be wrong to ignore the learning that occurs from the application of theoretical knowledge in a real-world environment. The CBE approach might yield better academic economists, but the DE approach might yield better economic policy makers.

226. Second, the CBE students’ language knowledge will probably be substantially better than that of the DE students. The English language knowledge of some of the DE students was very poor indeed.

227. Third, CBE students will have acquired a better knowledge and understanding of the Western culture and the Western market paradigm than their DE colleagues. It is precisely this knowledge of the Western paradigm which, coupled with the technical knowledge of the market economic science, is so valuable and so much sought after by transition governments. This is knowledge that is learned best abroad.

228. It is important to note that Government's benefit from M.Sc. graduates will vary, depending not only on the formal level of specialist knowledge and understanding achieved but also on the person and the position. On one extreme, if a government minister or other high official acquires through a DE approach new economics knowledge and understanding, the benefits could be quite enormous. On the other extreme, if a junior official returns to his old job with a newly acquired masters degree in finance economics following a CBE approach, the benefit could also be high, especially in the long run.

229. One problem to consider is the alleged difficulty that returning graduates from abroad have in adapting to the conditions in Government administration, where they sometimes cannot function as effective change agents for a considerable time.

B. Use and Application of Knowledge

230. All the sources of information available to the Mission – tracer studies, interviews with students and their employers, as well as interviews with others in- and outside the governments – confirmed that the majority of students in all four countries were indeed making use of their M.Sc. knowledge in their work, and that these tasks were relevant to Government's economic analysis work and its formulation of economic policy. Most of the SOAS students were still in the government. Only a few had changed employer from the public sector to the private sector, but many had received better jobs.

231. One SOAS graduate interviewed (a director at a ministry of finance), testified that "For me and my colleagues, the course was very important. The course gave us many tools to analyze the economy, and to understand how financial issues can help the country's development." In many cases, the acquired M.Sc. degree has also resulted in their taking on relevant new tasks. In all of the countries, a vast majority of the students reported in the tracer study questionnaires that the program had been "very useful" for carrying out their job duties. They often cited examples in which in a tangible way they had applied methods and procedures they were not able to use prior to their education. One example is the use econometric methods as a regular tool in their jobs.

232. We can thus conclude that the donor's objective at the effects level, namely that the knowledge acquired in the M.Sc. education could be put to good use in the government's economic analysis work and economic policy formulation, has been attained in all of the four country programs. As we shall argue below, however, this effect has not always been achieved in the most cost-effective way possible.

233. We have found that a large majority of the SOAS graduates today serve in positions where their newly acquired knowledge in market and finance economics is needed and therefore relevant for the government's tasks. This coincides with the overall picture we have received of the government's work, namely that the "economics" ministries (e.g. finance, planning, economy), as well as the central banks, generally make use of economic analysis and methodology based on market economics, including finance economics.

234. In all four countries – albeit in varying degrees – there is general agreement among observers that the Government's analytic capacity and knowledge in finance economics in particular and

macroeconomics in general has improved dramatically. In one country, the Mission could note how Government letters and memos sent to the World Bank had improved in quality in recent years. Although the increase in economic knowledge has been dramatic, the absolute level still remains low by European standards. All the ministries in all the countries experience large gaps of knowledge and analytic capability. To fill these gaps they will need many more economics graduates. Because of low government pay scales, however, governments are facing constant problems competing with private industry for the limited stock of high quality graduated economists. This problem will probably worsen with the current growth of the private sector.

235. Although most of the SOAS graduates are using their knowledge in their work, because of a lack of a rational personnel development policy in government, many graduates are not in positions to make *optimal* use of their knowledge in finance economics. Many graduates today need side jobs to supplement their incomes, which diminishes their capacity to focus on their main government tasks. With a more rational personnel development policy, it should be possible to promote those officers who have acquired a master level degree to jobs and tasks which better correspond to their economic expertise.

C. Improved Economic Policy

236. The Mission believes that the program's objective of contributing to enhanced economic policy making and better economic performance has been achieved. First, at the output level we have found that the graduated students have acquired an understanding of macroeconomics and finance economics. Second, interviews and direct observations have convinced us that most of the students, including a dozen or so persons in high positions, are applying their knowledge in carrying out relevant tasks in their jobs, although several of them are not in jobs which optimally correspond to their graduate level knowledge in finance economics. Third, the governments today are carrying out analysis and economic policy-making based on the market paradigm, and this is an important reason why the economic performance of these countries has significantly improved. Even if we can never *prove* that the SOAS knowledge has verifiably contributed to the improvement, we believe it a safe assumption. To assume otherwise would seem unreasonable.

237. Perhaps in Namibia and Vietnam, the relation between the program's output and effects, on the one hand, and a direct impact on the country's economic performance, on the other hand, is more theoretical. The reasons for this are: (a) The programs involved a small number of students, compared to the size of the total number of economists working for government; (b) Most of the students are not holding high positions in the government; and finally (c) There are other programs for training government officers in economics. For these reasons, it is not possible in practice to actually identify the lines of relation as depicted in the goal hierarchy model defined for this program. Nevertheless, the logic of our inductive reasoning should remain unperturbed.

D. Institution Building

238. The program's impact on institution building has been mixed but generally weak. In Mozambique, we find it clearly established that little or no impact has been achieved with respect to institution building at the national university. There has been no real cooperation of the SOAS program with the economics faculty. Nor was there any real host institution for the SOAS program. The economics faculty has been in great disorder all through the project period. It is difficult to say if Sida would have had a realistic chance of achieving any important or substantial institutional effect of their program had they tried. There was really no basis for creating a project which contributed to institutionalization, since there was nothing in the faculty of economics to build on.

239. If the main objective of the program was to transmit knowledge in economics to the government, which was urgently needed, it would not have been practically possible to build up a university institution at the same time. There were no preconditions for such an institution being built up in a matter of a few years. The two objectives were incompatible, and the objective of institution building within the framework should probably never have been included in the project purpose.

240. In Vietnam, the degree of institutionalization of the program at the National Economics University (NEU) was marginal during the first two cohorts. Most of the teaching and tuition were performed by expatriate experts. However, already during the first cohort, NEU had recruited three of its lecturers, and during the second, there were two lecturers following the program. As a result, significant competence transfer to NEU has undoubtedly taken place. In addition, the administration of the NEU has over the years become more confident in running distance education courses, as the SOAS program gave valuable experience for the NEU to develop its own distance education model. The combined effect of academic staff development, the building of a library, new administrative confidence, and the on-going process of translating the SOAS material into Vietnamese are significant elements of the institutionalization effect of the program.

241. In Namibia, there has been very little institutional effect at the university faculty so far, but there is a fair chance of a lasting impact, provided some donor offers continued funding to UNAM. The funding ought to be designed to be phased out over a period of three to four years in step with the five-year plan of the Department of Economics at UNAM.

242. In the short run, the sustainability and localization of the program appears to be in jeopardy if further funding is held back. Likewise, there is at present nobody to fill the role of Prof. Toukhy, should he choose to go back to Egypt. The prognosis for a lasting impact at UNAM at this point is thus uncertain.

243. In the five-year plan of the Faculty, there is a plan to launch an M.Sc. offered wholly by UNAM, but the department needs international co-operation; it needs also belong to a network of highly recognized universities.

244. In Cambodia at the start of the program in 1994/95, for the faculty of economics to take responsibility for management of the SOAS program was not an option. By choosing CDRI as the implementing agency for the M.Sc. program, it should have been clear from the start that there could be no institutional effect from this program. At least not in the sense of building up a national institution which could in the future take over the responsibility for the program and operate it without the intervention of SOAS.

245. Since most aid programs to Cambodia were of a disaster relief character, it was typical up until 1994/95 to have as an objective the *efficient delivery* of goods or effects and benefits. At that stage, donors had no time to concern themselves with institution building. There was nothing strange, therefore, about choosing a project and a delivery mode that was not expected to promote institutional development. Nevertheless, the objective of institutionalization was prominently written into Sida's decision memorandum.

E. Personal Benefits to Students

246. The students agree that the academic content of the program is relevant, makes them more proficient at work, increases their chances of promotion, introduces them to new ways of analyzing problems, and contributes to change in their working environment. It is difficult to ask for more impact of an educational program on a personal level. Interestingly, many students who did not complete their degrees also agree to many of these observations.

247. In all four countries, the students reported that the M.Sc. program had been beneficial to them in terms of better understanding of the subject matter, better performance and more efficient way of working, increased confidence, better job opportunities and consequently better earnings. In Cambodia and Vietnam, the students added that they acquired better command of English language.

248. As regards the usefulness of the program, the tracer study undertaken by the Mission found that in all four countries, the great majority of students had been able to apply the knowledge in their work. They had also been able to implement changes in their way of working⁷. In Cambodia, the National Bank and the Ministry of Economy and Finance are making effective use of their graduates by letting them teach their colleagues on issues related to economics at their training centers. On the other hand, a number of interviewed students in Cambodia expressed frustration and felt that they could not use their knowledge due to lack of opportunity. They complained that they were being under-utilized or even not used at all within the ministry because of bad management. In Cambodia, those without the right “connections” are said to be at a strong disadvantage in terms of promotions⁸.

249. In terms of career development, the study found that in all countries, there had been some mobility of the graduates from one employer to another, mainly within the public sector. Some 36% of the total sample (98 students) had changed employer during or after the M.Sc. program. The private sector is still in its emerging phase in these countries and does not yet provide the kind of security that the public sector does. As a result, the flow of graduates from public to private sector has been insignificant. Nevertheless, 59% of the students in the total sample reported that they had changed positions and had been given additional responsibilities at their work after their studies. In Mozambique and Namibia, changes in position are not attributed directly to the M.Sc. degree, but indirectly. In either case, the M.Sc. program had impacted on the career development of the students, not least because these students are more attractive to the job market and have increased their chances to engage in other income generating activities outside the government.

5. Cost-Effectiveness: A Comparison of DE and CBE Approaches

250. *Fixed Cost Package.* Sida negotiated a *fixed* cost package with SOAS, which does not vary with the number of students actually enrolling, so that cost per student falls dramatically with the total volume of students. Therefore it makes sense to allow everyone participate in it – whether high level or junior students.

251. *Sunk Development Cost.* It should be noted that in computing the actual cost of the DE program, we have not included the investment cost of MSEK 12, which Sida paid to the Open University in order to develop the methodology into the respective country programs. If we had done that the cost-effectiveness of the DE method would have lower. We are then also assuming that there would be no investment cost at all needed to “develop” a CBE model education in finance economics. For that presumably already existed.

⁷ The rate of positive responses on this regard was extremely high in Vietnam (28 of 29). We should have some reservations regarding such results.

⁸ As shown by Marie Yeo in the conclusions of *The Tracer Study of Australian Development Scholarship Graduates Returned from Australia*. AusAID Phnom Penh, 1999. “Yet the ability of a ministry to use its graduates effectively is dependent on many factors. Some factors relate to the ministry’s capacity and willingness to place graduates in suitable jobs as well as having suitable jobs to place graduates in. ... Other factors involve the qualifications and experience of graduate as well as his/her general work attitude. In reality, there is little that can be done in the area of placement as it is an intra-ministry issue.”

252. *Cost of institutional development.* When calculating the cost of the program per student enrolled or graduated, the question arises as to whether or not all costs of the project should be counted as costs for the transfer of knowledge, or whether some of the costs belong to the objective of institutional development.

253. The Mission has taken the following stance in this regard: In countries where it was quite obvious from the start that there would be no institutional effect coming out of the project – whether or not the institutionalization objective was included in the project objectives – all costs must be attributed to the objective of transferring knowledge. In the cases where there was a “legitimate” or realistic chance of attaining an institutional objective, some of the cost should of course be attributed to that objective and not to that of transferring knowledge, that is producing M.Sc. graduates.

254. If it subsequently turns out that the institutionalization objectives have not been achieved (perhaps because it was never a real possibility), the combination of aims (M.Sc. degrees and institutional development) has made accountability difficult. For it is difficult to distinguish the shares of common cost items attributable to the objective of achieving institutionalization from those attributed to the main objective of producing graduates in finance economics.

6. Performance of SOAS

255. SOAS has been the sole provider of academic input, the distributor of the distance education program, and the degree awarding institution. There has at no point been raised any doubt as to the quality of the M.Sc. program in finance economics. The material that has been developed by SOAS as well as the tuition provided through the assignments has also been of a good quality.

256. There has been some criticism, however. The students have been frustrated by the too long turn-around time of the assignments. The first assignment of a module was often not returned by the time the second was to be sent to London.

257. The tutors’ comments to the assignments were generally described as “sound, informative, helpful, of high quality,” although sometimes the students did not quite understand the praise of their tutors when they were informed of scores on the assignments. The local tutors generally had very little information regarding the performance of their students as manifested by their assignments. The quality of the program might perhaps have been even better if there had been some provision for systematic communication between the UK based tutors and the local tutors in each country

258. The residential school in London was extremely popular with the students. They have enjoyed London and the social activities as well as the impressive learning facilities and resources of SOAS. The three weeks period in London was generally used for teaching research methods and identifying their topics for the dissertations. All local administrators admit, however, that this was an extremely costly part of the program. The Cambodian organizer even raised doubt as to the necessity of the London visit.

259. The examinations and evaluations of the dissertations have been carried out by the same rigorous standards as every other SOAS student faces.

7. Sida's Role and Performance

A. Tendering Procedures

260. In none of the country programs has SOAS had to compete for the contract whether by a formal tendering procedure or otherwise. With today's standards regarding procurement of goods as well as services, this must be seen as remarkable. During the 5 to 10 years since the program began, market conditions and Sida's procurement procedures have evolved.

261. Seen against conditions prevailing then, it was not strange that the services of the Open University and subsequently SOAS to implement the program for all four countries were supplied through direct procurement. The Open University and subsequently SOAS had been found after proper investigation and discussions in Sida to be the most competent – at that time perhaps the only possible – institution to implement this project, and was therefore offered a contract.

262. Once the Mozambique program was developed and under way, there was a further problem. Sida had invested heavily in a program designed for Mozambique, and there was no interest in throwing away this investment judged so successful.

263. According to Sida, before deciding on each of the four country programs for which SOAS was subsequently contracted as implementing agency, Sida always made informal investigations of other institutions that could conceivably take on responsibility of delivering Master of Science degrees in finance economics by way of distance education. In the case of Namibia for instance, Sida's responsible program officer in 1994 investigated the three universities in RSA that offered DE programs and found that they were not up to standards. In 1994 the situation in South Africa was still somewhat turbulent, and the curricula at the universities had not been developed at all for at least 10 years.

264. It may be noted here that in the MBA training financed by Sida at the National Economics University, NEU in Vietnam, a tendering procedure was applied. In it a Hong Kong based university won the tender over Stockholm School of Economics.

B. Investment on Development of Distance Education Methodology

265. Apart from being offered the contracts to implement the four country programs, SOAS was also the recipient of a 12 MSEK investment made by Sida in order to develop the product that Sida felt it needed in order to carry out Master of Science training in Mozambique based on the distance education model.⁹ The investment cost of 12 MSEK was paid out over 2–3 years. After a decision in 1991 on allocations from Sida's budget for methodology development (FOM), 5 MSEK of this investment cost was transferred back from the Mozambique country frame to the FOM budget.

266. Against today's standards, it would probably be seen as more appropriate if Sida had invited a number of "qualified institutions" to tender for the program, leaving up to each one to include the size and the nature of the development investment which they thought necessary. In that way it would have been left up to "the market" to test the actual need for this development and the cost. The retrospective view at Sida today is that "there were no qualified institutions" offering the desired degrees using a DE approach.

⁹ This development work paid for by Sida was actually carried out within The Open University in London by Professor Laurence Harris. When Prof. Harris left The Open University to take up an appointment in SOAS, the work was brought along according to an agreement between the two universities and Sida.

267. Some people have remarked that MSEK 12 is a lot of money to develop a course methodology of this kind. The Mission, however, has not found the cost to have been excessive. The courses and materials were of good quality.

C. Use of Non-Swedish Institution

268. Neither the development investment nor the implementation contracts were given to a Swedish institution. Before contracting the Open University, Sida contacted several Swedish universities to inquire about their interest in participating in a program of this kind. The unequivocal answer received was that they were not. The universities approached generally claimed that they did not at the time possess the relevant experience of this type of distance education. In one case, they cited problems with language competence – in Portuguese. Not even the mentioning of a potential large investment to develop the course was sufficient to attract their active interest in this project.

D. Sida's Role Changed from Active to Passive

269. After playing an active role in the initial phases of the DE project in four countries, Sida became more passive in subsequent years. This was pointed out by both representatives of SOAS and the local administrations. The quarterly reports by CIEE to SIDA have never received any feedback from SIDA. Possible adjustments in the program could have been made *en route* if a dialogue between the donor and the university responsible for the program had been established. For example, a comprehensive analysis of the costs of the program by distance education experts at an early stage could probably have considerably reduced the cost and increased the cost-effectiveness of the program. There appears to have been no gains at all by running the program concurrently in four different countries. The program could have been run in several alternative ways. A more active monitoring of the program would also have prevented the dropping of the thesis for the second Namibian cohort.

270. It is the opinion of the Mission that the project would have had much to gain by a more active and professional role of SIDA when negotiating the contracts with SOAS. Established routines for an on-going dialogue with the provider and the local partners in the four countries would also have been highly regarded by the project partners. A more comprehensive and penetrable system for recording costs would also have had a positive impact upon the program.

E. Cost Reporting

271. The Mission has gone through all project files available both in the Sida head-quarters in Stockholm and in each of the four local Sida offices at the respective Swedish embassies. Cost reporting was lacking. Only in Mozambique did there seem to be a complete record of salary costs related to the M.Sc. program, but without much reference to the particular activities involved. The Namibian cost records do not permit identification of different activities of the program. In Cambodia and Vietnam, the local SIDA offices are unable to reproduce complete records of the costs of the program. To identify the costs of different activities is impossible. There are costs incurred by the programs in the different countries that do not appear in the accounts available in the local Sida offices. The cost of the bilateral academic experts, as was mentioned above, had not been recorded at all in any of the accounts held by the respective local SIDA offices.

272. In the documents to which we have had there are a number of different budgets, the exact status of which has been difficult to determine. Whether or not the document is the final budget or a draft budget or a budget proposal that has been approved or not, is not always clear. Nor is it clear if the budgets referred to in the SOAS reports cover only the teaching of the Master's Program or also some or all of the activities related to the Qualifying Course.

273. In Mozambique, the total expenditures of program activities as recorded by the Sida office appear to be correct. However, in Cambodia, and Vietnam, the Sida office is only able to report part of the total expenditure as of 1994/95, whereas the program started in 1992. In Windhoek, the final disbursement to SOAS was – understandably – not yet registered by the time the evaluation team was going through the disbursement records. The Sida office in Hanoi was able to produce records of expenditure, but the sums did not tally with the budgets of SOAS. No audit of any kind has apparently been undertaken of program expenditure for any of the three cohorts that have received their master's education, neither by SIDA in Hanoi, nor by the local partners, nor by SOAS in London. The fact that the budgets, fund allocations, and fund disbursements are given in at least three different currencies over a period covering seven to eight years with considerable variations in the rates of exchange, does not make analysis any easier. This is particularly true since it was unusual to find the actual rate of exchange by which budgets, fund allocations, and disbursements should be compared.

F. Division of Competence between DESA and UND

274. Since this is an educational project managed by the Department for Public Administration Support (DESA), there is reason to question the division of competence between the respective divisions in managing and running and taking professional responsibility for the program. The Mission, however, has come across only one instance in which a lack of clearly defined roles have actually lead to a questionable decision being taken by Sida, namely in Namibia, when the thesis requirement was dropped from the program for purely administrative reasons. Potentially, however, it could pose a problem for all the countries to the extent that Sida may have failed to take the optimal decisions from an educational, professional point of view because the program was under the managerial responsibility of the Department for Public Administration Support.

G. Decentralization

275. For Namibia, responsibility of managing as well as monitoring the program has been transferred entirely from DESA to the Embassy, and the entire Sida file of documents is located exclusively in the embassy in Windhoek. This was not the result of a specific decision by Sida of the fact that the program is paid for out of the Embassy's own fund for consultancies. Apparently, the decision to decentralize was taken without safeguarding a kind of alarm system whereby the professional department DESA's expertise is called for whenever needed, for example when new decisions are to be made or a contract to be renegotiated or prolonged. This circumstance would seem to be able to explain the "accident" whereby, for purely administrative and technical reasons, the thesis requirement in the Namibia program was dropped from the program. In the Sida department responsible for the M.Sc. program, DESA, there is today no one with an overall responsibility for all the four country programs.

H. Sweden's Six Overall Development Goals

276. *Environment.* There is no direct bearing of this project on the question of environment. However, indirectly, one may argue that the program has an important effect on environmental aspects. It has often been said that an important reason why the centrally planned economies have not addressed the important pollution problems in their industries is that they lacked the market price system which could inform them of the actual costs to the economy of pollution. It may therefore be argued that the Sida-financed project in finance economics, by transferring higher level analytical knowledge, *inter alia* about price theory and concepts of externalities, improves the country's chance of addressing the pollution problems by increasing the transparency of the actual cost to the economy of pollution created by industry.

277. *Equality and Poverty Eradication.* A similar line of reasoning applies to equality and poverty eradication. It is assumed that by supporting the transfer of knowledge and understanding of economics, the program will result in improved economic policy making and improved conditions for economic growth and development. One aspect of this growth and development can be expected to poverty alleviation and – in the longer term – increasing equality.

278. *Democratization.* As for the Swedish overall development objective of supporting democratization in society, it may be argued that there is indeed such a relationship with the present project. Increasing the knowledge in economics of large groups of people in the ministries will, in the long run, work towards more decentralized decision making. By virtue of the market economics principle, with economic decisions being based on the preferences and economic behavior of thousands of consumers, this can also be said to increase democracy, at least in relation to the previous model where also all economic decisions were taken by the communist party.

279. *Independence.* By supporting the transfer of knowledge and understanding of economics, the program can be expected to result in improved economic policy making and improved conditions for economic growth and development. Such growth and development are necessary conditions for independence and self-determination. The program can thus be said to support the development goal of independence.

280. *Gender.* In Mozambique, women were encouraged to participate in the program, but out of the 112 participants, only 20 were women. According to the CIEE director “There were extremely good and competent women in their studies in the first cohort. Women participants were reliable and very much devoted to their duties as students, and the number of dropouts were very low. The rate of success among women was higher in the first cohort.”

281. In Vietnam, gender equality was not a demand of the government but of Sida. Out of 64 participants, 31 were women. Several women students planned giving birth during the course in order to take advantage of the six months maternity leave during the study period. In spite of their pregnancy, however, they proceeded with their studies and completed all assignments and exams. The results for women students were comparable to those of their male colleagues and sometimes even better.

282. In Namibia, although women were encouraged to participate in the program, few applied, and those who engaged in the program dropped out after a short time. Out of the 43 participants, 14 were women. This may be explained by the fact that these women had other responsibilities besides work and studies and did not have support from their family.

283. There was only one woman among the students in Cambodia. Among the 65 applications, only three were women. This is because there are very few women who graduate from the university, work in the ministries, and do not have other responsibilities to prevent them from attending the program.

284. Altogether, in all four countries, the questionnaire samples included 31 women, which represented 32% of the total sample. They ranged in age from 25 to 45. Of the 31 women in the sample, 24 were working in the same organization as they did at the time of the course, and 7 had changed employer. However, 13 women indicated that they were given new positions or additional responsibility at their work. This rate was higher in Namibia (71%) and lower in Vietnam (27%). These women were all working in the public sector.

285. Seventeen out of 31 (55%) women in the sample successfully completed the M.Sc. degree. The rate of success among women in the sample was very high in Vietnam (93%), whereas in

Mozambique and Namibia the rate was extremely low. Only 1 woman in the sample in each of these countries graduated from the M.Sc. program. In the case of Mozambique, the sample result of one graduated woman (out of 8 in the program) seem not to be representative of the whole program population, in which 45% of women graduated with M.Sc. degree. As mentioned in Chapter II, Section 3.A (The Sample), the methodology chapter, the sampling process for Mozambique was biased. In the case of Namibia, it should be noted that 4 of the 7 women in the sample belonged to the 1998 cohort and were waiting for the final exam results by the time of this evaluation. All the female students in the sample found that they were able to use their knowledge in their current work. In general, the program has been favorable to them, in that they gained more confidence and performed better at their work.

I. Rationale for Extending the DE Program

286. Our analysis of the respective country programs have shown that only in the case of Mozambique is it obvious that the DE methodology was not only relevant, but probably also the only method feasible given the country's situation. In Mozambique in the end of the 1980s, there was a very direct, even dramatic connection between the needs of the government on the one hand and the "product" being offered by Sida and SOAS on the other. A Marxist government had taken the decision to make the transition to market economics and to accept the market-based stabilization and restructuring programs offered by the Bretton Woods institutions. Its ministers lacked experience of market economics, and there was not a single top official, let alone a minister, with formal training in market economics. At the same time, delegations from the IMF and the World Bank were almost literally at the negotiating table expecting the government to cooperate actively in the transition from centrally planned to market economy and to manage a finance and macroeconomic policy based on open borders and market principles.

287. In this dramatic stage it was clear that the potential target group of the economic training in market economics could not be absent from their jobs at all. For one thing they were in the highest echelon of government office, including ministers and deputy ministers, and such people can never be away from their jobs for any prolonged period. The obvious answer therefore was the distance education model.

288. In the Mission's analysis it has been born out that the DE product offered by the donor and London University to Mozambique was indeed the right product at the right time. It was also the Mozambican Government itself which had explicitly requested or suggested a project which would transfer economic knowledge by way of the distance education model.

289. Encouraged by this initial success and armed with the argument of the 12 MSEK which had already been invested as a sunk cost in the distance education methodology, Sida went on to offer the program to three other of its recipient countries: Vietnam 1994, Cambodia 1995 and Namibia 1996. In none of these latter countries, however, was there a clear rationale need for a DE approach. For these countries, DE was *one possible alternative approach* to be considered and compared with traditional full-time CBE graduate studies abroad. Some approach to foreign training was necessary, however, because the capacity to provide the training domestically was absent in all countries.

290. Apparently, without having carried out any cost analysis of the projects, it was assumed that the cost of the DE approach would be quite low, especially the marginal cost, after discounting the 12 MSEK, which had already been invested in developing the course methodology. As our calculations show, however, the marginal cost did not decline as the program was offered to additional countries. Alternative, possibly more cost-effective, approaches to achieving the objective of transferring knowledge and analytic capacity in market economics appear not to have been considered.

291. The economic situation and the degree of urgency of Government's need for economic knowledge and skills in order to shape economic policy has been different in the four countries. It is reasonable to expect that cost-effectiveness of a distance education program would vary between the countries. At one end of the spectrum, there was Mozambique, where there was a clear and urgent need for the knowledge offered by the program without the removal of the participants from their work. At the other end, there was Namibia, where there was never any acute economic situation and no dramatic economic transition. Not that there was not a need for trained economists. There surely was, perhaps just as much as in Mozambique. It might be argued, however, that there was not the same degree of urgency about it.

292. A second difference is that the positions occupied by the students were not at all as high in Namibia as in Mozambique. The students could presumably have been released for full time studies abroad. In that situation, distance education could be seen as just one of several other alternative ways of providing higher education in economics to the government bureaucracy. It must thus be compared with respect to both costs and benefits with other delivery modes, notably full time graduate studies in Europe or the USA or perhaps South Africa. The cases of Vietnam and Cambodia lie perhaps in the somewhere between Mozambique and Namibia in the spectrum.

293. As our economic analysis, in Section 3.B (Economic Analysis) above suggests, the cost-effectiveness might well have been higher for full time graduate studies abroad than for graduate studies based on distance education methodology in Namibia, and possibly also Vietnam and Cambodia. In order to draw a firm conclusion, however, it would be necessary to conduct a much more thorough economic investigation than has been possible within the framework of this evaluation.

J. Sustainability

294. Sustainability in this case would be defined as the degree to which there is a national capability of continuing to produce Master of Science graduates in finance economics. This issue can be considered from two perspectives, namely institutional and financial.

295. Although it varies somewhat between the countries, our general conclusion is that not very much effort has been put into the objective of institution building in this project and that not much has been achieved. In none of the host institutions, with the possible exception of Vietnam, is there today any capacity to assume responsibility for continuing on their own with the training of M.Sc. students in finance economics. In none of the countries is it possible to see how the respective institutions, without the help of foreign donors, would be able to finance a distance education program in finance economics of the kind evaluated here.

V. SUMMARY

A. Organization

296. In this chapter, all the specific questions that appear in various parts of the terms of reference are arranged systematically according to the logical framework matrix developed above. A present a brief summary answer is given to each question. Section G below provides a summary of the views of the participants.

B. Impact

297. *Has Sida's support to distance education in this program been an effective way to enhance macro-economic capacity in the four countries?* Sida's objective of contributing to an enhancement of the macro-economic capacity has been achieved in all the countries. However, available cost estimates of alternative ways to achieve the same graduate degree, namely through regular CBE studies abroad, suggest that the Sida-financed DE education is about as expensive as regular CBE. In some respects, it may be assumed that the campus experience contributes unique value (for example language and cultural knowledge and understanding). To the extent that the students selected for the program could have been absent for prolonged periods of time from their jobs, this would have been a more cost-effective way of achieving the objective.

298. It is not easy to determine with certainty in which of the countries and during which cohorts the students could have been absent from their jobs without disrupting the government's normal business. This could have only been assessed from the perspective of each respective government at the time. To a large extent, it must be related to the level of responsibility of the students in their government positions. If the students are department heads, permanent secretaries, or even ministers, as in Mozambique, then obviously sending these students abroad for full time studies is not realistic. In *economic* terms, the government's opportunity cost of such students being absent from their work places could be treated as "infinitely high". In that case, the DE program would be very cost-effective.

299. At the other extreme, if the students are much more junior or for other reasons could easily be absent from their work places for prolonged periods of time, then the opportunity cost to the government of their absence would be small. If government's benefits from regular full-time graduate education abroad is seen as much higher than that of DE, then the a DE program would be less cost-effective.

300. *How has the program influenced the amount of material (literature, computers) in the institutions?* In Mozambique and Cambodia, there has been no impact on the availability of literature or computers or other kinds of material support to the institutions. In Namibia, a computer laboratory with 12 work stations has been set up at the University of Namibia. Some literature has also been acquired in Namibia. In Vietnam, it appears that a library is being set up as part of the on-going activities.

301. *Has there been any sustainable impact on the local curricula of graduate education and research in economics?* In Cambodia and Mozambique there is no such impact, since the programs have been run by institutions or units that are independent of any university. In Vietnam, although the program was hosted by the NEU, it was run as a separate project, and there has been no impact on local curricula. In Namibia, however, the program has been used as one of the strategic tools to develop the Department of Economics at the UNAM.

302. *Has Sida's support to distance education in this program been an effective way to enhance macro-economic capacity on an institutional level at the educational institutions?* In Namibia, the DE program has been used to recruit more staff with macro-economic competence (Ph.D. qualifications). The program also to a large extent serves as motivating the program of competence development that the present staff of UNAM is undergoing (4 lecturers following Ph.D. programs at institutions in South Africa, the UK and Holland). In Vietnam, 13 of the local NEU lecturers have qualified for the Master's Degree of ICEE since 1993, and this must be seen as a contribution to enhancing the macro-economic capacity of the institution. In Mozambique some lecturers were trained. In Cambodia, however, there is no such impact.

303. *How is the impact of the program in comparison to other methods of education?* The program has been a mixed mode provision, where both distance education and CBE methods have been utilized. The quality of the teaching material developed by SOAS has been thought to be of very high quality in all countries. However, without the support of extensive classroom teaching, the program would not have been as effective as it has been in terms graduation performance. A more traditional version of a distance education program at master's level, that is without the intensive local tutoring, would probably have been far less effective.

304. The combination of rigid selection procedures, a generous provision of on-campus teaching, and considerable support by employers proved to be very effective in both Cambodia and Vietnam. The output of the programs is impressive in both countries.

305. In Mozambique and Namibia, the selection process was less rigid, the input of expatriate academic experts been marginal compared to the other two countries, and the support of the employers somewhat more restrictive than in the Asian countries. To a large extent, this explains the different rates of success of the program in Africa and Asia.

306. In summary, the positive impact of the program was due partly to the high quality and quantity of the academic inputs and to the relatively high quality of the students. The impact came at a high cost, however, partly because of the high volume of inputs, especially the local tutoring.

307. Sida should probably consider phasing out the CIEE's distance education program for this target group (civil servants) in all countries in favor of more cost-effective programs. There are a number of alternatives to the CIEE program:

- On-campus teaching of the whole program supported by foreign experts. This alternative ought to be strengthened by setting up twinning arrangements with other universities, such as Swedish universities. This alternative is in particular relevant in the case of Namibia.
- Scholarships for carefully selected ministerial staff who are qualified for studies abroad or at relevant and already existing in-country programs, especially relevant in Vietnam.
- In a longer term perspective, a carefully planned project aimed at competence development of university staff to doctoral level as a way of promoting institutional sustainability.
- If distance education methods are to be used, such methods ought to be chosen for relatively large but carefully selected subjects and target groups.

308. *Is the program sustainable, in terms of individual and institutional capacity-building?* The programs in Mozambique and Cambodia are not sustainable without the continued input of external support. In Namibia, it is in jeopardy if the program is phased out and no alternative support is forthcoming within a short time. In Vietnam, a Center for Distance Education has been set up at the NEU, and the program may be sustainable. To what extent some of the parts or the entire master's program

can be provided by NEU already from next year without foreign funding or support, is not altogether clear. The Qualifying Course, however, is already in the curriculum at the NEU.

309. What are the conditions and criteria for sustainable distance education at the masters degree or lower academic levels? Can they apply to other areas than macroeconomics, so that distance education could be a useful tool in capacity building? What is the level of confidence in the method?

310. Bearing in mind the parameters that ensure the cost-efficiency of distance education, the first task is to identify large but carefully selected target groups. In Africa and Asia, for a long time to come, distance education will be the *second best* alternative for the delivery of higher education except for cases of very high opportunity cost. For this reason, the DE mode could *as a first step* offer programs that are less academically ambitious, such as programs that are relatively short – corresponding to between two to six months of full-time studies. Programs combined with on-campus teaching are also an attractive alternative. The CIEE program, for instance, could have been split by offering large parts of the first year as distance education and the second year as a CBE add-on. Distance education programs ought not to be combined with considerable linguistic challenges for the participants.

311. Under such an approach, the following target groups might be of interest when considering the distance education mode:

- Government officials servants at local, regional, and central levels;
- Further education and upgrading of teachers at different levels;
- Selected groups in the health and social sectors; and
- Remedial courses at primary and secondary levels for large groups of people.

312. The courses ought to be limited in scope and designed in a way that facilitates further on-campus studies. Where possible, courses should be offered in the indigenous languages. Although some instruction in English might be necessary within the framework of an M.Sc. program, general language instruction in English is usually available locally. Language learning should not hinder substantive learning in economics. The use of different DE technologies in the program ought to be kept at a level that is in keeping with the infrastructure and other learning resources that are available to the target groups.

313. The logistics of a large-scale DE program should not be underestimated. Cost-effectiveness and high quality is only possible when the program administration is well qualified and the use of IT software is carefully integrated in the administrative routines. Specific distance education programs should not be decided upon unless a thorough feasibility study has been conducted.

314. *To what extent do graduates use knowledge and skills gained in the M.Sc. course in their work?* In all four countries, over 90% of the students in the sample (total of 98 students) stated that they were able to utilize their new competence in performing their tasks at work. This is a view that was consistently supported by the employers as well.

315. *To what extent have graduates used the M.Sc. program as a way of gaining entry to other post graduate programs (a) at the same level, (b) at a higher level?* Nearly 80% of the students in the sample indicated that they have attended courses, training workshops and study visits provided by the government, NGOs, donors and other international organizations. Of these, only 13% have attended other study activities at university level after they begun the M.Sc. program. We cannot ascertain to what extent the M.Sc. program has helped these students to enter the university programs. In one or two cases, interviewed students stated that the M.Sc. program had helped them through entry examinations to other university programs.

316. *What impact has the M.Sc. had on graduates' earnings and employment status? Were the students given career possibilities, including salary increase or other advantages, as a result of their studies?* The M.Sc. program had a significant impact on the graduates in terms of career possibilities. Altogether 59% of the students in the sample in the four countries reported that they changed position during or after their studies. Some students view these changes as a result not only of their studies but also of other factors.

C. Cost-effectiveness

317. *How cost-effective is the DE program, compared with other delivery forms?* The cost per graduate of the DE programs has been just as high as the cost of regular fulltime CBE studies, and possibly higher. We believe the governments' and the students' benefits from CBE are considerably higher than from DE studies. It follows that the cost-effectiveness of the Sida-financed DE programs will depend on the opportunity cost to the government of the students being absent from their jobs. This opportunity cost can be expected to be higher the higher or more important position the student occupies in the government.

318. We conclude that the cost-effectiveness of the program is highest where the bulk of the students were higher officials, especially in periods when the need for the government's enhanced knowledge in financial and macro economics was very urgent. This was the case for the first cohorts in Mozambique. In the cohorts which contained mainly junior persons and in situations where the government's need for this education was not acute, the cost-effectiveness of the DE model is lower than for alternative ways of acquiring the education, namely through regular full-time studies abroad.

D. Effects

319. *To what extent do graduates use knowledge and skills gained in the M.Sc. course in their work?* The general picture which emerges from interviews both with the students themselves, their job supervisors, and other observers in the ministries is that most of the students actually make good use of the knowledge which they have acquired through their studies for the M.Sc. in finance economics. This picture is corroborated by representatives from donor and lending agencies.

320. In Cambodia, the students themselves report that they were using their new knowledge in their jobs. It appears, however, that many of them have not been able to secure new positions or career advancements that would better correspond to their enhanced knowledge in economics.

321. *How has the ministry or institution gained from the enhanced capacity and skills?* We have concluded not only that most student actually use their new knowledge in their jobs, but also that the education which they have received is highly relevant for the tasks lying before the government. Therefore, we also conclude that the respective ministries and institutions have indeed benefited from the enhanced capacity and skills of the students. This view is born out by observers interviewed both inside and outside of the government.

322. *In what capacity are the students now involved in formulating policy strategies?* Overall in all the four countries a substantial number of the students are department heads or occupy other strategic posts in core ministries. Others hold jobs as advisers or other professional experts at lower levels. For both categories, it is clear that these former students are indeed involved in formulating policies and strategies, usually at a preparatory or advisory level, since the actual policy is formed by the minister and often the cabinet.

323. *Have the employing government institutions demonstrated capacity to retain and use effectively the graduates of such programs?* Generally, the Mission has found that most students make use of their knowledge in their jobs, so we would conclude that the respective government institutions have “demonstrated capacity to retain and use effectively the graduates”. At the same time, however, the Mission has noted in every country the absence of an active and rational personnel policy and even elementary personnel management. In all of the countries, this is an area in which reforms are being discussed and where donor technical assistance is targeted. In Cambodia we also noted that many of students have not been promoted to positions which would better correspond to their new degree. Our answer to this question is therefore that the governments should become much more active in strategically and rationally making optimal use of the important economic knowledge acquired by the SOAS graduates.

E. Outputs

324. *Financial sustainability: Has the capacity of the domestic educational institution to continue to finance and run similar M.Sc. programs been improved or established?* In Namibia it is relatively clear that under the present priorities of the government, the financial capacity of UNAM has not been strengthened to such a degree that the program can be run by its own resources. On the contrary, the position of Government in 1999 was rather to prepare for a 2% cut in the budgets of all educational institutions over the next fiscal year.

325. It is not clear if there are plans to strengthen the budgets of the NEU in Vietnam. Presently the continued development of the Distance Education Center is funded by Sida for about one more year. After the termination of the present on-going activities by the middle of 2000, it is unclear how the Vietnamese will finance the DE center. There is no sign of financial sustainability of the programs in Mozambique and Cambodia.

F. Inputs and Activities

326. *To what extent were the students given time off for studies?* In general, students were granted the necessary leave by their employers to follow the classes. Some received a 50% study leave, as in Cambodia and Vietnam, whereas others received the time they needed for following the classroom teaching, writing up their assignments and thesis, and sitting the examinations. Some students from Mozambique and Namibia had such difficulties being released from work and therefore could not follow their studies.

327. *Were the students obliged to travel in the line of duty during their studies?* Many students, specifically from Mozambique and Namibia, reported that sometimes they could not attend the local tutoring or were late in delivering assignments due to travel.

328. *Would it contribute to student motivation if the students or the ministry/institution were obliged to contribute to the fees?* This question would need to be further discussed. The Mission believes that cost-sharing could well be one way of making students more involved in and committed to pursue their studies.

329. *Was the provider institution (SOAS) able to adapt the program to the specific countries?* SOAS has generally not provided material related to the countries specific needs. Nor has SOAS provided country-related data except in the thesis packets. It is the Mission's understanding that this was a matter of policy for SOAS. SOAS maintains that the M.Sc. in finance economics is a theoretical education, and that students should learn methods and paradigms, which are general, not country-specific. The Mission accepts this argument. It is therefore not called for that all or part the materials should be adapted to the specific “needs” of a particular country.

330. *To what extent has the employer institution selected its candidates through assessment of the need for the employee's enhancement of skills?* The program was addressed to a very specific target group. From the interviews, we believe that to some extent, the selection of candidates was done according to the ministry's human resource development plan and need for enhanced skills. Some cases in Cambodia showed though that the ministry had no capacity to make efficient use of its graduates.

331. *What are the processes and criteria used for selection of candidates and their qualifications to participate in the program?* The selection process varied from country to country and even from cohort to cohort in each country. However, in general the selection was based on the following criteria:

- Interviews
- Suitability of the candidates' employment;
- Previous academic record;
- Successful completion of the Qualifying Course or Diploma in Economic Principles; and
- Gender.

G. The Participants

332. *Has the local supervision and tutorial provision been satisfactory?* The students reported that local supervision and tutorials have been necessary and very useful. In Vietnam and Cambodia, the expatriate tutors seem to be more highly thought of than the local ones. According to several students, it would have been an improvement to the program if expatriate professors had taken care of all the teaching. In Mozambique and Vietnam, the core of local tutors included mainly students from previous M.Sc. courses. Obviously, these tutors had some limitations in explaining and discussing the issues with the students.

333. *How has the students' language ability influenced the selection of literature?* The Mission found no indication that students' language ability influenced the selection of literature. Had it happened it would have gone against the purpose of the program, for an objective in its own right of this project was for the students to learn the English language.

334. *Which are the key factors for a successful program in terms of the need for support from and capacity at the local educational institutions and the local ministries and institutions?* The key factors for a successful program would include:

- Very detailed preparation work including information to the ministries and advertisements on newspaper and TV;
- Good selection process;
- High density of contact between SOAS and host institution and the local tutors;
- Regular essays and face to face tuition; and
- Strong involvement and commitment of all partners, i.e., students, employers, host institution, SOAS, and Sida.

335. *What effects are there on different target groups (e.g. geographical and gender issues, etc.)?* There is no regional effect intended in this program. However since the target group for the study programs are the ministry personnel, and the ministries are located in the capital cities, then obviously the program can be said to support a geographical *centralization* in the respective countries.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED

1. Costs

336. *Need for Economic Analysis.* Like many projects in the education and social sectors, this project shows the importance of doing at least a summary *economic analysis* in order to find the project design which appears to be the most cost-effective. The fact that the project's most important costs and benefits are non-quantifiable cannot be used as an excuse not to undertake economic analysis. Often, as in this case, the order of magnitude of the economic costs and benefits involved are such that even a very general analysis in qualitative terms can tell a lot about the cost-effectiveness of various alternative ways of designing the project, and thus help to avoid unnecessarily costly projects.

337. In order to realize the potential cost-effectiveness of distance education, there are a number of factors that ought to be analyzed before launching the project. The most important are discussed below.

338. *Size of Target Group.* The size of the target group is of crucial importance. If the target group is small, the chance of achieving cost-efficiency by the distance education mode is also small. In the case of the Sida-supported M.Sc. in finance economics, the numbers of students in each cohort has been too small to achieve cost-efficiency.

339. *Input Mix.* Distance education courses ought not to be harnessed with too much face-to-face tuition, which is relatively expensive. The initial investment in the distance education mode is made in order to avoid the cost of classroom teaching. If the DE program cannot stand on its own, then perhaps this mode ought not to be preferred. Of course, other factors, such as opportunity costs, can intervene and render DE the preferred delivery mode even if substantial local tutoring is needed. Ultimately it is a question of relative costs and benefits with the various mix of resources, and this will always vary from case to case. There is reason to believe that the program M.Sc. in finance economics could not be successfully implemented for this particular target group without relatively intense classroom teaching.

340. *Administration.* A professional distance education administration would have been able to cater for almost any number of students with very low marginal costs. In the case of SOAS, this possibility of achieving cost-efficiency was not pursued, although it could have been. To neglect to pursue this possibility has had considerable adverse effects upon the cost-efficiency of the program.

341. *Residence Period.* For strictly cost-efficiency reasons, the residential school could and perhaps should have been substituted by a separate DE package. We realize, however, that this is an add-on that has a certain value, it gave status to the program and useful exposure to the facilities of London University.

342. *Cost of Institution Building.* A failure to clearly define which parts of a project are designed to achieve one, of several objectives, and which belong to another objective, will make it difficult to calculate the project's real cost-effectiveness. In this project, it has not been possible to deduce, from project objectives and from cost data, how much of total project cost should be attributed to the objective of building an institution, and how much to the objective of providing trained graduates in economics, thus blurring the picture of cost-effective.

2. Project Monitoring

343. *Need for Monitoring.* A donor cannot entirely abstain from regular project monitoring, even if it is on a general level. With no monitoring at all, there will be no chance to rectify mistakes in time.

344. *Decentralization.* When decentralizing responsibility for project management from the headquarters to the field office, the donor must make sure that there exists some kind of alarm system whereby the professional officers in the headquarters are alerted when unexpected turns and developments take place in the project. If Sida had had the necessary competence at an early stage in the program, it is likely that some of the financial or budgetary terms of the SOAS contribution could have been amended *en route*.

3. Participants

345. *Selection.* The selection process is important to the success of the program. A lot of effort should be put into the initial phase of the program to secure the distribution of information to the concerned ministries and target group. The information should be formulated in a way that appeals to both genders.

346. *Appropriateness of the Distance Education Approach.* Distance education might be more effective for most people on secondary levels and under-graduate levels than at the graduate level. It is very ambitious to launch a master's degree as distance education in a cultural context, where distance education has low status and often will be considered as the second or third choice.

347. Although the DE approach is less disruptive in terms of family and employment than CBE, distance education is nevertheless very demanding for most students. The combination of part-time work, family and other social obligations, and a part-time distance education master's program is in itself almost too much for most people. When the language of instruction is only rudimentarily known to most of the students, this is an additional hinder. Against this backdrop, it must be clear that the completion rates are quite impressive for most cohorts.

348. *Academic Standards.* The academic standard of the SOAS' DE master's degree is not to be disputed, and the quality of the DE provision, to a very large extent, has been satisfactory. It is important to keep the thesis as part of the program. The value and status of the DE format will otherwise suffer considerably.

4. Institutions

349. The institutionalization of the program varies from one country to another. There is evidence that the inceptions of institutionalization are in place in Namibia and Vietnam. What has been achieved so far may soon be in jeopardy without further support. It seems that SOAS has had no interest in institutionalization of the program, and that Sida has shown very little initiative in securing institutionalization. Much could have been differently, in particular in Mozambique and Cambodia and Vietnam, if institutionalization had been given high priority from an early stage in the project.

350. It is crucial that all partners be committed to and involved in the program: the ministries, Sida, the host institutions, DE delivery institution (in this case CIEE/SOAS), and the students. The regulations should be clear, so that nobody becomes excluded from participating in the program for obscure bureaucratic reasons.

351. The learning context of DE approach is very demanding. It is essential that the students have access to good computer and library facilities. In this respect the student cohorts have been treated differently in the four countries. In Mozambique, all students received their personal computers, whereas in Namibia a good quality PC laboratory was set up with the necessary number of computers to cater for the students. In Cambodia and Vietnam, there has been somewhat too limited access to computer facilities.

352. If face-to-face teaching is scaled down, the local tutors still need to be experienced and properly briefed by DE delivery institution. The fact that students prefer local tutorials to self-study should not be neglected. One of the reasons is that self-study is not as effective, in part because it requires self discipline, i.e., the students are not used to – or do not have – the discipline to carry out study on their own. It is therefore important that the contacts between students and their supervisors are close and permanent.

353. DE mode is appropriate for those who cannot be away for extended periods of time because of work and family responsibilities. But overseas studies are also considered important for human resource development of these countries because people are exposed to new technologies and more advanced economies and to the English language.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Namibia

354. A sudden withdrawal of funds by the donors at this point might jeopardize everything that has been achieved in Namibia. A much more attractive alternative to UNAM is the prospect of a gradual phasing out of Sida support that is in phase with the five-year plan of the Faculty. This, according to the Vice Chancellor of UNAM, would secure sustainability of the program with UNAM. It is the opinion of the Mission that this ought to be done – if possible – together with a Swedish university. The co-operation with CIEE ought to be phased out. An alternative to a very abrupt termination of the relationship with CIEE is to renegotiate the financial terms of the co-operation and enter the students as individual participants at the standard fee of GBP 6,000 for the whole degree. Local tuition can be arranged by UNAM itself or within the framework of a twinning arrangement with a qualified university department.

B. Vietnam

355. There will still be a long way to go before NEU is able to launch a master's degree in finance economics on its own. There are at the moment no concrete plans to support NEU beyond the middle of next year. If, however, Sida at a later stage decides to continue its support to the education of master's degree candidates, there are two interesting possibilities for co-operation between Swedish universities and the NEU.

356. One is to set up a twinning arrangement between NEU and a Swedish university to continue the competence development at NEU. In principle, this arrangement could be extended to both staff and on-going student programs.

357. A second possibility is to broaden the basis for co-operation by inviting the participation of already existing programs at the NEU that are funded by other donors than Sida.

C. Cambodia

358. All institutional possibilities ought to be examined very closely before a possible candidate for a continuation of the program in Cambodia is decided upon. When the assessment of CDRI has been completed, Sida will also have a more complete picture of the potential in Cambodia. At the moment, the draft application of the Faculty of Law and Economics in Phnom Penh is too uncertain to be considered a high-quality provider of master's programs in Economics. There is no one at the Faculty who has the necessary qualifications to run such a program, nor does the Faculty have other people on its staff qualified to teach in an M.Sc. program. The French-supported program for competence development will primarily supply teachers with French master's level equivalents. A continuation of the program in Cambodia can only be implemented after thorough planning, in which the sustained support of a twinning university with necessary competence becomes an integral part of the whole project. A possible feasibility study regarding a continuation of the program should not rule out the potential that may exist at the University of Phnom Penh.

359. In Cambodia there are two training centers that provide short-term courses in a number of relevant subjects to ministerial and bank staff. One is under the National Bank and other under the Ministry of Finance and funded by the World Bank. An alternative strategy of Sida would be to

explore possibilities for supporting such institutions. This could be done through co-operation with the World Bank and a Swedish institution that could provide one-year courses at graduate level, training of trainers in finance and development economics, and other subjects according to the needs of the country.

360. This alternative might create a possibility for a continuation of the program without such a prolonged interruption, as a twinning university solution would require. DE courses suitable for competence development program for civil servants already exist in an “on-campus” format. These could be converted to the DE mode and be distributed to all regions of the country. Providing the target groups are large, this could be one way of realizing the inherent cost-efficiency of distance education.

361. Ministries should be encouraged to make efficient use of their graduates through design and establishment of good human resources development program. Sida should make sure that the target ministries have a good HRD plan (capacity to integrate and make effective use of the graduates) and a good incentive scheme.

362. In order to enhance the impact on female students in the next programs, the following should be considered:

- Already in planning phase, a pre-study should be carried out to look at family composition (single female head or not) and how women allocate their time during the day. This would help in planning when the course should be held during the day for women to be able to participate and what kind of support women might need in terms of child care.
- Information should be design in ways more attractive to women; and
- Previous female participants could be used as role models.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the MSc Programmes Conducted by SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) in Four Countries

1 Background

As most governments in developing countries over the past two decades have been pursuing economic reforms to promote macroeconomic stability and economic growth, they have been faced with considerable need to reinforce economic management capacity within the public sector. The shortage of trained economists in these countries has threatened sound economic management, growth and development.

The overall objective of the MSc Programmes provided by the Center for International Education in Economics (CIEE), School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London University, has been to build up and strengthen financial economic and macroeconomic capacity within targeted ministries and institutions to improve macroeconomic management, sharpen policy analysis and design appropriate policy strategies for economic reforms.

The programme was devised and designed to reach a target group of public servants already employed in strategic positions in the recipient country's public finance sector. The programme hypothesis was that it would be necessary to provide them with high quality education (resulting in them acquiring strategic planning and negotiating capacity), without removing them for extended periods of time from the workplace. Thus the programme was built on a distance education model.

The original course, developed for Sida, was a core course in financial economics, aimed more specifically at the priorities of a reforming Ministry of Finance. Since then, CIEE developed an MSc course in Financial Management which focuses on the economic and management techniques needed for those working in commercial banks, investment funds etc. It is also applicable to those working in central banking. In 1996 CIEE widened its portfolio and offered an MSc in Development Finance, aimed at those in international agencies, development economists, etc.

In addition, CIEE also developed, in 1995, the Diploma in Economic Principles (DEP) which is a conversion course for graduates wanting to move into economics. This programme was developed at the behest of Mozambique with financing from the World Bank.

The first programme was initiated in Mozambique in 1991 to develop and support economic management capacity in primarily the Ministry of Finance. This included strengthening the Ministry's capacity and competence to negotiate the reform programmes suggested by the concerned international finance institutions. This context meant inter alia that the course was intentionally developed and delivered in English. Subsequent courses have had a wider range of coverage. The local counterpart has however been the Ministry.

In 1993, the programme was extended to Vietnam, where it is being implemented by the National Economic University (NEU). The two purposes of the programme in Vietnam were to support the doi moi economic reform programme by strengthening economic management and decision-making capacity within ministries and other institutions, as well as to strengthen the NEU in its role as an institution for higher education. In the longer term, the objective is to build up NEU's capacity to run the MSc programme itself.

In 1995, similar programmes were initiated in Namibia and Cambodia. In Namibia, the local counterpart is the Economics Department at the University of Namibia (UNAM). In Namibia, the programme is co-funded by the Ford Foundation. Its purpose is to strengthen economic analytical and management capacity at targeted ministries to attain macroeconomic goals, to narrow the gap between expatriate advisors and local counterparts, and to develop and support post-graduate education and capacity at the UNAM.

The programme in Cambodia is implemented by the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI). The purpose is to address the shortage of qualified economists in financial economics to support economic reform programmes, and to contribute to the development of training capacity at the CDRI.

The Sida funding for programmes in Vietnam is in the process of being phased out, while in Namibia an additional programme has received support. In Cambodia, options for pursuing a programme in development studies:economics is being investigated.

The MSc courses are delivered through distance education techniques from London University on a part time basis. Prior to 1995, Sida funded students to study a Qualifying Course (plus English language tuition) as a preparatory course before the MSc. It was taught on a face-to-face basis in each country by a UK lecturer. The course was specially prepared and designed to cover the main theory and applications of microeconomics, macroeconomics and provide a grounding in mathematics and statistics.

This Qualifying Course was taught in Mozambique for the first two presentations, in Vietnam for three presentations and in Cambodia. With the introduction of the DEP in 1995, Mozambican and Namibian students, who were not eligible to go directly to the MSc programme, studied this Diploma programme as a precursor.

When studying by distance learning, students are provided with all the necessary materials, including specially written course units which guide the students studied and take the place of face-to-face lectures.

In addition, local/resident tutors have been appointed to lecture the students face to face and supervise their written work. In Mozambique and in Vietnam previous MSc students have been employed as tutors. In Namibia a lecturer from UNAM has been appointed. In Cambodia and Vietnam bilateral associate experts were appointed as resident tutors; in Vietnam, this task has now been taken over by NEU.

2 Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

Although the programmes are at different stages, it is Sida's opinion that an overall evaluation should be carried out, for various reasons. For the projects that are in the phase of being taken over by the local counterpart, there is a need to analyse the results of the programme in terms of capacity-building on an individual as well as an institutional level. For the ongoing programmes, it is of importance to analyse cost efficiency and the individual and institutional motivation for this method of education.

There is also an interest in examining the provider institution's capacity to deliver general advanced level education and at the same time take country specific characteristics and language difficulties into consideration.

For the future it is of interest to examine whether this method is a recommendable way to enhance capacity in the economic area, as well as in other relevant areas on the institutional level (e.g. public administration).

The primary targets of the evaluation are the governments of the countries concerned and within this framework, the public institutions whose institutional capacity has been affected by the programme, and the individuals attending the programme. The capability of the provider institution will also be scrutinised.

3 Issues to be covered in the evaluation

Both *impact* and *general programme indicators* should be covered in the evaluation. The impact indicators are concerned with the enhancement and transfer of skills in economic management and the related capacity building. The programme indicators address general issues within the programme, and whether the curriculum of the programme is adapted and suited to the needs of the targeted ministries and institutions.

Through interviews with former students (tracer studies), their employers and instructors at SOAS, and others, the consultants should examine the following issues and questions:

3.1 Impact indicators

a) The public institutions whose employee(s) participated in the programme

- To what extent has the employer institution selected its candidates through assessment of the need for the employee's enhancement of skills?
- What is the subsequent level of responsibility of the graduates? How has the ministry/institution gained from the enhanced capacity/skills?
- In what capacity are the students now involved in formulating policy strategies?
- To what extent has there been a "brain drain", i.e. loss of former students to the private sector? To what extent has there been a 'brain drain' of MSc graduates to work outside their countries (and how does this proportion compare with that estimated for full-time graduate studies abroad)?
- To what extent were the students given time off for studies?
- Were the students obliged to travel in the line of duty during their studies?

b) The individuals who attended the programme

- To what extent do graduates use knowledge and skills gained in the MSc course in their work?
- To what extent have graduates used the MSc programme as a way of gaining entry to other post graduate programmes (a) at the same level, (b) at a higher level?
- In the student's/employer's/SOAS instructor's opinion, to what extent has he/she developed his/her skills?
- What impact has the MSc had on graduates' earnings (distinguishing earnings from main job and other earnings) and labour force status? Were the students given career possibilities, including salary increase or other advantages, as a result of their studies?

c) The provider institution

- What are the process and criteria used for selection of candidates and their qualifications to participate in the programme?
- Could it contribute to student motivation if the students or the ministry/institution were obliged to contribute to the fees?

- In terms of capacity building on an institutional level: how many graduated students have become teachers in the economics departments as a result of the programme?
- Has the local supervision/tutorial provision been satisfactory?
- How has the programme influenced the amount of material (literature, computers) in the institutions?
- Has there been any sustainable impact on the local curricula of graduate education and research in economics?
- How has the students' language ability influenced the selection of literature?

3.2 General programme indicators

The evaluation should examine the *internal efficiency* of the programme, i.e. the qualification rate of the students and the time employed.

The evaluation should address the question as to the *value and cost effectiveness* of Sida's requirement that the Masters students should attend residential school in Britain and write dissertations in order to qualify.

The consultant should discuss whether Sida's support to distance education in this programme has been *an effective way to enhance macro-economic capacity* in the four relevant countries on an institutional level (both at the employing institutions and the educational institutions). Interviews with representatives of the international finance institutions can be used to investigate changes in *negotiation and dialogue capacity* in the countries concerned.

Key factors for a successful programme in terms of the need for support from and capacity at the local educational institutions and the local ministries and institutions should be discussed, preferably by comparing the four country programmes. This should also include an analysis of *the provider institution's (SOAS) capacity to adapt the programme to the specific countries*.

The consultant should discuss the *cost efficiency and quality/impact of the programme in comparison to other methods of education*, and also in comparison to the objectives of the programme, with the objective of determining *whether there is scope for continuation of the programme* or if the programmes should be phased out. In analysing the method of distance education there should be a discussion of the effects on different target groups (e.g. geographical and gender issues, etc.)

The above should also lead to an analysis of the *sustainability* of the programmes, in terms of individual and institutional capacity-building through distance education, and the level of confidence in the method established. Has the capacity of the domestic educational institution to continue to finance and run similar MSc programmes been improved or established? Have the employing government institutions demonstrated capacity to retain and use effectively the graduates of such programmes? The consultants should if possible *derive conditions and criteria for sustainable distance education* at the Masters degree or lower academic levels. If possible, these recommendations should give an idea of *other areas* apart from macro-economics, where distance education could be a useful tool in capacity building.

4 Methodology, Team COMPOSITION and Time Schedule

The extensive range of the programme, both in terms of geography and evaluation indicators, requires knowledge and experience in different areas. First, knowledge of economy and policy strategies and economic reform in developing countries is essential. The consultant should also possess experience in distance education techniques and education in developing countries. Academic experience from post-graduate education (preferably in economics) is also desirable. These

competence requirements should require a team of two to four members, depending on the combination of skills in the team proposed.

The evaluation should be carried out by background document analysis (project documents, curricula, learning materials, selected theses), and by interviews. The interviews serve two purposes:

- first, through the medium of the so-called tracer studies, where a sample of students in the different programmes is followed up (according to the issues addressed in §3 above), and
- second, in the follow-up of the programme with decision-makers, administrators and educators involved in the programme, in order to answer the questions posed concerning distance education as a method, cost efficiency, institutional capacity building, etc (see also §3, above).

The consultant is to visit the relevant programme countries, where interviews and documents shall be used for analysis. There will also be a visit to SOAS in London, where necessary interviews and document collection shall be carried out. A familiarisation visit to Sida in Stockholm will be necessary. The planned visits to the programme countries should be divided among the team members if possible.

The time schedule for the operation is calculated at 10 weeks for preparatory visits and field visits (two weeks for visits to Stockholm and London and for preparatory work, and two weeks for each programme country), plus two weeks for writing the final report.

5 Reporting

The consultant shall, before leaving each programme country, present the main findings and conclusions orally and if possible in a written summary, in a meeting with the concerned parties (recipient institution and Sida).

The evaluation report shall be written in English and should not exceed 75 pages, excluding annexes. Format and outline of the report shall follow the guidelines in *Sida Evaluation Report – a Standardized Format* (see Annex 1). 10 copies of the draft report shall be submitted to Sida no later than September 10, 1999. Within 3 weeks after receiving Sida's comments on the draft report, a final version in 10 copies and on diskette shall be submitted to Sida. Subject to decision by Sida, the report will be published and distributed as a publication within the Sida Evaluations series. The evaluation report shall be written in Word 6.0 for Windows (or in a compatible format) and should be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing.

The evaluation assignment includes the production of a Newsletter summary following the guidelines in *Sida Evaluations Newsletter – Guidelines for Evaluation Managers and Consultants* (Annex 2) and also the completion of *Sida Evaluations Data Work Sheet* (Annex 3). The separate summary and a completed Data Work Sheet shall be submitted to Sida along with the (final) draft report.

Annexes 1, 2 and 3 will be provided in template form on diskette.

Subject to decision by Sida, a seminar will be held at which the Consultant will present the findings and conclusions of the evaluation. Participation in this seminar is part of the assignment.

Appendix 2

Country Information Mozambique

Attachment: *SUMMARY OF TRACER STUDY*

1. Introduction

The Mozambican program was started in 1991 with the purpose to: “*develop and support economic management capacity in primarily the Ministry of Finance*”, and to “*strengthen the Ministry’s capacity and competence to negotiate the reform programs suggested by the concerned international financial institutions*”.

The original idea for Sweden to finance graduate level training in financial economics by distance education came from a proposal forwarded by the Mozambican Government to Sida. This happened while the civil war was still going on and while a tough structural adjustment and economic stabilization program, supported by the IMF and the World Bank respectively, was being implemented. This program required that dramatic decisions regarding economic policy be taken by the government. Mozambique, at the time, had fewer academically trained people than any other country in Africa, although the country’s Minister of Finance held a Masters degree in Economics. The capacity of the local university of Eduardo Mondlane to train economists at an academic level was almost nonexistent.

The educational level in Mozambique in general was, and still is, very low. There is today an acute lack of trained people in the ministries, mainly at the levels below department heads. Also there are constantly added new topics and areas where the government must perform analysis and formulate economic policy. Therefore the need for and the scope for qualified economists in the government sphere is increasing.

Apart from the regular master of science courses, a propedeutic course was given to even out imbalances in the students’ educational backgrounds. The program also offered courses in the English language.

2. Delivery and execution

Selection of Students

Based on the figures obtained from SOAS in London the total number of enrollees into the MSc program over the years 1991–1998 is 112. In addition 114 students have been enrolled to the preparatory Diploma of Economic Principles (DEP) Program that was launched in 1995/1996, funded by the World Bank.

The students were initially selected by the host institution (Ministry of Finance) and a list of potential candidates was sent to SOAS. They were first interviewed and then had to attend a Qualifying Course that has been later developed into a Diploma in Economic Principles. Close to 80% of the students had already completed a university education at undergraduate level upon entering the program. The students of the first cohorts were mainly from the Ministry of Finance, whereas new cohorts seem to have attracted students from broader target groups, including the financing and banking sector as well as other ministries.

Graduation

The program has produced the following numbers of diplomas and master degrees:

Appendix 2. Table 1: Number and distribution of diplomas and master degrees

	Number of diplomas	Distribution
MSc of Financial Economics	60	15% females
MSc of Financial Management	1	Male
Diploma in Financial Economics	28	22% females

The Program

The program has run for altogether four cohorts in Mozambique. A total of 112 students have been registered in the degree program and 61 have taken their MSc.

Appendix 2. Table 2: Number of Registered Students and Output

Year	Registered Students	No of MSc	No of PG Diplomas	DEP
1991–1992	21	16	2	
1993–1994	38	21	9	
1995–1996	29	8	12	
1995*	50			10
1996*	61			20
1996–1997	13	7	4	
1997*	3			2
1997–1998	11	9	1	
Totals	226	61	28	32

The curriculum

In general the program in Mozambique followed the outline given in the chapter outlining the course program.

Tutors

The input of tutors was basically from two sources, the SOAS in London and local experts from Mozambique. The latter were to a large extent students of previous cohorts in Mozambique. During the residential schools in London, a number of tutors from other UK based institutions were also invited to give lectures. In 1998 for example these tutors operated together with 3 tutors from Mozambique and 4 from Vietnam.

Administration

At the SOAS in London a separate administrative unit was set up to be responsible for and monitor the overall management of the programs. In addition, there were two local coordinators: one with a particular responsibility for the academic input, and one, based at the Ministry of Finance, with a responsibility for all practical matters.

CONCLUSIONS FROM TRACER STUDY AND INTERVIEWS

Usefulness of the MSc program

The Usefulness of the program received high scores. 75% of the students in the sample reported that the program was “very useful” and 25% that it has been “rather useful”. As interesting is the fact that 22 of 24 (92%) students in the sample reported that the program have helped them introducing changes in their working situation. This appears to be a rather reliable indicator of a degree of impact at individual and institutional level.

The students' evaluation of the material from SOAS

Written material was said to function well by all the students interviewed and in the sample, as do the videocassettes and audiocassettes even if some were a bit more critical to the audiocassettes. Also, all students reported that there have been very few problems with the distribution of teaching material to the students. They felt the need for more reference books to accomplish the dissertation and even some of the assignments. They also felt that some subjects should be extended, like for instance International Finance. More sessions with videos for discussions are needed. Videos were not available to the students and were used only in the macroeconomics course. The sessions with SOAS tutors were considered too short.

Assignments and dissertations

We would also like to point out that the assignments that the students forwarded to London were commented upon and returned within two weeks as a rule. The quality of the comments the students received is reported to be most satisfactory, although with a few exceptions. Many of the students pointed to the problem of access to a proper library in Maputo. The students of the 99-cohort, however, have no problems with this since the BM now has built up a library of their own. The students also reported to have received adequate comments and tuition for the dissertations. The themes for dissertations were as a rule set by CIEE/SOAS. The themes for the dissertations were rarely linked to the economic and financial context of Mozambique, however, apparently because of the lack of continuity in national statistical information. As a consequence, the students had to base their dissertations on cases from other countries.

Local tuition

In Part I (1st year) of the program tuition has been offered three times a week (each session lasting two hours) throughout the semester. Since 1993 local tutors have carried out this work. There has been raised some doubt as to the qualifications of these tutors by several of our informants. The tutors were referred to as “not qualified” to teach at this level because they had no experience (they were often candidates of previous cohorts). In addition, it seems as if some of the local tutors have had problem with English as the language of instruction and in some cases were unable to give adequate explanations to the questions the students had. Another fact that caught our interest was that the tutors worked solely by giving lectures based upon what was already in the books that the students had received. The attendance appears to have been irregular at times. Many students did not get permission to leave the work for studying because the internal regulations of their institutions were not clear on this regard. Others could not participate because of frequent travel on work. Many of the students explicitly wanted the local tuition to be strengthened by people from SOAS. Some students even maintained they could have done the program without the local tuition.

Work load

All interviewed students reported to have studied individually for between 10 to 16 hours a week on average. This came on top of the 6 hours of tuition they received. The program thus took about 20 hours or so every week. The students received no time off for studies by their employers except for one week for examinations. Most of the students reported to work 40 hours per week (100%). Most of the students have families and children and it goes almost without saying that if the family does not support the student, the chances of a successful outcome becomes very slim. One of our informants told us she had to stop, because her husband said no. Since he died she is now again following the program, though she has a small kid to look after. It becomes a matter of honor.

The residential school in London

According to the interviews we have conducted the Residential School in London has been a successful part of the program. Everybody agreed that these weeks have been very useful. In particular they praised the tutors and the library facilities.

The learning style of the CIEE compared to that of the UEM

In all the interviews, the different learning styles of the two institutions were commented upon. Even if some found it difficult to pin down the differences they wanted to draw our attention to this fact. It seems to boil down to the following: At the UEM the students are to a large degree prove that they have read the set literature of the curricula. The lectures are focussing on what is in the books, and a typical exam consists of a number of questions asking for facts. The CIEE approach, however, “goes deeper” as some of the students characterized the difference. The assignments and exams invites for discussion and analysis, the students are asked to show that s/he understands the core of the problem and that a possible solution to the problem is highly welcomed. This fact combined with the use of English as the language of instruction, leads to a situation where the students are to some extent feel culturally alienated and at the same time are intrigued by the learning style and analytical approach of the program.¹ They all seem to prefer the learning style of the CIEE to that which is steeped in the Portuguese tradition.

Career development of the students

Even if this point has been well covered by the questionnaires, it may be of interest to refer in some detail from the interviews as well: Most of the students reported to be in the same positions as they had upon entering the program. Some, however, also mentioned that they are being commissioned to undertake special tasks by their employers where they can use more of their hard won competence. All students reported to be satisfied with the course and that they have learned a lot. But not all reported to being able to use this knowledge in their daily chores. There is no automatic increase in salaries upon the successful matriculation from the program. In the first cohort that was recruited the majority of students came from the Ministry of Finance and many of the students held already high positions within the ministry. In later cohorts a number of employees from the Bank of Mozambique were recruited together with officers from other ministries. None of the people we interviewed reported to have changed their positions as a consequence of their completing the program (Part I or Part II). However, we should make due note of the fact that for instance the Governor of the Bank of Mozambique emphasized that his bank performs better today because he now has some 15 people with the MSc (10 more than 8 years ago) among his staff. “We are looking at the balance sheets of the bank in a different way.” His satisfaction with the program is also the reason that the Bank of Mozambique has arranged for a loan with the World Bank to finance the continuation of the program to the tune of GBP 18,000 per student over a two-year period.

80–85% of the total number of students who have followed the course are employed by the public sector. There is very little leaking from the public to the private sector in Mozambique for the simple reason that the private sector is still relatively underdeveloped.

Apparently, a new salary system has been introduced in the Civil Service. The point appears to be to stimulate the recruitment and further secondment of people with university degrees. As an example, a Head of Department earns 4,070,000 per month in basic salary (USD 230). This is being increased by a further 40% if the holder of this position has a BSc, and by 60% if he holds

¹ It appears that the remedial courses in English have been dropped since 1995. Source is Manuel Paulo, National Local Administrator, Maputo

a *Licenciatura*. A MSc or a Postgraduate Degree from SOAS makes so far no difference because these degrees are not formally recognized in Mozambique. However, there is at present some discussion if holders of these degrees ought to be offered 20% on top of the basic salary. A person with a *Licenciatura* and MSc would then net an extra 80% on top of the basic salary.

Salary incentives to education

There are very large salary differences between private and government sectors. A department head in government will have a hard time reaching 10 million meticaïs a month. The same person in private sector would have a salary of about 30 million. Traditionally the salary structure in the government has been based almost exclusively on seniority. This has now changed. Recently (April 1999) a new salary system has been introduced in the Civil Service. One of the motives for the reform is said to be to stimulate the recruitment and further secondment of people with university degrees. As an example, a Head of Department earns 4,070,000 per month in basic salary (USD 230). This is being increased by a further 40% if the holder of this position has a BSc, and by 60% if he holds a *Licenciatura*. A MSc or a Postgraduate Degree from SOAS makes so far no difference because these degrees are not formally recognized in Mozambique. However, there is at present some discussion if holders of these degrees ought to be offered 20% on top of the basic salary. A person with a *Licenciatura* and MSc would then net an extra 80% on top of the basic salary.

AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM BY THE BANK OF MOZAMBIQUE

It is interesting to compare the results of the tracer study and the interviews with an evaluation carried out by the Bank of Mozambique in 1998. According to this the general impact of the MSc program is as summarized as follows:

1. DE approach allows the bank to train a greater number of employees at the same time that they are kept at their work. The time they are on leave for studying is very little;
2. The courses promote self-study, one of the bank perspectives;
3. The courses have contributed to continuing the process of professional integration of graduated employees and also of those who didn't graduate but have improved their macroeconomic understanding;
4. The areas of specialization of the MSc program are very related to the bank interest;
5. The content of the courses has direct application to the bank activities in terms of negotiation skills and management of economic reforms;
6. It gives also an understanding of economic and financial phenomena and allows due intervention;
7. The major impact can be measure by the level of intervention, negotiation and management capacity that Mozambique shows at local and international levels;
8. Some of the graduates are in key positions at the BM.

Some difficulties faced by the students when attending the program:

1. The national system of education is very theoretical and this makes it difficult for the student to develop certain skills;
2. Differences between the assessment systems of Mozambique and Britain;
3. The students' low level of English;
4. Inexperienced local tutors.

During these years (1994–98) a total of 15 employees have completed the MSc degree and 3 received diploma in financial economics.

3. Cost efficiency

We have not come across any documents that represent an audited report of the costs of the program in Mozambique. The documents we have had access to are the following:

- i) Budgets by SOAS for the different cohorts;
- ii) A Sida report of 1997 that lists approximate costs accrued by the program up to 1997;
- iii) A printout from Sida in Mozambique listing the total disbursements over the period 1989 to 1999 to the program.

Neither the in budgets, nor in the Sida overview, nor in the Sida print-out, have the total expenditure been broken down to cover the different activities (DEP, 1st year and 2nd year of the MSc program separated, fixed costs, variable costs, development costs, operational costs, etc).

For this reason it becomes extremely difficult to arrive at reliable figures relating to the cost efficiency of the different parts of the program.

The most reliable data we have, apparently, are the accumulated costs as entered in the Sida book-keeping system in Maputo. According to Sida in Maputo this overview contains the total expenditure over the whole period

It also seems appropriate, therefore, to base our estimates on the final accounts of the project as they stand at the Sida office in Maputo as per 23.08.99. The figures were given in an interview with a representative of Sida and they represent the accumulated costs attributed to the project in Mozambique. Please note that the use of a flat conversion rate SEK/GBP is an oversimplification, and that a one to one comparison of the annual figures entered as Sida disbursements and those of the SOAS budgets cannot tally completely.

Table 3, below, presents the figures as they are entered on an annual basis:

Appendix 2. Table 3: Accumulated costs per annum and Conversion to GBP

Fiscal Year	Accumulated costs per annum (all figures are in SEK)			Conversion to GBP (conversion rate SEK/GBP 12,50)
1989/90		2,709,066		216,725
1990/91		2,659,225		212,738
1991/92		1,791,977		143,358
1992/93		1,773,369		141,870
1993/94		3,609,682		312,775
1994/95		4,072,564		325,805
1995/96	i)	4,623,753	2,830,501	7,454,254
1997	i)	1,321,673	1,154,254	2,475,927
1998	ii)	3,331,000	266,480	
1999	iii)	161,000	12,880	
Totals		33,647,746		iv) 2,691,820

NB: It is somewhat unclear what activities the accumulated costs from 1989–90 and 1990–91 are referring to, since the first students were recruited in 1991.

- i) In the fiscal years of 1995–96 and 1997 project costs are logged under two different main entries in the Sida accounts book in Maputo. The accumulated costs (7,5”) have been attributed

to the SOAS program, but Sida's representative is not sure why the entries have been made separately. The same appears to be the case of the fiscal year 1997.

- ii) This fiscal year covers altogether 18 months due to the introduction of a fiscal year that follows the calendar.
- iii) The figures entered in 1999 are covering costs accrued in 1998.
- iv) This sum does not tally 100% with the figures in the column since the sums have been rounded off.

Comments

1. In establishing the cost of the operational part of the program, the accumulated costs of about SEK 5,3 mill – for 1989/90 and 1990/91 – have been deleted since these are costs that are not directly related to the operational phase of the program. To what extent these are investment costs covering the development of course material have not been established with absolute certainty, since no one in Sida, Maputo, would know what activities the disbursements of these years were meant to cover.
2. After having checked with Sida in Stockholm it is likely that this sum has been allocated for the development of the MSc program. Interviews with Sida staff also reveals that a corresponding sum of money (SEK about 5 mill) has been made available to the development of the program through FOM (*Försöksverksamhet och Metodutveckling*) in 1992. There is, however, no document that can substantiate this assertion.
3. If both these assumptions prove to be correct, Sida has also funded the MSc by some SEK 10 mill in course investments. These are costs that must be added to the operational costs of the MSc program.

In 1995–96 we get an overlap due to a change in fiscal years in the Swedish public administration.

A reconstruction of the SOAS budgets from 1990/91 up to 1998 show the following approximate figures:

Appendix 2. Table 4: Budgets of SOAS

Year	The Budgets of SOAS in GBP	Converted to SEK
1990–1991	251,852	3,148,150
1991–1992	339,737	4,247,163
1992–1993	123,174	1,539,675
1994–1996	685,535	8,569,188
1996–1998	698,420	8,730,250
Totals	2,098,754	2,62,34,425

At a flat rate of exchange of SEK 11,75 to the GBP the budgets of SOAS and the registered disbursements of Sida 1991–99 would tally completely. However, there have been considerable fluctuations in the rates of exchange, and the conversions in Mozambique are for all the years based on a flat rate of exchange between the GBP and the SEK of 1/12,5.

Cost efficiency estimates

The students have stayed with the program for longer or shorter periods of time pursuing different goals according to their own ambitions and abilities. We can assume that the master degrees are

more costly (estimated two years of study plus residential school) than the others, and that the Postgraduate diplomas (one year of study) are more costly than the DEP students (about six months).

There is no information of cost disbursements per cohort per annum. Therefore the only way of estimating the relative distribution of cost upon the different degrees that have been awarded, is to use differentiated weighting of the costs of the different parts of the program. It is reasonable to posit that:

- A. 61 MSc counts for 2,5 each
- B. 28 Postgraduate Degrees counts for 1 each
- C. 17 Diploma in Economic Principles counts for 0,5 each

Based on this it may further be assumed that the 61 MScs have cost about 77% of the total expenditure, the Postgraduates about 14% and the DEP graduates 9%. This would give a suggested distribution of cost per degree at the various levels:

- A. One MSc Degree: SEK 311,405
- B. One Postgraduate Degree: SEK 123,349
- C. One DEP Diploma: SEK 65,302

Based on the accumulated figures entered in 1996 the Sida office in Stockholm was informed of the costs of the program, and in particular the cost per student. In an e-mail (2/12/96) it was pointed out that the level of cost per student in the fourth cohort of the program ought not to exceed the cost of actually sending the students to an educational institution in for instance South Africa. As it stands it may appear as if this would have been a less costly approach.

It may also be of some interest that under the new program (starting in 1999) the Bank of Mozambique appears to have a contract with SOAS where they estimate a spending of about GBP 18,000 (SEK 220,500) per student over two years.² If they had registered their students as individual students and not as a cohort, the student fees would have been about GBP 6,000 for the whole degree. The cost of local tuition will be additional.

4. Alternatives to SOAS DE-program

Cost-effectiveness of the Program

To assess the cost-effectiveness of an educational program is a difficult exercise mainly due to lack of quantitative or reliable data. One has to compare the program against realistic alternatives – intensive on-campus training in periods, evening classes without the input of DE, sending staff to UK to follow the courses, sending staff to South Africa, or other countries. The DE program of SOAS can be assessed against comparable DE from other institutions, in the UK; USA; Canada, and Australia, maybe also from other countries.

On the benefits side, we know that competence development has been achieved. Not only have a large number of students matriculated from a masters program. They also report to have had an overall positive experience throughout the learning process and they feel more competent at work. Many of our informants report to be using their hard won competence every week. Their employers report that their institutions (i.e. the Ministry of Education and the Bank of Mozambique) perform better than a few years back and they attribute this fact – if not solely – to the rising number of graduates from the SOAS program. What this is worth in the context of economic

² According to Adriano Maleane, Governor of the Bank of Mozambique.

development in a very poor and war-ridden country is of course impossible to estimate. We may, however, assume that it must be worth a lot.

Alternatives to the distance education method

Several of the officers interviewed in the government said that they would strongly prefer to study full time for 2–4 months instead of studying and working at the same time. It would be much more efficient to study full time. And there should be no problem for us to do it. The ministry should arrange work so as to allow that to happen. Many people in the ministry failed the course because it was too difficult to study and work at the same time. There are many examples of higher officers, even department heads which go away on month long courses e.g. for English language studies in South Africa.

The mission has been able to obtain an estimate of the actual current cost of full time graduate studies abroad. The example comes from a 2 years program in Glasgow for graduate studies:

Tuition fees would come to about 10,000 pounds. Board and living costs could be calculated to about 400 pounds per month for 24 months. Two round-trip plane tickets from Mozambique to Glasgow cost about 2000 pounds. This would make a total of 21,600 pounds, or about SEK 300,000.

According to information from Sida, at the time the project was being planned, there were few realistic alternatives to the DE program offered by SOAS/Sida. This sounds reasonable. Since not even the Open University in UK had this program at the time, very few other institutions – if any – would have the competence at this time to launch such programs in the DE mode. Today this has changed dramatically, as there are now many universities all over the world who offer economics education also at masters level.

An alternative to DE would be to send the staff to a university abroad to follow the program. The management of the benefiting institutions in Mozambique was against this solution because the staff that was recruited to the program could not be substituted by other staff.

Another alternative could have been to organize intensive sessions of three weeks or more in Maputo and to use tutors from the UK or another country to run the classes. This would also, however, have caused disruption of working routines in the Bank and in the Ministries. Evening classes over a period of two to three years may also have been an alternative, but this would be very demanding upon the students because this is a very rigid regimen that gives the students extremely little flexibility. The objective was to organize competence development in a way that offered the students maximum flexibility. The answer to this problem is very often to organize flexible learning based upon the DE mode of instruction.

5. Quality

Knowledgeable persons, interviewed by the mission, with good insights in both the government and the University spheres, have argued forcefully that academic quality requirements in distance education course are inevitably lower than in regular graduate training. A student studying in the evenings, while at the same time holding a regular job, can therefore not achieve the same educational level as a full time student. For full-time graduate students the demands are simply higher. An example was given of a student who passed the SOAS course but experienced considerable problems at a similar Harvard course, which he took later on.

In these persons' opinion the coverage in distance education must in practice – if not in theory – be smaller or narrower. Asked directly whether they think that the quality of the SOAS graduates is the

same as of full time regular graduate students the answer was always a more or less emphatic “no”. One expatriate professor of economics had seen at least one thesis, written by a SOAS graduate, which in his opinion, would not have passed a regular (i.e. full time on-campus) masters program. In his opinion it is very unlikely and perhaps unrealistic to expect that the quality of Mozambique students with distance education could be as high as for others. Some of the SOAS students also speak very bad English

Several observers emphasized that the quality of different graduates is not uniform. Just like anywhere there are students of differing educational backgrounds, differing ability and differing interest. That is natural. As in Vietnam and Cambodia, it was pointed out that there is no tradition in the Mozambique bureaucracy to critically discuss and think independently. This cultural inhibiting trait is now however said to be starting to change.

6. Use and application of knowledge (Effect of program)

Even if all the students in the program do not reach the same high quality level, the knowledge acquired has generally been well applied in the students’ job performance. There is no doubt that the capacity for economic analysis in the Government is much higher today than some years ago. In the country’s transitory period from a centrally planned to market economy a program like the one provided by SOAS was very needed and played a big role. Many Government officers are today able to understand and to discuss economic issues. At the Finance ministry the readiness and capacity and knowledge for economic policy analysis and formulation and negotiations with the Bretton-Woods is today much better. One SOAS graduate interviewed, a director at the ministry of finance, testified that *“for me and colleagues the course was very important. The courses gave us many tools to analyze the economy, and to understand how financial issues can help the country’s development...In 1997 we began a new system of budgeting. The SOAS course has helped in much of this work.”*

There is today considerably more opposition and constructive critique from the Mozambique side *visavis* the Bretton Woods. Earlier, one high level official testified, *“it was always ‘yes sir!’ to IMF. We would accept everything uncritically.”* The reason for the change is maturity as time goes by, coupled with better knowledge.

Most of the SOAS students are still in the government. Many of them have received better jobs.

But many have not seen their salaries rise – at least not so far – in spite of the education which they have acquired. Therefore, one is led to think that if the students were willing to make the sacrifice to complete their studies, while at the same time working full time, they perceived it to be important for their work.

There are, however, also SOAS graduates in Mozambique who are *not* using the knowledge acquired in the SOAS courses in their jobs. Some have changed jobs, others are in private industry. Many graduates – either with domestic or foreign degrees – will choose to work in the private sector because of the much higher salaries. The government is disadvantaged in competing for the best graduates, and is continuously in search of highly qualified economist.

The Central Banks need for economists

Earlier there were no economists to be found in the local labor market. Therefore the Bank, even if its high salary scale enables it to offer competitive salaries, had no other recourse than to train its own employees if it wanted to enhance its capacity in economic analysis. The only (economically) feasible way to do this was on paid employment time. Programs like the SOAS therefore served a very valuable purpose.

Today the situation is different. If an employer is willing and able to pay it is possible to find economists, even with a Ph.D. level, in the labor market. The Central Bank's salary package is competitive with the private sector if one includes various benefits. This makes it at least 3 times higher than the salaries normally paid in government. In the Bank's estimation, however, still today it may be feasible to do its own in-house training even at advanced graduate level. The Central Bank today has a graduate distance education program implemented by SOAS and financed by the World Bank. This is part of a larger capacity building program which the World Bank finances in also other institutions of the government. The SOAS program in the Bank started in February 1999.

Political will versus macroeconomic capability/knowledge.

Both political will and economic knowledge are essential to reform the society towards a modern market economy. Both exist in the Mozambique government today. Since 1992 the government has been genuinely convinced of the need for liberal market reform, and today the market liberal model has taken over completely in Mozambique, but there are still some pockets of opposition. An important factor with respect to the government's enhanced capacity is the dynamic, political process and its pact with civil society, not only with political parties. There is a certain maturity process, which does not, at least not primarily, have to do with education.

Still today in the Mozambican government the number of high level key officers who are committed to market reform is limited. A lot is therefore seen to hinge on those influential individuals that today are seen to be the driving forces behind the restructuring programs. In donor circles there is some concern that if these key people left their jobs this would put the success of the economic reform program in jeopardy.

Several sources of economic knowledge

According to some observers the Mozambican government, compared to most of its African neighbors, is today relatively well off when it comes to knowledge and capability of macroeconomics and financial analysis. But this is obviously not solely a result of the SOAS program as there are many other graduates in economics apart from those of SOAS.

One important reason why the government's knowledge and analytic capacity for economic reform and macroeconomic policy-making have increased is the presence of senior economic advisers from the *Harvard International Institute for Development, HIID*. This group has since three years a team of four senior economists at Ph.D.-level stationed full time in the ministry of finance providing economic advice. The HIID group is well integrated in the work of the Ministry of Finance, and receive their salaries from the Ministry's payroll.

Enhanced dialogue with the IMF and the World Bank

The Government's negotiations with the Bretton Woods institutions are obviously functioning better today than before. The Mozambique side prepared most of the draft of the *Policy Framework Paper (PFP)*, which was to be negotiated with the IMF and the World Bank. In preparation for this the government assembled all foreign donors and presented the government's draft proposal for the matrix of conditionality, which forms part of the PFP-document, and asked the donors to submit their oral as well as written comments.

In recent years the World Bank as well as the IMF have been much more open towards the other donors when processing and negotiating the agreement with the government. Before each new PFP document the IMF representative approaches other donors to collect their comments. There are two main documents negotiated and agreed upon between the government and the Bretton Woods Institutions:

Firstly, there is the *Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies*, which is a confidential document agreed upon between the Government and the IMF. The memorandum contains a table specifying various targets regarding economic and financial factors, which according to the analysis of the two parties must be attained in order for the program and the funding to go forward. These targets are not published. *Secondly*, there is the *Policy Framework Paper (PFP)*, which is public and contains a “translation” to the public what is already contained in the memorandum, and also includes analysis of and objectives and activity plans (so called “benchmarks”) for the various sectors of the economy. The PFP also contains a matrix with all the targets or conditions, including timetables, which the government agrees to implement, as a condition for the program and the funding to go forward.

The analysis and all preparations on the government side regarding the agreements with the World Bank and the IMF are all done by a *Technical Committee*, which is also responsible for the negotiations. Of the committee’s member half have completed the Master of Science program financed by Sida. This committee has enjoyed good continuity in recent years, not having lost any of its members since the programs with IMF/WB started in the beginning of the 1990s. This has been important for the quality of the committee’s work, and is seen as having considerably enhanced its capacity to negotiate. Today the programs with the World Bank and the IMF are of high technical quality, and the government possesses good capability of analyzing, discussing and negotiating with the Bretton woods.

IMF continually offers various courses in the financial and macroeconomic fields. These are mostly shorter courses lasting 2–3 weeks. However there was also one lasting 3 months in financial programming in Washington. The IMF courses, in general, are oriented towards practical needs, and can thus not be directly compared to the SOAS program, which is theoretical education at graduate level.

7. Contribution to enhanced economic policy-making in the government and improved economic performance (Impact 1)

The mission believes that that the program’s objective of contributing to better economic performance has largely been achieved. This is a conclusion based on interviews with a large number of (key) people and on extensive documentation. Our reasoning is largely of an *inductive* kind:

Firstly, we have at the output level found that the graduated students have in deed acquired good understanding of macroeconomics and financial economics.

Secondly, interviews and direct observations have convinced us that many of the students, including a dozen or so persons in high positions, are applying their knowledge in their jobs – old or new ones.

Thirdly, we know for a fact that the governments economic performance is today much better than it used to be.

Therefore, with those points – even if we can not prove that the SOAS knowledge has verifiably contributed to the improvement – we have no choice other than to assume that also the SOAS knowledge must have contributed. To assume otherwise would seem unreasonable.

In making the conclusion we are also somewhat influenced by the fact that among the SOAS graduates were some of individuals most instrumental in carrying out the country’s economic reforms, namely the Governor of the Central Bank, the Minister of Finance, and the country’s Prime Minister. These and the other graduates have spent much of their free time to complete the program without, usually, having received a higher salary because of it. One is led to assume that they did it because they felt it was important for their jobs. It would thus also seem reasonable to assume that

the knowledge acquired must have contributed towards achieving the improved economic performance.

In summary, we find that the Sida funded SOAS program has achieved its long run or main objective of the program. It has had an important effect on the country's ability to implement the economic reforms, and it has therefore contributed to the improvement of the country's economic performance.

8. Institution building (Impact 2)

No achievement

As for an impact with respect to institutionalization at the National University it is clear that little or no such impact has been achieved in this program. There has been no real co-operation of the SOAS program with the economics faculty. Nor was there any real host institution for the SOAS program. In the beginning the program used office space in EMOSE, an insurance company.

Even if the objective regarding institutionalization had been formulated less ambitiously – in the agreement it says that: “*as a result of the project the university would acquire a capability of independently continue a program of this type*” – the objective of institutionalization would still not have been achieved because nothing has really been built up at the university. This is understandable, for the economics faculty has been in great disorder all through the project period. Before one can start any graduate program one must stabilize and raise the quality of the undergraduate program. This year only 6 students graduated and last year there were only 2. Until 1992 for some years the university did not enforce the diploma or dissertation work requirement for lack of tutors. For a long time there was no dean at the economics faculty.

There was really no foundation for Sida to have created a project which would have contributed to any significant institutionalization, since there was little in the faculty of economics to build on.

The faculty of economics at the Mondlane University

Observers with insight into the faculty of economics at the *Universidade Eduardo Mondlane* (UEM) characterize the situation there as one of lack of leadership and cohesion. In comparison, it is pointed out that the agricultural faculty seem to be functioning well. The staff at the economic faculty today consists of four full time, and 15 part-time or temporary teachers, most of them teaching only a course or two. In the last decade there have been only two to four students graduating per year. One member of the Harvard team spent over a year at the economics faculty as a contribution to the efforts of reviving the institution. But little progress has been achieved. The problem is not seen to be one of money, as there are today said to be enough potentially available aid money for the economics faculty. Surprisingly, the University salary level in MOZAMBIQUE is substantially higher than in many or most of the neighboring African countries. A professor today receives 800–1000 USD, a department director 2–3000 USD, and a lecturer about USD 500.

There is a current proposal by the *Africa Capacity Building Program (ACBP)* to set up an institute, attached to the faculty of economics, which would engage in studies and consultancies. Skepticism was expressed regarding the realism of this proposals because the total pool of professors or researchers is so small that it would be difficult to recruit the people, unless one took away those professors teaching at the university now. But then university would go without needed teachers.

Conflicting objectives

In order for Sida to achieve its impact goal No 1 (that of contributing to an impact on economic performance), there was not really a great possibility, at the same time, to achieve impact No 2, i.e.

that of institution building. In fact, in the case of Mozambique in the early 1990s, one may say that the two objectives were incompatible or conflicting. If the main objective was to transmit knowledge in economics to the government, which was seen as a very urgent need at the time, it would be impossible, at the same time, to build up a university institution, since the preconditions for the latter were not there. This we know at least when looking back today. Possibly one may argue that at the time of starting the project it should have been clear that it would be very difficult to achieve the institutionalization objective. Therefore it is surprising that it was not expressed in a more general or non-committing manner, such as e.g. that “the program should, if at all possible, be implemented such that it helps build up future capacity and knowledge at the local university”.

Future development

The University was initially asked to host the program by the Ministry of Finance, but declined. (According to one source an important reason for this declination was that the University could not accept the idea of having to receive instructions from the Ministry of Finance). It appears that the program in its present form will not be integrated in the other regular study programs of the UEM. An important reason for that is that the program represents the Anglo-American Master of Science degree, and as such does not fit into the present organization of study programs, which is according to the traditional Portuguese concept. The learning concepts of the Anglo-Sachsan and Portuguese respective traditions are different. The management of the UEM views the academic contents of the SOAS Master of Science program with more than a small portion of skepticism. According to one source, the SOAS program represents a shortcut to a MSc, and it can not be as comprehensive as it should be in order to comply with the academic requirements that UEM would accept. However, there are signs that the management of UEM has become interested in the distance teaching methodology, and that it hopes to be able to launch its own distance education programs. There are also indications that the UEM wants to develop its own MSc in Economics. This program would be designed to fit into the present structure of the university.

If these indications should materialize there is perhaps a case for concluding that the Sida financed SOAS program has contributed to motivating an institutional development at the UEM. However, as matters stand today no concrete steps of institutionalization of the program have been taken, and the SOAS MSc is still not recognized by the UEM. This is in spite of considerable pressure from the Ministry of Finance to have UEM integrate the program into the UEM regular curricula. Nor has it escaped the attention of the UEM that the Bank of Mozambique on its own is going to finance the relatively expensive program over a two-year period. The Director of the Bank of Mozambique expresses his hopes in an interview that after a two-year period there will be some kind of a local solution to this problem.

9. Personal benefits to students (Impact 3)

Most of the students interviewed in Mozambique reported to be able to utilize the competence they had acquired through the program. Some reported of their job tasks having been extended to special assignments where their competence was needed, and some attributed at least some of the effects of the program to their career development. The students emphasized that they gained “more respect” and are “more confident” in the working situation. The promotions that have taken place were however by the students not seen as direct consequences of the MSc degree.

Attachment: Summary of Tracer study

Questionnaire Results from Mozambique

Introduction

During the period 1991 and 1998, Sida has financed a distance education MSc program in Financial Economics in Mozambique at a total cost of approximately 33,647,746 SEK. Altogether 112 people participated in the Sida funded MSc program out of which 20 were women. This evaluation covers a sample of 30 students. Only 24 of them filled in and returned the questionnaires, two could not be contacted and four were on business trip. Thus, all the findings will be based on the final sample of 24 students. The questionnaires were returned by fax. So in one case a page was missing and in another a question related to the employer was unreadable. Table 5 shows the distribution of the sampled students in relation to the total student population.

Appendix 2. Table 5: Distribution of the population and the sample

Cohort	Admitted Students			Sampled Students		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1991	18	3	21	1	0	1
1993	34	4	38	1	2	3
1995	19	10	29	5	4	9
1996	12	1	13	4	1	5
1997	9	2	11	2	1	3
1999 ³	8	2	10	3	0	3
Total	100	22	122	16	8	24

The Sample

The sample includes 16 male and 8 female students in ages ranging from 34 to 57. The average age for the students in the sample was 41 as per September 1999 (see Table 6). The majority of the sampled students (13) had a BSc degree in economics before participating in the MSc program. Four were graduates in engineering, three in economics, one in social science, one in medicine, one in international relations. One did not answer. This means that 19 of the students had received university education at undergraduate level and five did not have a degree. Women represent 33% of the total sample because in the sampling process we tried to have a good gender distribution.

Appendix 2. Table 6: Students by age and gender

Age/ Gender	31–35	36–40	41–45	46–50	51–55	56–60	No answer	Total	Average age
Male	2	6	4	1	1	1	1	16	42
Female	3	3	2	0	0	0	0	8	38
Both	5	9	6	1	1	1	1	24	41

Work Situation

Today 20 of the students in the sample are employed by the public sector and four are employed by the private sector. The flow from public to private sector is almost non-existent. Only 2 students moved to private sector and there is one student employed by the private sector today whose previous employer is unknown to us. Three students have changed employer (from public sector to

³ Note that this cohort is not funded by Sida. Due to lack of information in the beginning of this study, 3 students of the 1999 cohort were included in the sample.

public sector) and 17 have the same employer as they had at the time of the course. It should be noted that one of the employer organizations has changed, namely from Banco Popular de Desenvolvimento to Banco Austral, currently a private institution. Tables 7 and 8 below show the work situation of the students before they entered the MSc program and their work situation today, respectively.

Appendix 2. Table 7: Employers at the time of the course and number of students

Employers	Number of students
Ministry of Education	1
Banco Austral	1
Banco Popular de Desenvolvimento	2
Eduardo Mondlane University	1
Bank of Mozambique	5
IDIL (Institute for Industry Development)	1
Ministry of Trade and Tourism	6
Ministry of Defense	1
Ministry of Transport and Communication	1
IPEX (Institute for Export Promotion)	1
Beira Hospital	1
Ministry of Labor	1
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1
Organization not mentioned	1
Total	24

Appendix 2. Table 8: Employers today and number of students

Employers	Number of Students
Ministry of Health	1
Banco Austral	3
Eduardo Mondlane University	1
Bank of Mozambique	6
IDIL (Institute for Industry Development)	1
Ministry of Trade and Tourism	6
GPZ (Zambeze Valley Development Authority)	1
Ministry of Transport and Communication	1
IPEX (Institute for Export Promotion)	1
Beira Hospital	1
Ministry of Labor	1
Banco de Fomento e Exterior	1
Total	24

The flow of students from one employer to another has been insignificant. However, 12 students have changed positions and duties (3 female and 9 male) between time of the course and today as seen in Table 9. The status change column indicates our understanding of whether the change in position has brought promotion (1), demotion (-1) or remained the same (0). In one case the student did not report his previous position. Therefore we considered as if the position remained the same. Another case is that of the IT manager who changed position to project leader but was not considered a promotion. In general, the students do *not* view the promotions as direct effect of the MSc program.

Appendix 2. Table 9: Career development between the time for the course and today by gender

Cases	Before MSc course	After MSc course	Status Change
	Male	Male	+/-
1	Director	Financial Advisor	1
2	Accounting Director	Deputy Director	1
3	Economist	Manager	1
4	Economist	Economist	0
5	Economist	Economist	0
6	Division Chief	Division Chief	0
7	Provincial Delegate	Provincial Delegate	0
8	Head of Department	Deputy Director	1
9	Head of Department	Managing Director	1
10	Head of Department	Head of Department	0
11	Head of Department	Head of Department	0
12	Deputy Minister	Deputy Minister	0
13	Technician	Economic Dept. Director	1
14	Technician	Technician	0
15	IT Manager	Project Leader	0
16	No answer	Director	0
	Female	Female	
17	Economist	Manager	1
18	Unit Chief	Unit Chief	0
19	Unit Chief	Unit Chief	0
20	Deputy Minister	Deputy Minister	0
21	Doctor	Doctor	0
22	Junior Official	Division Chief	1
23	Technician	Technician	0
24	Head of Department	Permanent Secretary	1
	Total "same"		15
	Total promotions		9
	Grand total		24

Participation in the MSc Program

Most of the students involved in the study stated that they applied to the MSc program for the following reasons: they were interested in the program (14); they needed it for their work (13); and their bosses advised them to apply (2). It should be noted that, in relation to this question, the students could present more than one reason.

The diagram above shows the progression of the students in the sample for the period: January 1991 to August 1999. Of the 24 students who entered the program, 3 dropped out after completing "a little course work", and 2 indicated that they were continuing their studies while 1 did not answer. Out of the 19 students who completed "most course work", 2 dropped out, 2 were continuing their studies and 2 did not answer. Of the 13 students who completed "all course work", 3 were continuing their studies, 1 received post-graduate diploma and 9 completed their thesis. However, only 7 students graduated at MSc level in Financial Economics while the other 2 received post-graduate diploma.

Have the students participated in any other study activities after they began the MSc program?

Table 10 shows the programs in which some of the students (13) have participated after they begun the MSc.

Appendix 2. Table 10: Participation in other programs

Type of Education or Training	Number of responses
Training workshops given by the Government	4
Other workshop	5
Course given by the Government	3
Other course	5
Study visit	2
University course in economics or related field	1
Another university degree	2
Total “other programs”	22

Usefulness of the MSc Program

As seen in Table 11, almost all students found the course “rather” or “very useful” for carrying out their duties at work both today and at the time of the course. However, one student found the course “a little useful” because it has no direct application to his present job.

Appendix 2. Table 11: Usefulness of the course in carrying out duties

	At the time of the course	At the present work
Not useful, a hindrance	0	0
Not useful, not a hindrance	0	0
Perhaps a little useful	0	1
Rather useful	6	5
Very useful	18	18
Was necessary in order to get or keep the job	0	0
Total	24	24

Below follow some comments from the students, illustrating in what way the course has been useful:

- I enjoy more respect from other colleagues and institution. I feel more comfortable to work with any team in matter of economics. The quality of work I am doing is more appreciated.
- The program gave me insights to carry out my tasks, especially on evaluating the market risk of lending in Mozambique.
- It was useful. It allows me to be updated with macroeconomic and financial analysis and reminds me all the time of the linkages between all variables.

Changes in work and in organization

Almost all of the students involved in this study (22 out of 24), have expressed that the MSc program has helped them in making changes in their work. On the other hand, only 13 stated that they have been able to apply changes in their respective organizations. The students see the improvements made in their work as a direct consequence of the knowledge acquired in the course, while changes in the organization are seen as indirectly related to such improvements.

Below follow some of the comments made by the sampled students on this respect:

- As advisor in the MOH, I introduced new planning and budgeting methods.
- As deputy director of the accounting department I made some changes.
- The course gave me new understanding of financial economics. I think it helped me to make changes since my work is more appreciated.
- The course helped me to gain more space and duties. I believe it also helped me to make changes in the organization since they gave me new position.
- I haven't made change in the organization because it is going down due to lack of financing from the Government.
- Feel much confident and have been improving the quality of my work. I have been trying to pass on my knowledge to my colleagues in the department.
- I have introduced other type of control and management of the finance material and human resources.
- I changed my reports (monthly reports) to my boss including some topics that I learned on the program.
- I understand better my work and its importance in the institution. I've learned different concepts that I used to use incorrectly. Thus the quality of my work has improved.
- Got better understanding of IMF and the World Bank position. This helped in drawing sector policies and strategies.
- I gained new concepts and became more fluent in English. This helped me to improve my work and indirectly to contribute to changes in the organization.
- Some changes have been made. But I feel that I would have selected other courses if no restriction were imposed.

The Distance Education Approach

Table 12 shows how satisfactory the distance education program has been to the students. Most of the students (12) expressed that there were “virtually no problem” with the technology while 10 stated that there has been some problems. As regards the support from the national host institution, 15 students were of the opinion that there were no problems. Eight students said there were some problems. In analyzing this question, it seems that the reason why the majority of the students said there were no problem at all is because there was no host institution in Mozambique. Those who said there were problems were referring to problems with local tutoring.

Appendix 2. Table 12: Students' level of satisfaction regarding the DE approach

	Technology	Support from local host institution	Support from the employer	Support from SOAS in home country	Support from SOAS in London
Major hinder	0	0	3		
Major problems	2	1			
Minor problems	8	7			
No problems	12	15			
Little support			1	2	0
Some support			1	6	2
Good support			18	15	11
No answer	2	1	1	1	11
Total	24	24	24	24	24

The majority of the students seemed to be satisfied with the support from the employer. However, three had problems in being released from work to attend the course and prepare for the examinations. This constituted a major hinder for them to overcome.

Concerning the support from SOAS in the home country, 15 students expressed to be satisfied although 8 students considered the support they have got insufficient. It seemed that there had been some confusion regarding the support from SOAS received in London. Eleven students did not respond because they had not been to London attending the residential school. Even among the 11 students who answered that the support was good, 2 of them had not been to London and consequently, they could not have an opinion on this question.

General comments on the MSc program

The comments below demonstrate the students' general opinion on the program. All in all the students were positive and considered the course relevant, useful, and of good quality.

Positive Comments

- The program enhanced the knowledge obtained from previous courses. The content corresponds to the level of the course. The disadvantage with DE approach is lack of permanent contact with teachers.
- The quality of teaching and the program in general was good.
- The content was good. The differences in relation to other courses are the quality and the methods adopted.
- DE is very good and useful in case where students have knowledge and know the gaps that they need to fulfill.
- DE approach is very useful for the majority of people who have families and want to study. The quality is good and the course has an international level.
- This kind of approach is the best for our country because we can study having full time at work.
- I would prefer DE because it gives me more time and flexibility.

Other comments

- Good quality. It is important for complementing the knowledge acquired before. However, the program should be adjusted taking into account the reality of developing countries.
- SOAS may give more time than one month to macroeconomic course.
- The textbooks were very long and generalized and the assignments were given back out of the date of sending the next, which is bad for the students. It would be better if the course was more specific on topics and less general.
- The DE approach provides us with all necessary literature but it requires students' efforts, commitment, responsibility and planning.
- The program has good quality but bad regulations because it doesn't take into account that the students are in the first place employees.
- Residential approach is better in the sense that the students are more committed with their duties in relation to the university.
- It is necessary to improve the contact between students and SOAS teachers for assistance during the studies.
- I think that in part II, econometric analysis and applications might be compulsory. However the three courses of list A and list B should be available to comprise the institutional needs. As it is now, it seems that more emphasis is given to the courses of list A.

Appendix 3

Country Information Vietnam

Attachment: *SUMMARY OF TRACER STUDY*

1. Introduction

Origins

The MSc project in Vietnam originates in 1989 when Sida decided to support the economic reforms under *Doi Moi* and the economic reform package agreed between Vietnam and the Bretton Woods institutions. At that time Sweden financed a research seminar and a few publications on economic reform. Subsequently it was found out that in all of Vietnam there was not one single person with an economics education from the west. That is when the proposal of financing a MSc training in Vietnam came up. The concrete idea to run the SOAS Distance education program in Financial economics in Vietnam came from Sida's Division for Democratic Governance, *DESA*.

The institutional development objective of developing a Vietnamese institution to be capable of taking over and in the future manage a distance education program of the same type as the SOAS program in financial economics was at the time seen as realistic by Sida. The *National Economics University* (NEU) was at the time not seen by Sida fully competent to be a contract partner to SOAS, nor was it deemed to be fully capable of running the program on its own. There was an “umbrella” decision 1994 by Sida covering 5 different projects, among them the MSc program and an MBA education program, also hosted by the NEU. For the Master of Science education program there were in all three formal financing decisions made by Sida: 1994, 1996 and 1997.

NEU

The National economics University, NEU is also host institution to a Master of Business Administration program financed by Sida and implemented by a Hongkong University. Sida has thus financed two master level education programs at NEU: the SOAS MSc program in financial economics and the MBA program. The SOAS program was the first time that a course had been given in a foreign language at NEU.

The MBA program was decided by Sida at the same time as the MSc education, but it was started somewhat later. The MBA program evolved into becoming a School of Economics within the NEU, and was inaugurated in a big ceremony in February 1998. A Canadian citizen worked as consultant for several years.

Phasing out

In 1996 Sida took a decision to phase out the MSc program within two years, after the third cohort was finished. This was a result of the decision by the Sida General Director to concentrate Sweden's aid to Vietnam to fewer projects, and the Embassy was asked to submit a proposal for the best candidate projects for phasing out. Sida considered the MSc program to be a good candidate because, after the second cohort, Sida did not see any tangible evidence that the program's institutional effect was being achieved. Of the programs two main objectives – to provide training and to promote institutional development – DESA in 1997 thought that only the first one had been attained, but not at all the 2nd one. As one former program officer observed: “*We were only conducting courses, not getting any institutional development*”. The NEU had not assigned sufficient staff, and was not

running the program actively. Also Sida felt that similar education was offered by other institutions in other programs.

Sida and the Embassy subsequently had extensive discussions with the NEU about the proposal to phase out. Today the decision to phase out, taken in 1997, has been “forgotten”, and it has been decided to continue the program into year 2000. But after that it will be phased out.

For the future, Sida has decided to limit its support to an institutional component within NEU, but not including the courses offered by SOAS.

No tender

No tender procedure was ever applied for procuring the consultant to implement the program. Nor was any Swedish University institution invited to participate. According to Sida there was in 1990/91 no Swedish University interested to become involved in a program like this.

In the early 1990s neither the habit of using tenders for procurement of consultants, nor the interest to use the Swedish resource base, were as developed as today. Today it would be difficult to imagine that an implementing consultant in a project of this magnitude could be procured without a tender.

Objectives

The main objectives of the program in Vietnam were to

- (1) Support the Doi Moi economic reform program by strengthening economic management and decision making capacity within ministries and other institutions, and to
- (2) Strengthen the National Economic University in its role as an institution for higher education. In the longer term the objective was to build up NEU's capacity such that it would be able to run the MSc program by Distance Education itself.

Referring to the project's goal hierarchy (as set out in Chapter II of the report), which shows the relationship between the output/effects level on the one hand and the impact on the other, it is important to point out that in the case of Vietnam this relationship is somewhat theoretical because the students in Vietnam were quite young. The idea being that the more junior the person the more difficult it will be to trace the relationship between the *use and application* in the workplace (*effect* of the program) of the knowledge acquired in the program (*output*) on the one hand, and any long term impact on the other.

2. Delivery and execution

The MSc program in Financial Economics in Vietnam started by a Qualifying Course in late 1992 and it has since then been run till 1998. The 3rd cohort received its master's degrees at a Graduation Ceremony in October 1999. The students of the first cohort were handpicked people at middle and higher level in the ministries, many of whom from the finance ministry and the central bank. For the 2nd and 3rd cohorts there were advertisements in the papers which attracted a large number of applicants.

The program has been financed by Sida at a total cost estimated to approximately MSEK 22.

Appendix 3. Table 1, The progression of the students

Year	Qualifying Course	Master of Science Program Fin Economics /Fin Management		Degree/Diploma Awarded
		Part I	Part II	
1992	24			
1993		14 FE		1 PGD
1994	48		13	12 MSc
1995		24 FE		1 MSc
1996	48		21	2 PGD – 20 MSc
1997		15 FE/10 FM		2 PGD
1998			14 FE/9 FM	23 MSc
1999		1 FM		
Totals	120	64	57	56 MSc

In addition one student was enrolled in 1999 as an “occasional student” in MSc in Financial Management. Out of the 64 students admitted in the MSc program, 5 completed the post-graduate Diploma, 2 dropped out, 56 completed the MSc degree in Financial Economics and Financial Management, and one is continuing his studies. Of the 64 students, 33 were male and 31 were female.

Recruitment and Selection

Broadly speaking the students had received information about the course through three main channels, – first by limited announcement within certain ministries, and later previous students, advertisements in the papers, and through TV. All students had a BA in Economics or Mathematics either from the NEU or from abroad.

As of the 2nd cohort a bilateral expert at Sida assisted in the selection process that was based on interviews and suitability of the students’ employment. Advertisements were placed in the newspapers. Applications from the public were sent to London. Then a representative from SOAS arrived and conducted interviews. There was a lot of pressure coming from those that were not admitted.

All 150 applicants were asked to write a short essay. Of these about 60 were invited to interviews which were conducted by a representative of SOAS and the expatriate local tutor in Hanoi. Of the interviewees 24 were selected.. The selection process has been quite “brutal” in that hundreds of people were allowed to sit for the initial tests and only 24 were admitted to the Qualifying Course of the 1st cohort whereas 48 were allowed to the Qualifying Courses of the 2nd and 3rd cohort. Upon the final examination of the Qualifying Courses 14 of the most successful students were admitted to the 1st cohort of the master’s program, whereas 24 and 25 students continued to the 2nd and 3rd cohort respectively. The competition between the students had been very fierce.

In practice the selection had been made in Hanoi, but formally the decision was communicated to the students from London. This was in order to avoid pressure from disappointed applicants who did not make it. The criteria applied to selecting the students were language proficiency in English, ability to reason and discuss using common sense, and an ability to think critically.

None of the admitted students had a basic qualification in Economics. They were therefore made to take a qualifying course for 6 months and an English course for 4,5 months. They had undergone tests in English language proficiency and economics before they were admitted to the qualifying course.

The selection of students appears to have been much more rigorous from an academic point view than it ever was in Mozambique. In Vietnam there have been tests of admission to the qualifying part of the program for hundreds of applicants as well as a final selection of the master's students in that only about 50% of the best students of the qualifying program were admitted to the master's program. However, this kind of selection process will make sure that the student cohort consists of very able and competitive students.

According to NEU's statistics there are many more applicant to the SOAS program than for half a dozen other foreign financed programs. One reason for this, it was pointed out in an interview, is that it is in Financial Economics, which is a very attractive subject today. Also, the quality of the training is regarded as being very good. For the 2nd cohort there were 500 applications.

The Qualifying Course

The Qualifying Course was delivered as traditional classroom education, with 3 lessons every day Monday to Friday over three months. The lectures were delivered by expatriate staff for the first and second cohort whereas the NEU took full responsibility for this part of the program in 1996 (3rd cohort).

The aim of the Qualifying Course was to offer intensive foundation courses in Mathematics, Statistics, Microeconomics, and Macroeconomics before the students commenced the master's program. In addition there was a proficiency course in written English. According to the students theses courses were of good quality but they had too little time to really digest all the subject matter.

The Master's Program

The program was delivered by CIEE, SOAS, of London University, and it is identical to the program that already was being delivered in Mozambique since 1991. However, from the start the combined input of classroom teaching, full-time expatriate tutors has been considerable. Even the employers' support has been somewhat more generous than it was in Mozambique.

The number of options

In Part II of the program the number of selected areas became more diversified for the 2nd and 3rd cohorts. The number of options was increased from four to nine so that the students could choose courses that better suited their needs. To our knowledge this increase in the number of courses that became available to the Vietnamese students were not opened in other countries.

Mixed mode rather than distance education

Again, the relatively substantial input of classroom teaching implies that the program can hardly be described as a distance education program in its conventional sense. It must rather be referred to as a mixed mode provision where the input of face-to-face teaching is close to what part-time on-campus students can expect in a traditional university program. This explains also in part the relatively high costs of the program. (See later).

The rate of success by Vietnamese students

The combination of full-time secondments of bilateral academic experts to the program and a rigorous selection process may explain the very high degree of program completion by the Vietnamese students. To what extent social and cultural factors, like the status of higher education, self-discipline, and peer support, etc. can explain the success rate of the program in Vietnam has not been ascertained by this evaluation.

General satisfaction with exceptions

The general impression is that the students are very satisfied with the program. The material developed by CIEE is highly praised by the students, so is the local administration and most of the local tuition and classroom teaching. This general impression is substantiated by the Vietnamese student survey.

The survey and the interviews reveal also that the students are not impressed by the technical support they have received, in particular they refer to limited access to PCs and that the program software that was made available was out-dated by the time they received it. Also, in the interviews it becomes clear that the CIEE was too slow in returning the assignments to the students. It was the norm rather than the exception that the students received their comments from the UK based tutors only after they had sent their next assignment along to London. (Source: Interviews with 11 students from all three cohorts).

SOAS paid the salary of this project administrator; but only about 10% of his time was devoted to SOAS business. Often NEU has conveyed suggestions to SOAS so as to improve on the administration of the program. NEU also wanted to adapt the literature and the case studies to better suit Vietnamese conditions. NEU would also like to include students from provincial towns into the program.

Distance education versus classroom education

It should be noted, however, that the students showed mixed feelings regarding the distance education approach in comparison with residential approach. Some students recognized the advantages of distance education approach but they still seem to prefer the residential approach. For more detailed comments by the students, see the summary of the Vietnamese tracer study.

Tutors

There were two full time tutors seconded to the program. These were financed by a special fund for junior professional traineeship at Sida (the Swedish name is BBE or *Biträdande Bilateral Expert*) One Swedish expatriate for two years, and one Vietnamese Ph.D. student from Lund married to a Swedish lady. The Swedish tutor in practice also acted as Sida's "man" in the program. The expatriate Vietnamese experienced some problems to get accepted in the beginning, but after a while was seen as functioning very well, even better than the Swedish tutor.

The tutor also gave (regular) classes and met with pupils about every second day. It is remarkable that it was not foreseen in the project document that there would be a need for an expatriate tutor/lecturer.

3. Cost efficiency

For several reasons, it has been extremely difficult to establish the correct expenditure of the MSc program activities.

1. In the documents that we have had access to there are a number of different budgets, the status of which is difficult to determine. Whether or not the document is the final budget or a draft budget or a budget proposal that has been approved or not, is not always clear. Nor is it entirely clear if the budgets referred to in the SOAS reports cover only the teaching of the Master's Program or also some or all of the activities related to the Qualifying Course.
2. In Vietnam, Sida is only able to report of the total expenditure as of July 1994, whereas the program started in September 1992. In addition the cost of the bilateral academic experts are not recorded at all at the Sida office in Hanoi. In order to establish the total costs in Vietnam, further analysis is necessary in Stockholm.

3. Even if the Sida office in Hanoi can produce records of expenditure, these sums do not tally with the budgets of SOAS.
4. We have not come across any document that report of an audited examination of program expenditure for any of the three cohorts that have received their master's education, – nor by Sida in Hanoi, nor by the local partners, nor by SOAS in London.
5. The fact that the budgets, fund allocations, and fund disbursements are given in at least three different currencies over a period covering seven to eight years with considerable variations in the rates of exchange, does not make our analysis any the easier. This is particularly true since it is relatively rare to find reference to the actual rate of exchange by which budgets, fund allocations, and disbursements ought to be compared.

For these reasons we cannot guarantee any degree of accuracy regarding the assessments of actual expenditure. What we hope to have done is to indicate the level of expenditure per cohort as well as suggesting a very tentative cost per student/master's degree.

Appendix 3. Table 2, The Disbursement of Sida since July 1994 up till September 1999

Year	Activity	2. Cohort	3. cohort	Additional Activities 1999–2000	Disbursement by Sida, Hanoi, (SEK)
1992	Qualifying Course 3 months				NA
1993/94	Master's Program				NA
1994/95		1,035,533			1,035,533
1995/96		4,663,635			4,663,635
1997		1,277,461	844,580		2,122,041
1998			4,871,802		4,871,802
1999			778,073	235,951	1,014,024
Totals		6,976,629	6,494,455	235,951	13,707,035
Totals in GBP i)		536,664	499,573		

i) Estimated rate of exchange SEK/GBP is 13,00

This overview of Sida disbursements was conveyed to the evaluation team in Hanoi and is based on the records at Sida's local office.

1st Cohort, 1992–1994, Budgets and Recorded Disbursement by Sida – Hanoi, SOAS Sources

Appendix 3. Table 3, Cost overview

Year	Activity	Total Budget by SOAS (GBP)	Draft Budget by NEU in GBP	Recorded Disbursement by Sida in GBP
1992	Qualifying Course est.	NA Est 100,000	NA	NA
1993–94	The Master's Program (The residential school is not included in the budget)	491,100	NA	NA
	The Residential School est.	NA Est 50,000	NA	NA
Total	Estimate	641,100		

Notes:

1. A budget regarding the cost of the Qualifying Course in 1992 is not to be found. Our estimate is based on the budget of the Qualifying Course in 1994. Since the Qualifying Course is run as traditional classroom education, and the cost of one class is much the same no matter how many students attend the class, we feel pretty safe in assuming that the cost of the Qualifying Course in 1992 is about the same as the one in 1994.
2. There are no records in Sida, Hanoi, of actual expenditure regarding the first cohort. The only available figures appear to be the SOAS budget, which does not contain the considerable cost of the residential school in London. An estimate based on half of the cost of the 2nd cohort is therefore added to the budget. (The 2nd cohort had 24 registered students whereas the first had 14 students).

Cost per Student 1st cohort

(In this case all permutations between SEK and GBP is based on a flat rate of exchange at 13/1)

Provided our estimate is correct we can assume that the Qualifying Course was run at a cost of GBP 4,167 or SEK 54,167 per student (based on 24 students in the Qualifying Course)

The total cost of the Master's Program – inclusive of the Residential School – may be estimated to GBP 541,100. With 14 students in the cohort the cost per student – over two years – can be estimated to be GBP 38,650 or SEK 502,450. If the costs of the Residential School for some reason was included in the budget of SOAS the cost per student of the 1st cohort is considerably lower; – SEK 455,929.

When the costs of the bilateral academic experts (BBE) are also taken into account this figure will of course have to be increased considerably.

2nd Cohort, 1994–1996, NEU, SOAS, and Sida Sources Budgets and Recorded Disbursement by Sida – Hanoi

Appendix 3. Table 4, Cost overview

Year	Activity	Total Budget by SOAS (GBP)	Draft Budget by NEU in GBP	Recorded Disbursement by Sida in GBP
1994	Qualifying Course	i) 114,000	126,650	
1995–96	Master's Program	559,480	420,830	536,664
Totals		673,480	547,480	536,664

i) Letter from Sida, Division for Public Administration and Management to SOAS, 28th Feb, 1994

It is not altogether clear what the recorded disbursement of Sida is meant to cover. The disbursements appear to match both the budgets of the SOAS for the Master's Program and the budget of NEU for all activities. It is not clear if the costs of the Qualifying Course are covered by the Sida records. However, since the Qualifying Course runs from September to December it is likely that the course is included in the records of disbursements. The costs of the expatriate experts (the BBEs) that were attached to the program do not appear in any of the documents we have had access to.

Since the budget of NEU and the disbursements of Sida tally quite well, and further since it is likely that Sida has recorded the full costs of the Qualifying Course, we choose to base our estimates on the low alternative.

Cost per Student 2nd Cohort

Since the 2nd cohort was much larger than the first we expect the costs per student to drop considerably.

The Qualifying Course had 48 students, hence each one of the students accrued a cost of GBP 2,375 or SEK 30,875 when the estimate is based on the budget of NEU.

The recorded disbursement of Sida yields a cost per student in the master's program of SEK 290,693. This is a figure that is not far from the estimates made for Mozambique, Namibia, and Cambodia. However, to arrive at the full cost the full-time expatriate experts ought to be included in the estimates.

3rd Cohort, 1996–1998, NEU and SOAS Sources. Budgets and Budgeted Support

Appendix 3. Table 5, Cost overview

Year	Activity	Total Budget by SOAS in GBP	Budget by NEU in (USD) and GBP	Budget Support by Sida, Hanoi, In (USD) and GBP
1996	Qualifying Course		(35,936) 21,780	(29,236) 17,719
1997-98	Master's Program	510,197		
1997-98	Master's Program		(1,074,953) 651,487	(1,025,582) 621,565
1997-98	Additional Activities:		(278,764)	(208,308)
	– Upgrading of staff		168,948	126,247
	– Translation – printing of material			
Total MSc			673,267	621,565
Total all activities			842,215	765,531

i) It should be noted that in a letter (arrival 10.03.1997) the NEU asks Sida for the reimbursement of costs accrued by the Qualifying Course. In this letter the NEU estimates Sida's contribution to be USD 15,156 or half the sum of the budget. It is not altogether clear whether this request was meant to cover all or some of the costs.

ii) Exchange rate USD/GBP at this time is recorded to be 1,65. The figures in bold in columns 4 and 5 are figures converted to GBP.

Our analysis of available documents shows that the disbursement of Sida has been close to GBP 500,000 whereas the budget of NEU presupposes a support by Sida of about

GBP 620,000. The disbursement of Sida tallies well, however, with the budget of SOAS. On the other hand, our interpretation of the budget of SOAS is that it is exclusive of the Qualifying Course, Sept–Dec. 1996.

Cost per Student 3rd Cohort

The qualifying course

It is not clear why the Qualifying Course in 1996 is budgeted at about 1/4 of the costs of the Qualifying Course in 1994. It can be suspected that this may be an effect of NEU taking over the full responsibility of the Qualifying Course. If we base our estimates on the figures given in the Final Draft of the Project Document NEU, 4th July 1997, the cost per student appears to be GBP 454 or SEK 5,899.

The Master's Program

It is not clear on which figures we ought to base our calculation of costs:

- The disbursement records of Sida show an amount of SEK 6,494,455 or GBP 499,537 for the 3rd cohort. This figure – it must be assumed – is also referring to the cost of the Qualifying Course, but this is not ascertained. The figure tallies with the SOAS budget of the master's program.

- b) The budgets of SOAS and NEU differ considerably. If we base our estimates, again, on the lowest alternative – that of SOAS – the cost per student in the 3rd cohort of master’s program is GBP 20,408 or SEK 265,302. The disbursement of Sida is close to the SOAS budget of the master’s program.

Again all estimates are exclusive of the costs of the bilateral academic experts that have been seconded to the program from 1993.

The Total Costs of the MSc Program in Vietnam

Since there is so much uncertainty connected to the costs of the 1st cohort we base our estimate on the high alternative for the 1st cohort. This means the total expenditure must be around GBP 640,000 plus 2 man-years of expatriate assistance.

For the 2nd cohort the total expenditure is estimated at GBP 540,000 plus 2 man years of expatriate assistance.

In spite of inconsistencies between the budgets and the disbursements it can be assumed that the 3rd cohort have come to cost some GBP 500,000, plus 2 man years of expatriate assistance.

Appendix 3. Table 6, Total Costs:

Cohort	Costs in SEK
1 st Cohort	8,320,000
2 nd Cohort	7,020,000
3 rd Cohort	6,500,000
Total 1992–1999	21,840,000

4. Alternatives to SOAS DE-program

Regular studies rather than distance education

Many of the department heads of ministries and others in high positions told the mission that they actually prefer graduates from full-time studies abroad rather than DE graduates. A representative of the Bank of Vietnam said that “The banks preferences are definitely full time studies rather than DE. Then they come back with much better education, language and ideas. There is no problem to find replacements while students are abroad.” When informed that the DE education of SOAS may have cost about the same per student graduated as full time studies abroad, he remarked that: “If DE is almost as expensive as regular on-campus graduate studies – then I am very definitely opposed to DE”.

Others took a more balanced view: “It depends on the situation and on who the person is. Both types of education have their advantages.” The government is very conscious of the fact that a regular student abroad learns much more not only about economics but also language and about the western paradigm and life. “The ones who can get a scholarship and are willing to go abroad we send. Others who for some reason or other cannot or will not, will do with DE.” A senior professor of economics told the mission that “the width and depth of knowledge, as well as the quality of the students that have pursued regular full time studies abroad for two to three years, is obviously much higher than that of the DE students, but an advantage with the latter is that they are on the job and that they know their work.”

Other opinions expressed were the following: “Some graduates from foreign universities are not able to use their knowledge in Vietnam because conditions are so different. There is a certain suspicion on part of the party against the Vietnamese student returning with degrees from several

years in the west.. But this does not apply to the SOAS students since they are remaining in the country and in their jobs throughout the whole study period.

An advantage of DE is that it takes place while the students are close to the reality, while the full time students need a long time after their graduation to gather enough experience in order to be effective on their jobs. The DE method is more suitable for older people, not for younger students. Some people who have studied abroad cannot at all function in their jobs. "They can't read nor write nor function properly in the job."

The Cost Factor

The cost of two year graduate program under the WB/Japan program is about USD 60,000, which should be compared to the average cost per student graduated in the SOAS DE program, which comes to about USD 50,000.

Vietnamese students abroad

At present there are between 4,000 and 5,000 Vietnamese students studying abroad. Of these a little over half are graduates including Ph.D. studies and the rest are on bachelor level. About half of all students engage in studies in Economics and Business Administration and one third in Information Technology.

Modern Distance Education

The World Bank is today trying to set up a distance education facility with the help of the World Bank institute, at the CIEM and also in the Ministry of Technology and Environment. They will thereby make use of a satellite disk and other electronic equipment of very high quality to facilitate fast access to the net. Many elements of DE are contemplated.

5. Quality

In Vietnam many observers, especially during the first years, were critical against the SOAS program mainly for what they perceived to be the low quality of the graduates. Among the many allegations of shortcomings were the following: *"In the theses work everyone was copying from everyone else, and everybody passed... In one case the theses was produced by a fiancée. ..The surveillance at the written exams was deficient. As soon as the SOAS person left the room a general co-operative activity ensued...It is strange that everyone got his exam in spite of the fact that the language knowledge of some was so limited that it was not possible to converse with them in English... The students read each other's thesis and co-operated. ..In Vietnam you can often "buy" a grade or the passing of a certain exam."*

One tutor reported that he could often see that the students had copied texts from each other, and often he would ask them to rewrite such portions of the texts. One observer inside the Vietnamese government observed that *"the knowledge of the student fades quickly if he is not in a position to actively used it in his job. There is also a cultural barrier in so far that Vietnamese traditionally are not used to discuss and think critically. But, on the other hand, the personal characteristics of the person are also very important"*.

Sida's program officer at the time wrote a few critical letters to SOAS in London, none of which were answered, and also raised the issue with Sida in Stockholm, without however this leading to any visible reaction or remedy.

Thesis work

A weak point in the program are the theses. SOAS presented the students with ring-binders containing 7-8 topics with tips, description of the topics, and also including basic statistics needed. Some of the students in this way got all of their data needs satisfied. By not having to choose and develop

their own theses topics the students missed out on an important learning element, namely the experience and insight to be gained when having to analyze and together with your tutor discuss and seek to develop an appropriate thesis subject. One observer remarked that *“The course has given the students a good knowledge in financial and macroeconomic science but it has not to a sufficient degree developed their critical thinking”*.

This, in the missions opinion, is not conducive to developing research capability and independent critical thinking of the students

6. Use and application of knowledge (Effect of program)

Based on the tracer study as well as the interviews with students and their supervisors we can conclude that in the majority of cases the students today serve in positions where their newly acquired knowledge in market and financial economics is needed and therefore relevant for the government's work of analyzing economic issues and formulating economic policy based on market economics. From interviews with other people knowledgeable about the work in the government we can conclude that, generally speaking, there is today a lot of economic analysis and economic policy making based on the market economics paradigm going on in the ministries.

With these two bodies of information we believe we can conclude that the projects has achieved its main effect, namely that the knowledge acquired through successful completion of the SOAS training is actually being applied in relevant tasks at the ministries.

Questionnaire results

26 of the students in the sample are employed by the public sector and 3 are employed by the private. The flow from public to private sector has been insignificant. Only 3 students have changed employer from the public sector to the private sector.

Of the 29 students in the sample, 18 have the same job as they had at the time they entered the MSc while 11 students have changed employer. However very few of the students have moved upward in the hierarchy as a result of the education. Only one of the female students can be said to be on a managerial level, and only four of the males can be said to have shown significant upward mobility. Only two persons in the sample are at director level, one of whom was already at this level when entering the program. Four others are at deputy director levels.

Against this background it becomes interesting to note that the majority of the students in the sample (26 and 28 respectively) found the program “very useful” or “rather useful” in carrying out their duties both at present work and at work at the time of the course. This finding is also substantiated by the student interviews that were carried out.

The course has also helped in applying change in their day-to-day work as well as in the organization. When asked whether the MSc program has helped the students in making changes in their work, 28 replied “yes” and 1 replied “not yet”. As for applying changes in their respective organizations, 13 students responded that they have *not* been able to apply changes at all, 2 responded “not yet” and 1 responded “not directly” while 11 responded “yes” and 2 did not respond. The number of students who reported being able to apply changes in the organization are found mainly in high level positions such as director, deputy director and manager. One of the students Mr. Tu is today a secretary to the General secretary of Vietnams communist part and is a very powerful man.

Lack of personnel management

Even if most of the SOAS graduates have seemingly been successful in applying their analytical knowledge in the task they have to perform in their jobs, most observers agree that there is generally a lack of modern and rational personnel management in the Vietnamese government.

The system is said to be ineffective and definitely not transparent. The salary system is such that there is no real incentive to undertake education. It is said to have improved in the last few years, but must be reformed thoroughly. An important problem is also the lack of communication between different departments.

There is a government agency responsible for reforming the government apparatus including personnel functions – the *Governments Committee on Organization and Personnel*, called GCOP. The head of the GCOP is a minister and a cabinet member, which gives him sufficient power to act.

Bonded contracts

In the ministries there is formally no bonded contract for the applicant to sign as a condition for being allowed to enter the Master of Science education program. However, the applicant in his application to a foreign study program testifies that he will return to his job. But the issue does not seem to be very well known or perhaps relevant (yet) in Vietnam. One student interviewed states that he does not remember having signed any application where a paragraph about returning to the old job was included.

In the Central Bank everybody who is admitted to a foreign university will be allowed to go. They will not receive any salary but they do retain all the social benefits. Also the study time abroad is counted fully as service time with respect to pension systems etc. In general, most people who work in the public sector wish to stay there even if the salary in the private sector may be higher, for there are many social benefits, including the chance to study, go abroad, pension systems etc. The private sector is still quite small in Vietnam, and cannot yet be said to constitute a serious competitor to the government for scarce educated manpower.

Governments knowledge and analytic capacity in financial economics

Looking at the situation in the different ministries and institutions – not from the extent to which the SOAS students are observed to use their new knowledge – but rather from an overall point of view, there is general agreement that the analytic capacity and knowledge in financial economics in particular and macroeconomics in general has gone up dramatically since 1992. This is something which everyone seems to agree upon – Vietnamese officials and foreign observers alike. Below we will report briefly from the situation in a few of the key government institutions involved in economic policy analysis and economic policy making and also account for the standpoint of the World Bank and the IMF.

It should be noted that in Vietnam all important, regarding the economy as well as everything else, are taken by the 20-person politbureau of the communist party. That is the real government in Vietnam with offices and full cadres of officers for each particular department just like a shadow government. The country's Ministers are more like general directors of government agencies in Europe. They faithfully, with very small leeway, carry out the decisions made by the party. Often the decisions in the party are taken without any apparent influence of the knowledge of western economics today possessed by many in the government. *Doi Moi* started formally in 1986 with a decision by the country's communist party, but in the first few years, until 1991 or so, not much progress was made in practice.

Central Bank

The Bank employs five graduates from the SOAS program. Also the bank has sent students for full time graduate studies to Washington and Australia. Many of its staff have attended shorter courses in the World Bank institute in Washington, and the IMF institutes in Vienna and Singapore, and in Japan. The WB has provided scholarships for two-year master studies abroad.

Of the total employees in the bank (2500 in the whole country of which 500 are stationed in Hanoi) about 10 have been on long term graduate studies abroad, but at least a total of a hundred have been on shorter term courses. No bonded contracts are applied but there is a regulation issued by the Banks Governor stipulating that the student must return to the bank after completion of studies. There are some incentives in terms of career opportunities to students acquiring graduate degrees, but they must also prove themselves to be hard-working in order to get ahead.

(Overall today a large number of Vietnamese students go to study in Australia every year. There are also about 10 Fulbright scholarships for higher studies in the USA for Vietnam every year.)

Analytic capacity and knowledge in the Bank in terms of market economics has in the Bank management's opinion increased considerably in recent years. Today most of the officers can work rather efficiently on most (economic) issues. The knowledge has developed gradually all through the period starting in the late 1980s. One Department head observed that *"10 years ago when someone mentioned the word balance of payment people were laughing and making faces. Today there are many in the bank who can engage confidently in discussion even with the IMF on this topic"*.

In the bank's opinion there is no doubt that the SOAS graduates effectively make use of their knowledge in their jobs, and that they carry out relevant tasks. The state bank is said to be much better equipped than the Ministry of Finance and other ministries in terms of economic analytical capacity. The central bank, being just one ministry, has the same pay scale as the rest of the government but is considered to have better endowment of computers and office facilities. Also it is considered that the bank manages to attract the best graduates.

Ministry of Finance

The taxation department in the Ministry of Finance has 13 economics graduates from NEU, of which one has graduated from the SOAS program. Altogether four of its officers have master level degrees in economics from abroad: one from SOAS, one from the WB/Japan program, one from Japan, and one from France. In addition some are currently studying in Thailand. Asked which they prefer for their personnel, the distance education model or full time studies abroad the answer was that the Ministry needs both, as each has its advantages.

The SOAS graduate claims that the SOAS course directly enabled her to engage in technical discussions with the IMF on international taxation and other issues. In her opinion knowledge in market economics in general and experience from studying abroad are very important for the tax department to properly do its job. It is crucial to be able to negotiate with the IMF and WB.

"But we constantly need updating of our knowledge because there is change taking place all the time."

The upgrading of the department's knowledge and capability in market economics started seriously only in 1995, but then it came very fast. Normally no *bonded contracts* are applied in the ministry of Finance, but the interviewees all state that for them it is self-evident that they will stay in the government, if not out of loyalty, because it is also a very good and interesting job.

The Ministry of Finance, the Central bank, as well as almost every ministry, have their own research departments plus respective networks of affiliated research institutions. Most of them are however considered to be of very low quality. The Ministry of Finance has its own institute for research and training. From time to time the Ministry will also invite foreign lecturers as part of their internal education programs.

Ministry of Planning and Industry, MPI

Much of the Ministry's cadre was educated in the former USSR and in Eastern bloc countries. Distance education is by the Ministry seen as a good option for middle level department heads as for them it may be difficult to leave their jobs to attend full time studies abroad. People with previous degrees from socialist countries can benefit considerably even from shorter courses in market economics. In the MPI all the staff have taken either a short term or medium term course in market economics. Three persons have graduated with a MSc degree by distance education from the SOAS program. Of a total staff of 12 in the foreign investment department seven have a university degree (BA, MA or PhD) from abroad. In addition there is one currently studying for a Ph.D. abroad.

The missions could observe that the department for foreign investment does not appear to be typical of other ministries, as it seems to be better endowed with foreign training among its personnel. In the Vietnamese government almost all the staff, except guards, caretakers etc., have a university degree. In terms of the Ministry's analytic capacity and economic knowledge there has been a rapid improvement in the last few years. There are today a large number of middle level people in the key ministries who are quite competent to discuss technical matters regarding the economic and financial management of the country. Most of the people obviously have not studied abroad, but within a certain category of officers, almost everyone has attended shorter courses in Vietnam and abroad – e.g. IMF courses.

PMRC (The Prime Minister's Research commission)

All the staff in PMRC are very senior: advisors to the PM and to the vice PM etc. PMRC does not engage in academic research, but analyses concrete issues as demanded by the PM, and also the effects of a specific decision to be taken by the PM.

The government has often questioned IMF's proposals and taken its own decisions. There has been, over the past years, a substantial improvement in the government's economic analysis capacity. There are today foreign experts in all ministries who can provide advice. Generally the ministries make good use of the knowledge and capacity acquired by the students in various training programs but the scope for career advances are nevertheless limited, because there is a fixed volume of staff which can not be increased. Most people want to work in the ministries in Hanoi, and not go to work in the state firms in the provinces. The Vietnam government puts a lot of emphasis on education and training of the cadre. The focus of distance education methodology, like e.g. SOAS, should be on younger people not on senior ones.

CIEM (The Central Institute for economic Management)

In the managers view the government's capacity for dialogue in financial and economic issues has increased dramatically over the past three to four years, but still the quality needs to be raised substantially. The political control exercised today is an obstacle to rapid development of capacity and quality.

CIEM has 70 professionals with university degrees. It is a think tank and policy research institute under the MPI, formerly directly under the PM's office. In their selection of studies CIEM is mainly demand driven, waiting for an order from the government to undertake a study, but there is really no systematic plan on the government's part on how to use its services. CIEM does not often take own initiatives. In the "think tank" function CIEM is today, by its own opinion, relatively weak.

CIEM was instrumental in promoting the idea of a distance education program in economics. Today there is some Sida support – through consultancy funds – for capacity building in the CIEM.

CIEM takes part in the Governments preparation and analysis of the texts and policies for the ESAF and the PFP documents, and regularly participates in the governments meetings with the World Bank and with the IMF.

Today there is one CIEM officers studying in Singapore, two in Australia and one in the US. Of the total present staff at least 10 have studied abroad. There is today increasing competition among the existing research institutions. But CIEM's possibility to compete is hampered by the fact that it is not completely autonomous, being directly under the MPI.

University education in Vietnam is still relatively undeveloped, especially in the social sectors. Even after graduation the quality of the degree may be quite low. Also the NEU graduates lack quality enough to be able to be used directly by CIEM, so they need to be further educated at considerable cost. This is done mainly by way of on-the-job training, but also through lectures and provision of books and study materials for self-study. CIEM also sends some of its officers abroad for master studies, and some are sent for training to the MPI training center.

Cooperation with the Bretton Woods Institutions

In Vietnam there is today a well functioning cooperation between the World Bank and the IMF regarding the ESAF credits and attached conditionality packages. The *matrix of conditionality* attached to the PFP is common for the Banks and the Funds programs. In addition, each of the programs may have some, usually regarding minor points, conditionality of their own. IMF has its own *letter of intent* formally to be sent by the government to the Fund, while the World Bank has its "*letter of structural reform and development policy*".

In the estimation of IMF's representative "*the people with whom we discuss the ESAF program really understand the technical issues... They are very competent people...(regarding economic analytic capacity in the government) there seems to have been a big leap forward at least in percentage terms. But the absolute level is still low.*"

However, in Vietnam it is the communist, party with its 20-person strong politburo, that makes all-important decisions, so it does not always help that the ministries are convinced of a right course of action for the government. Government in Vietnam is very closed . It is not easy for a foreigner to get a real insight into the decision process. As one observer noted "*The people who are doing the wrong arguments at the other side of the table they know the right arguments*".

The World Bank

In the Bank's opinion one can see the fruit of a dramatic learning process in the government by looking at the contents and quality of government letters and memos sent to the World Bank. The issues and the arguments the Government brings up are today quite professional. Often, however, an officer in the government will know his limited topic very well, but typically he will lack the overview how one issue may fit in with issues in other areas. Comparing staff trained abroad with staff trained in Vietnam the former have more overview of the area to be analyzed and a more systematic way of analyzing it than the latter category of staff.

In the current PFP document there are 129 points. All of these have grown out of discussions with the government. And it is no longer only a one-way relationship. Often the Bank will learn from the Government on several issues. The reason why the two sides are not able to reach an agreement today (the program with the Bank and the Fund is at present declared "off-track") has to do largely with the political process. The PFP is a common framework document on which both the ESAF and SAC are based.

The government should urgently improve the flow of information within the administration, as well as reporting and monitoring of all economic programs. Currently the WB is involved in the following programs regarding capacity development in the government: State enterprise reform, banking reform, and trade liberalization reform. Earlier there was also a program regarding “strengthening of economic management”. Under this program the government sent out 60 of its employees for long term graduate studies, of which two thirds were in economics, others in law, public administration and business administration. The Vietnamese students went mainly to UK and US universities.

7. Contribution to enhanced economic policy. Improved economic performance (Impact 1)

All donors interviewed seem to agree that not only is the government today carrying out on a wide scale analysis and economic policy-making based on the market paradigm, but also that this is undoubtedly the main reason why the country’s economic performance has been so successful in recent years. During 1991–1996 the country’s annual growth rate was 8% a year, and during 1996–1998 it was 6–7%.

By virtue of inductive reasoning we have that:

- since we have determined that the output level of the project, which is that students have acquired sufficient knowledge in market economics, was attained, and
- since we have independently ascertained that economic methods are applied in the work of the ministries and that this seems to have contributed to the country’s good economic performance,

therefore we believe we can also conclude that the Sida-financed project did in fact contribute to achieving the impact of enhanced economic performance.

8. Institution building (Impact 2.)

During the first year of the program there was little institutional effect of the project, to the point even that the Embassy’s responsible program officer questioned whether the objective with respect to institution building should really be in the project document. In his view the NEU, at the time, did not have the necessary capacity or competence for the institution building objective to be achieved. Furthermore, at that time NEU appeared to have a rather limited interest in the program. Subsequently, with the advent of the new dean at NEU, this changed.

Even if the program, according to some observers, is not designed so as to focus on institutional development, encouraging elements of institutional development have materialized. During the first two cohorts most of the teaching and tuition was performed by expatriate experts. However, already in the first cohort NEU had recruited three of its lecturers and in the second there were two lecturers following the program. Upon the successful completion of the program these lecturers were used to teach in the program. In the 3rd cohort another eight lecturers from the NEU followed the program. This means that 13 of the academic staff of NEU now have a master’s degree from London University. As a consequence a not insignificant degree of competence transfer to NEU has undoubtedly taken place.

Background

NEU’s own teaching of market economics started in practice only 6–7 years after the decision was taken by the party in 1986. The reason being that there was lack of appropriate text books, curricula and most of all competent lecturers. Even today the University is faced with the same problems.’ The 1986 politburo decisions meant a decision to undertake the transition over to market economics. but it was left up to each university how they would introduce the academic training in market

economics. Nor are there any direct or formal concrete instructions to NEU from the ministry of education on how to organize and with what methods the training in market economics.

In NEU there are two main specialisations: business administration and economics. Because of Sida's reportedly successful support to the MBA program the business administration program is considered more advanced than the economics part. It follows that the institutional effect of the MBA training has been considerably bigger than in the MSc training. In economics the SOAS DE project was the first foreign intervention.

There are many twinning arrangements with foreign universities at the NEU. These are important for the university to develop its institutional capacity, but there is a lack of co-ordination and information sharing between the donors in the many foreign-assisted programs at the NEU.

New developments

In recent years the administration of NEU has become more confident in running distance education courses, as the SOAS program has given valuable experience for the NEU to develop its own distance education model. NEU is today ready to launch DE programs in other fields. NEU has contracted a market study on the demand for DE in economics. NEU also wants to include some new topics in addition to the ones already in the SOAS program, e.g.: international trade, stock markets, economic development. The financing of the new DE program, which NEU wants to do on its own, would come from the Government's budget, from student fees, from contributions from the institutions sending the students. NEU also intends to approach Sida with a request to help finance expatriate professors for the program.

At the time of the mission the NEU had meetings with representatives from one of the regions in Vietnam that wanted the master's course delivered in their region. In the presentation of the new Center for Distance Education in Economics (CDEE) at the NEU, it is pointed out that since early 1998, all guide- and textbooks of the Diploma in Economic Principles produced by SOAS have been translated into Vietnamese and printed. They are being used as key sources for designing and developing a Postgraduate Diploma course in Economics, which will be CDEE's first program.

With the support from Sida, a start has been made translating the materials for the MSc in Financial Economics and Financial Management which will become an important basis for future MSc programs at the Center and useful reference sources for other faculties at NEU.⁴ The combined effect of academic staff development, the building of a library, new administrative confidence, and the on-going process of translating the SOAS material into Vietnamese, are all significant factors when assessing the implementation of a successful institutionalization of the program. In a *Report on Curriculum Reform at the National Economics University*⁵ of March 1998 there is a full inventory of all curricula in all the faculties of the NEU. A list of all professors of the NEU is attached to the report and it shows that there are five persons with a Ph.D. in Economics attached to the NEU, but yet no one with a degree in Financial Economics.

9. Personal benefits to students (Impact 3)

At the personal level most students seem to have enjoyed the program and they feel that they now have received a highly recognized degree that helps them understand better the mechanics of market economy. This aspect is reported on in detail in the attachment following this annex.

⁴ NEU, Centre for Distance Education in Economics, *Master in Economics by Distance Education*, Statistical Publishing House, 1999.

⁵ Adam McCarty and Sasha Fink, Report for NEU-SOAS Curriculum Reform Project, 13. March, 1998

10. Future programs

Sida Supported Activities 1999–2000

Sida has committed itself to a new project at NEU that will go on till July next year. The suggested project is different in scope compared to the previous support of the master's program in Financial Economics. The activities are targeted towards:

1. Academic development, notably development of
 - i) teaching staff, and
 - ii) development of educational programs (translation, adjustments, etc)
1. Management Development, and
2. Facilities Development

The support by Sida is estimated to about USD 306,607 over 1999–2000. Considering what has already been achieved at NEU, this is probably a sensible approach in securing the further development and institutionalization of the distance education competence at NEU. However, in the missions opinion, there will still be a long way to go before NEU is able to launch a master's degree in Financial Economics on its own.

The Vietnamese-Dutch Project for M.A. Program in Development Economics at NEU

There are at the moment no concrete plans to support NEU beyond the middle of next year. If, however, Sida at a later stage decides to continue its support to the education of master's degree candidates an interesting possibility for co-operation between Swedish universities and the Vietnamese-Dutch Project for M.A. Program in Development Economics at NEU has been put forward by the project co-ordinator of this project.

Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, and Wageningen Agricultural University, Wageningen, both Holland, has since 1994 been running a Master's Degree in Development Economics at the NEU. Each year about 30 students graduate from the two year degree, gaining a certificate signed both by Vietnamese and ISS Rectors. The course is taught full time on campus in English and the examinations are also conducted entirely in English.

The program is now in its second phase (1998–2003). The total cost of the project is about USD 3,5 mill or SEK 28 mill. A breakdown of the budget of this project shows that the average cost per student/degree over five years is just under SEK 94,000.

Scholarships

As the project will be expanded from the year 2000 additional full-fee students will be accepted, provided they meet the minimum entry requirements. Donors are also invited to provide scholarships for Vietnamese students on this master's program. The scholarship is in 1999 estimated to be about USD 10,000 for a full program including a six months bridging course.

Contrary to the SOAS Distance Education program students are invited to identify their own topics or themes for the thesis and the students are also encouraged to find themes that are directly relevant to Vietnam.

Co-operation

Another feasible solution is to try and set up a co-operation between the Dutch universities and a Swedish university to join forces at the NEU. In order to do this a kind of "Sustainability Proposal" ought to be drawn up.

The proposal could involve linking a master's degree in Finance with the Dutch master's degree and the sharing of common facilities (classroom, library, equipment, communications, etc.).

It would also require nominating one senior Vietnamese with a Ph.D. to run the degree program. The program would have to be run for about three years to secure full institutionalization. Expatriate staff ought to be recruited to harness the program. The co-ordinator of the Dutch-Vietnamese programs estimates costs of a three-year project to a total of about USD 300,000.

Attachment: Summary of Tracer study

Questionnaire Results from Vietnam

Introduction

Of the 64 students that were recruited to the program, 33 were male and 31 were female. This evaluation covers a sample of 30 students, out of which 15 are male and 15 are female. All participants in the sample have been contacted. The questionnaires have been completed and returned in all cases but one. In this case the participant was unwilling, "for personal reasons", to fill in the questionnaire. This study is therefore based on a final sample of 29 students as shown below in Table 7.

Appendix 3. Table 7: Distribution of the population and the sample

Cohort	Admitted Students			Sampled Students		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1993	8	6	14	5	2	7
1995	15	9	24	4	5	9
1997	9	16	25	4	8	12
1999	1	0	1	1	0	1
Total	33	31	64	14	15	29

The Sample

The sample includes 14 male and 15 female students in ages ranging from 25 to 46. The average age for the students in the sample was 35 (as per October 1999) (see Table 8). Looking at the students' previous qualifications, the study found that 21 students had a background in Economics, 3 in Social Sciences, 1 in Arts & Humanities, 2 in Engineering, 2 in Mathematics, and 1 in Banking. Of the 29 students in the sample, 24 held a degree at Bachelor level, 2 at Master level, and 3 had some university education at graduate level but no degree. This indicates that all the students in the sample held the right educational qualifications to enter the MSc program.

Appendix 3. Table 8: Students by age and gender

Age/ Gender	25-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	Total	Average age
Male	5	2	2	3	2	14	36
Female	6	3	4	2	0	15	33
Total	11	5	6	5	2	29	35

Work Situation

Today 26 of the students in the sample are employed by the public sector and 3 are employed by the private. The flow from public to private sector has not been so significant. Only 3 students have changed employer from public sector to private sector. Of the 29 students in the sample, 18 have

the same job as they had at the time of the course while 11 students have changed employer. This points to a significant mobility of the students although mostly within the public sector. Tables 9 and 10 below shows the work situation of the students before they entered the MSc program and their work situation today, respectively.

Appendix 3. Table 9: Employers at the time of the course and number of students

Employers	Number of students
Bank for Investment & Development	1
Bank of Foreign Trade	2
Center for North American Studies	1
Center for Youth Union	1
Electricity of Vietnam	1
Faculty of Banking & Finance (NEU)	1
Faculty of Labor Economics (NEU)	1
General Statistics Office	1
Industrial and Commercial Bank	1
Ministry of Finance	5
Ministry of Planning & Investment	1
Ministry of Science	2
National Economics University	4
National Institute of Agricultural Planning	1
State Bank of Vietnam	6
Total	29

Appendix 3. Table 10: Employers today and number of students

Employers	No of students
Bank of Foreign Trade	1
Central Executive Committee Office	1
Center for North American Studies	1
Compaq Computer Viet. Ltd	1
Economic Commission of CCCPV	1
Faculty of Banking & Finance (NEU)	1
Faculty of Labor Economics (NEU)	1
General Statistics Office	1
General Dept. for Dev. Investment	1
Government Office	1
Industrial and Commercial Bank	1
HABU Bank	1
Ministry of Finance	4
Ministry of Planning & Investment	1
National Economics University	4
National Institute Agricultural Planning	1
State Bank of Vietnam	4
State Securities Commission	1
The World Bank	1
Vietnam Leasing Company	1
Total	29

Among the students who maintained the same job, 1 reported that he has changed position and 12 reported that they have additional tasks and responsibilities in their work today. As shown in Table 11, a total of 12 students have currently new positions and duties as compared to the time they entered the course. Of the 12 students only 4 female changed positions. The status change column indicates our understanding of whether the change in position has brought promotion (1), demotion (-1) or remained the same (0). In one case the student did not report his previous position. We know, however, that he changed job to the private sector and therefore is viewed here as a change that brought promotion. On the other hand, the change in position from division chief to economist is considered a demotion since the student remains in the same job and having the same tasks. In general, the students view the promotions as direct effect of the MSc program.

Appendix 3. Table 11: Career development between the time of the course and today by gender

Cases	Before MSc course	After MSc course	Status Change
	Male	Male	+/-
1	Director Foreign exchange Dept.Director	Foreign Exchange Dept Director	0
2	Division Chief	Economist	-1
3	Economist	Financial Manager	1
4	Expert	Expert	0
5	Lecturer	Lecturer	0
6	Project Officer	Acting Manager	1
7	Research Fellow	Research Fellow	0
8	Researcher	Treasury Manager	1
9	Senior Officer	Senior Officer	0
10	Specialist	Specialist	0
11	Specialist	Deputy director	1
12	Staff	Division Deputy Chief	1
13	Vice Division Chief	Director	1
14	No answer	Operation Officer	1
	Female		
15	Assistant Lecturer	Assistant Lecturer	0
16	Assistant Lecturer	Assistant Lecturer	0
17	Credit Officer	Deputy Director	1
18	Deputy Director	Director	1
19	Division Deputy Chief	Division Deputy Chief	0
20	Expert	Expert	0
21	Forex Dealer	Forex Dealer	0
22	Government Official	Government Official	0
23	Inspector	Inspector	1
24	Instructor	Instructor/Expert	0
25	Lecturer	Lecturer	0
26	Lecturer	Lecturer	0
27	Officer	Deputy Director	1
28	Officer	Officer	0
29	Project Officer	Project Officer	0
	Total demotions		1
	Total "same"		17
	Total promotions		11
	Grand total		29

Participation in the MSc Program

To the question “why did you apply to the MSc program?” the students responded as follows: “I was interested in the program” (15); “My bosses advised me to apply” (2); and “I needed it for my work” (21). The students could present more than one reason, and the majority of students who said they applied because they were interested in the program also indicated that they needed the course for their work.

The diagram above shows the progression of the students in the sample for the period January 1993 to October 1999. Of the 29 students who entered the program, 1 dropped out after completing “most course work” and 2 received the post graduate diploma after completing part I of the program. The student who entered the program in 1999 reported that he completed “a little course work” but he is still continuing his studies. Of the 29 students in the sample, 25 completed all course work and the thesis and graduated at MSc level in Financial Economics or Financial Management. The conclusion is that the output of the program has been successful in terms of number of students graduated.

Have the students participated in any other study activities after they began the MSc program?

Almost all the students in the sample (except one) indicated that they have also participated in other training programs, as seen in Table 12. It seems that some of the students have attended all kinds of study activities.

Appendix 3. Table 12: Participation in other programs

Type of Education or Training	Number of responses
Training workshops given by the Government	12
Other workshop	11
Course given by the Government	3
Other course	9
Study visit	9
University course in economics or related field	3
University course in other field	1
Another university degree	5
Total “other programs”	53

Usefulness of the MSc Program

As shown in Table 13, the majority of the students in the sample (26 and 28 respectively) found the program “very useful” or “rather useful” in carrying out their duties, both at present work and at work at the time of the course. One student indicated though that the course was “a little useful” in the previous work but considers it “very useful” for the work today. Of the 2 students who took the course because they found it was necessary in order to get or keep their job at the time of the course, only one has the same opinion today.

Appendix 3. Table 13: Usefulness of the course in carrying out duties

	At the time of the course	At the present work
Not useful, a hindrance	0	0
Not useful, not a hindrance	0	0
Perhaps a little useful	1	0
Rather useful	6	4
Very useful	20	24
Was necessary in order to get or keep the job	2	1
Total	29	29

The comments offered by the students to illustrating in what way the program has been useful to their work include the following:

- It is useful for my duties since I have better knowledge and understanding of bank activities and the economy as a whole.
- It provided me with indispensable basic academic knowledge for my everyday work and research.
- The program gave me knowledge that is necessary for me to successfully carry out my work.
- Understanding of economics/banking facilitates financial decisions.
- The program has widened and deepened my knowledge of market economy that is so important for policy makers.
- The program has upgraded my knowledge on capital markets and corporate finance.
- The program has improved my research approach and method and provided basic knowledge of financial economics.
- It enhanced my analytical skills and provided good knowledge for my working field.
- The program has provided me with economic and financial concepts and experiences of other countries in planning investment resources for Vietnam.
- It supplied both basic and advanced knowledge in economics, especially in banking and finance field.
- It provided me a systematic understanding of economics, especially financial economics. It also provided knowledge complementary to my field.
- The knowledge and method I got from the program helps me carry out my duties better.
- The program has been useful by increasing my knowledge in economics which helps me to prepare my lecturing notes and by providing me with research tools and analysis skills.

Applying change in work and organization

When asked about if the MSc program has helped the students in making changes in their work, 28 replied “yes” and 1 replied “not yet”. When it comes to applying changes in their respective organizations, 13 students responded that they have not been able to apply changes at all, 2 responded “not yet” and 1 responded “not directly” while 11 responded “yes” and 2 did not respond. The number of students who reported being able to apply changes in the organization is nevertheless significant. They are found mainly in high level positions such as director, deputy director and manager. However, some are among lecturers, foreign exchange dealers and banking experts.

The students’ explanations on this regard are given as follows:

- Organizing postgraduate courses, method of teaching and the way to approach study issues.
- No, my organization is the same. I am only an individual and the Central Bank (particularly the Inspectorate) is very big and conservative.
- Yes. It helps me have a more accurate and comprehensive approach to problems or policy issues. Changes in the organization is quite a long and complicated process.
- No, because I am only a staff of the office and not a leader.
- Yes. The knowledge I gained helps me to understand and do my work better.
- Not change in the scope but change in quality of work.
- Change in the Department contributes to change in the organization. In addition to it, contribution will be made in working out policy effectively.

- The studies did not help me make changes in my work but they help me improving and upgrading my work. The course helped me to accumulate knowledge and experiences. However, I think that I am not having enough knowledge and experience to make changes in my university.
- Yes. I know better how to organize and to proceed my work in developing capital market.
- Focus my research topics in macro financial economic issues of North America. I also assist the management to organize distance learning in American studies.
- No. Changes in organization take time as it is associated with the process of administrative reform in Vietnam.
- I have been able to process the required work more quickly, confidently and scientifically. As regards changes in the organization, my position does not allow me to create meaningful changes.
- Yes. Now I am not only a simple forex dealer as in previous time, but also an analyst specialized in assets management. This course has helped me to find out new strategy in assets management for my bank.
- Having studied the MSc program, I found some limitations in my faculty's curriculum and asked the Dean to change some things. However, changes have not been done yet as it takes time and energy to do so.
- Yes. It makes me feel more confident and knowledgeable in my work.
- Yes. It enables me to take part in research projects that require high qualification.

The Distance Education Approach

Table 14 shows how satisfactory the distance education program has been to the students. Of 29 students in the sample, 17 indicated that there were minor problems with the technology, 2 indicated that the problems were major but manageable. Only 1 student considered the problems with the technology a major hinder to overcome. Conversely, 8 students found that there were no problems at all with the technology.

In relation to the support received from the national host institution, 14 students reported that there were minor problems and 2 found that there were major problems. On the other hand, 13 students stated that there were no problems at all. These problems may be related to local tuition where students from previous courses have been acting as local tutors.

Of the 29 students in the sample, 24 expressed satisfaction with the support they received from the employer. Four students stated that they had received "little support" from the employer, and 1 student even found that "lack of support from the employer was a major hinder". It should be noted that except for the Qualifying Course, local tutoring was conducted twice a week in evening time (after work). During the Qualifying Course, the students had face-to-face lecturers 4 times a week. Sometimes it could be run in the morning, sometimes in the evening.

In general the students were satisfied with the support they received from SOAS. Twenty-one students indicated that the support was good and 5 students felt that there was some support from SOAS. Similar is the satisfaction concerning the support the students received while in London attending the residential school. Two students felt that there was "some support" while 25 students found that the support received was good. Two students did not answer because they have not been to London. Among those who answered, 2 students must have been confused or answered by mistake since they have not been to London.

Appendix 3. Table 14: Students' level of satisfaction regarding the DE approach

	Technology host institution	Support from local Employer	Support from the in home country	Support from SOAS SOAS in London	Support from
Major hinder	1	0	1	0	0
Major problems	2	2			
Minor problems	17	14			
No problems	8	13			
Little support			4	3	0
Some support			13	5	2
Good support			11	21	25
No answer	1	0	0	0	2
Total	29	29	29	29	29

General Comments regarding the MSc Program

All in all, the students in the sample found the program well prepared, useful and efficient and of very good quality. However, the students showed mixed feelings regarding distance education approach in comparison with residential approach. Some students recognized the advantages of distance education approach but still they may prefer the residential approach. Below are some general comments on the program as reported by the students.

Positive Comments

- The positive point with DE approach is that participants don't have to leave their work for long time. The content of the program was appropriate and useful in general, and very necessary to officials working in Ministry of Finance, State Bank, General Statistics Office and Ministry of Planning and Investment.
- It is a good approach and appropriate for Government staff who could not stop working for studying. The program was good in terms of quality and SOAS strict examination rules.
- Good tutorials and good content but lack of time and library resources.
- DE approach has many advantages: it provides opportunity for people who cannot study full time, good quality of teaching, rich content, learners are motivated.
- Very good approach in terms of quality of teaching and content.
- Good quality thanks to sufficient course materials and tutors' enthusiasm.
- The content is suitable for Government officials dealing with financial aspects of economy.
- Quality of teaching is equivalent to face-to-face teaching once the learning materials are well prepared. The content is very interesting and easy to understand so that distance learning students are motivated. It is relevant to country like Vietnam and also updated enough to cover emerging issues in the world.
- The program is good, comprehensive and informative but more media-based materials are needed.

Other Comments

- DE approach is effective if trainees are provided with materials.
- It would be better if there was more time with the tutors, particularly during the dissertation writing period. It would also be better if there were more diversified courses for larger selection of participants.

- Distance education approach is a good way to train people who have to work and study simultaneously. Its main weakness is the problem of tutors. We lacked qualified tutors.
- I think that the distance education approach is not very convenient in comparison with the residential approach to higher education.
- The DE approach and the content of the program are good. More discussion papers and updates of current economic issues would improve the quality. Also an online support process would help to deliver quality more constantly.
- Good approach but it would be better if there had been more face-to-face guidance.
- In general, the quality of teaching and the content are good. Lack of social events, seminars, especially lack of time. The DE approach is appropriate for those who could not take the residential approach.
- DE approach is better for students who have limited time. But they have to spend most of their time to self-study. Little chances to meet teachers is one weak point of this approach.
- We had lack of time to study and to meet each other for discussions and had no library facilities.
- DE is an appropriate approach to follow higher education while accumulating experience via work. But learning facilities are not as good as in the residential approach.
- DE requires a very high degree of self-study which may be more suitable for those who do research work.

The quality of the program is good. But in order to do the thesis better, the econometrics course should cover some more topics

Appendix 4

Country Information Namibia

Attachment: *SUMMARY OF TRACER STUDY*

1. Introduction

The program in Namibia started in 1995 with the *Ford Foundation* as co-funder and the Economics department at the University of Namibia as local counterpart. In Namibia there was a de facto decentralization with delegation of program responsibility from DESA in the Sida Stockholm headquarters to the Embassy in Windhoek. The decentralization of decision-making was not because of any special intention or motive by DESA, or Sida, but because the funds for the program were taken out of the consultancy fund managed by the Embassy.

The decision to support the Namibia program was taken by Sida's Regional Africa Division, and was based on a consultancy study on the needs of the country's finance sector. DESA was not the responsible part on the Swedish side, and was not involved in the process like in the other three countries. According to one view, Sida was driving the proposal of DE program in economics fairly hard, the motive being that Sida had already – with considerable success funded the program in Mozambique and Vietnam. According to some the project was never very well based in and supported by the Government.

The Ford Foundation did not undertake any particular evaluation or appraisal as it took the decision to finance the SOAS course. Generally the Foundation will rely on the fact that another major donor has been involved. In this case the Foundation had through studies and analyses found it worthwhile to support the project. The Ford Foundation is currently supporting another distance education program in Namibia, in public policy, a program being implemented by The Hague Institute of Social Studies.

Unlike South Africa, in Namibia there has traditionally been no local black persons with higher education in economics. In South Africa there was, at least since the turn of the century, a trickle down in the racist society, so that there were some black Africans who acquired not only a master level degree but even a Ph.D. Namibia was always a province in the periphery. No university graduates in economics were produced. Most people who invested in higher education left for jobs abroad.

Primary education in Namibia today is said to be good, but it is the secondary and the tertiary levels, which are neglected. Namibia's government has a liberal attitude towards distance education. The government must itself get involved to train its people in economics, for, due to the much lower salaries in the public sector, the government is not able to compete in the labor market and find the economists they need. At the same time, paradoxically, black Namibian graduates are said to experience difficulty in getting jobs in private banks. The banks are all South African, and are by some said to prefer hiring whites.

In Namibia there was never, as e.g. in Mozambique, a dramatic change from one economic system to another, with the ensuing acute need for (re)trained economists. The transition, at least in the field of economic policy, was quite smooth. Nevertheless there was, and still is, also in Namibia an acute need for additional trained economists. Many of the Namibians, returning from abroad at the time of independence, had studied in the Eastern bloc countries, and therefore lacked the necessary

knowledge to successfully manage a market economy. There are today serious knowledge gaps in the government.

Namibia has not had and does not today have a program with either the IMF or the World Bank. It only has the routine so called “Article Four” consultations, just like Sweden and any other IMF member country. Therefore, in Namibia there was not perceived to exist a direct or urgent need to develop the governments negotiation skills in economics like there was in Mozambique to manage relations with the Bretton Woods Institutions. Nevertheless, also the Namibian government experiences an acute needs for trained economists in order to manage the country’s relations and membership in all the different kinds of international economic conventions and co-operations that the country engages in. One current example is the demands posed by international trade agreements, e.g. the negotiations going on with SADC. Another is the acute need to improve the country’s debt management capacity.

Many parastatals today need to be privatized e.g. the telecom and power companies, and the Agricultural bank. These parastatals are not losing a lot of funds, but they could conceivably generate a lot more incomes to the state if they were more efficiently run. So the opportunity cost for the government not to privatize is high. The government, however, is afraid that the industry is going to be bought up by RSA firms. Also because the parastatals are not a big drain on resources there is no perceived acute big need to privatize. The parastatals are not integrated into the governments overall budget

Objectives

The main objectives of the Namibia program were to

- “To strengthen economic analytical and management capacity at targeted ministries to attain macro-economic goals,
- to narrow the gap between expatriate advisors and local counterparts, and
- to develop and support post-graduate education and capacity at the UNAM”

2. Delivery and execution

Pilot program

In 1995 a pilot program was launched for 26 Namibian students. The program was a Postgraduate Diploma in Economic Principles (DEP) delivered as distance education. The program followed the same organization as earlier in Mozambique with supporting tuition twice a week in 2 to 3 hour sessions. The program was funded by SIDA with GBP 150 000. Two independent consultants evaluated the program in late 1995, and “UNAM noted their positive findings and recommendations with keen interest and appreciation.”⁶ This evaluation was funded by the Ford Foundation.

Based on this evaluation report an agreement was signed to the effect that SIDA and

Ford Foundation would jointly fund a program over two years with the following objectives:

1. To run a two year contract cohort program for 10–15 students enrolled into the MSc in Financial Economics starting Feb. 1996
2. To permit the successful DEP students from the 1995 cohort to continue their postgraduate program

⁶ Note to SIDA, Windhoek, 9th Feb. 1996, from Prof. Katjavivi, Vice Chancellor of UNAM.

3. To strengthen links between the Economics Departments of UNAM and SOAS
4. To support UNAM's contribution to Namibia's economic management capacity building, as well as to general university teaching and research in economics, finance, and related fields

Output of master's degrees – 1st Cohort

However, of the 26 enrolled only 11 were able to receive the Diploma in Economic Principles.

Out of these only two students received their Postgraduate in Financial Economics in 1996. In 1997 an additional five students got received their postgraduate diplomas. In 1997 and 98 the output of the program in terms of masters' degrees was a total of eight Master's Degrees (2 in 1997 and 6 in 1998).

The output of the first cohort of the program in Namibia was characterized as deplorable by the SOAS administration in London as well as by SIDA representatives. And as a consequence of these results, a number of changes were introduced. See next chapter. Under the second and present cohort 17 students were enrolled in 1998 out of which 2 received their Postgraduate in Financial Economics and 15 follow the Master's Program in 1999.

Appendix 4. Table 1: Numbers of Students Enrolled (Input)

No of students	1995	1995/96 ⁷	1996/97	1998	1999
Diploma in Economic Principles	26				
MSc Financial Economics		2	3	4	15
Postgraduate Diploma in Fin. Economics		5	10	13	

Appendix 4. Table 2: Number of Candidates at Different Levels (Output)

No of Candidates	1995	1996 ⁸	1997	1998 ⁹	Total
Diploma in Economic Principles	11	4			
MSc Financial Economics		2	4	2	7(8)
Postgraduate Diploma in Fin. Economics	1	2	5		7(8)

Note: The figures in brackets indicate the number of candidates when the output of the Ford Foundation cohort of 1995 is included in the numbers.

It appears that we can conclude that of the 26 students that started in 1995 under the SIDA funding 11 qualified for the Masters Program. Of these 11 the output has been 8 Master's Degrees and 1 Postgraduate Degree in Financial Economics. If we consider the total program, i.e. inclusive of the additional 7 candidates recruited to the Ford Foundation program, we can conclude that out of the 33 students that started in 1995 the total output has been 9 Master's Degrees and 3 Postgraduate Diplomas.

Expected output of master's degrees – 2nd Cohort

However, it is noteworthy that of the 17 students that started in 1998, 15 have proceeded to the MSc Part 2 in 1999. According to the latest progress report there is much optimism regarding the final results of the 1998-cohort. The student assignments show so far consistent and on the whole

⁷ On the program funded by the Ford Foundation.

⁸ Of the cohort funded by the Ford foundation in 1995

⁹ These six candidates belong to the first cohort. They had to postpone their presentations because of personal matters.

good marks.¹⁰ It has just recently been reported that all 15 students have turned up at their final exams. The formal reporting of exam results is due in December 1999.

Changes in the Master's Program

The following changes in the program have occurred:

1. The tuition in classes has been rescheduled from evening classes to morning classes. The students have been allowed to follow classes from 0800 to 1030 twice a week throughout the semester. This is deemed to be beneficial to student progress by all parties.
2. The overall administration at the UNAM has become more experienced in running the courses. According to our sources problems are now being picked up and solved at a much earlier stage than previously.
3. The tutor that was recruited by SOAS in 1995 performed poorly according to the Namibian sources. To have him replaced by local tutors with Ph.D. qualifications has improved upon student performance, again according to UNAM sources.
4. We have the impression that with the second cohort the recruitment procedures have been practiced in a more rigorous manner, and consequently that the quality of the student material has been improved compared to the first cohort..

These four factors are contributing to the apparently much better performance of the 1998 cohort.

Cancellation of thesis requirement for second cohort

In addition it should also be noted that a rather substantial change has occurred in the academic program of SOAS as well. According to the UNAM it was decided already in late 1997 to cancel the Residential School in London for the new cohort. The reason for this was uncertainty as to the continued commitment of SIDA to the Program as such. The decision regarding participation in the Residential School would have to be made in October 1998 at the latest, whereas the UNAM had to wait till early 1999 before SIDA¹¹ made its position clear regarding the commitment to the program. Then it was apparently too late to organize the Residential School in London. As a consequence of this decision the dissertation for all students were dropped, and an alternative Master's Program¹² was presented as a solution.

This alternative solution meant that instead of the dissertation, the students would – for the successful completion of Part II of the program – sit for exams in three courses instead of two. To our knowledge this alternative had not been discussed in any of the documents we have seen. For example in the memorandum of SIDA, Feb 1999, that discussed the further commitment of SIDA, this particular consequence of the decision to drop the Residential School was not mentioned at all.

According to the UNAM administration this decision was regrettable yet unavoidable. The students we have interviewed also think that this decision has a bearing upon the educational product that SOAS has delivered. There are mainly two reasons for this:

¹⁰ Prof. M M El Toukhy, Head: Economics Department, UNAM, *Interim Report, August 1999*.

¹¹ SIDA was not willing to commit itself for further funding of the program unless the four students who had submitted their dissertations too late in 1997, received their Masters' Degrees in 1998. Since SOAS refused to release the results of these dissertations until December 1998, the decision regarding Sida's commitment to the program was kept pending for close to one year.

¹² This alternative is covered by the Regulations under which the SOAS Program has been running.

- i) As a consequence of this decision the course in Research Methods has also been dropped; there was no reason to teach research methods if there wasn't going to be a dissertation. This course would have been very useful to the working situation of many of the students.
- ii) Some of the students who have worked their way through the program have also ambitions regarding a Ph.D. at a later stage. They now worry – and with good reason – that there are several universities that will not accept their master's degree because there is no research related work as part of the degree.

As a consequence of this particular change, it is the opinion of the evaluation team that SOAS can hardly be said to have delivered the product that SIDA expected at the time SIDA announced its continued commitment to the program (early 1998). One ought to remember that most of the students – if not all – have been through an educational system based upon the apartheid policies of South Africa. However unintentional this may have been, the embarrassing consequence of this change in the academic program is that the Namibian students yet again are asked to complete an educational program that is inferior to and of less academic value than what they were led to believe upon entering the program.

The Selection Process

The selection of students for the DEP program was done by SOAS in London based on the following criteria: the student should hold a bachelor degree with economics as a major and have work experience from public or parastatal sector. For the two first MSc presentations, the recruitment was mainly based on the student performance from DEP. Later in 1998, the recruitment was open to a wider range of people. UNAM received about 56 applications and 17 students were selected based on the criteria above mentioned. SOAS had though the final say.

Information from tracer study questionnaires

The results¹³ presented below are a summary of the findings from the questionnaires and interviews based on a sample of 27 students. In all a total of 12 (4 females and 8 males) Namibian students have been interviewed, five of whom were of the 1995 cohort and seven of the 1998 cohort. The sample¹⁴ comprised 20 male and 7 female students who on average are 35 years old.

Looking at their *educational background* before entering the MSc program, we found that:

- 20 students had a background in economics,
- 4 in social science and
- 3 in other fields like, accounting and computer science.

Out of the 27 students 66% (18) had received university education at undergraduate level (BA and BSc degrees), 15% (4) had degrees at a graduate level (MA, MSc), 1 had some university education at graduate level but no degree. This indicates that the great majority of the students had the right educational background and fulfilled the criteria of admission in the MSc program.

Asked about why they had applied to the MSc program, the students gave the following answers:

- I was interested in the program (19);
- my bosses advised me to apply (2);

¹³ See Appendix on results from the questionnaire – Namibia for more details.

¹⁴ See Appendix on results from the questionnaire – Namibia for more details.

- I needed it for my work (10); and
- I needed a higher qualification (1).

Most of the students who said they were interested in the program also said they needed it for their work.

THE STUDENTS' OPINION OF THE MSc PROGRAM

The interviews were geared to concentrate the learning situation of the students plus identifying the most decisive factors that might have influenced their study motivation and progression. The workload was considered to be quite intensive and most students reported of putting in about 8 to 12 hours/week studying plus the following of the tutorials (two times three lessons a week). The students found the program of good quality and placed the exams on the same level as other Masters although the volume of the subjects might have been different. Part II of the program was considered limited in terms of choice. The students felt constrained because they could not choose the subject they wanted. The program gave new insights in terms of economics and introduced new approaches on economic issues. The academic level was satisfactory and challenging. It enhanced the analytical ability of the student.

Materials

In general, the students found the course material well structured, good, easy to follow and sufficient for this program. There is very little need for additional material. In some cases, the students even found that the materials were so well structured that there was really no need for tutorials. One of the students has compared the material from SOAS with a corresponding DE program from another UK based university and found the material from SOAS much more user friendly. The material from London was always received on time.

Local Tutorials

Sessions were held twice a week and when needed on Saturdays as well. The interaction between students and tutors made the course much more meaningful. The teachers did bring in real cases from Namibia and other countries. The opinion about the local tutors and tuition varies. For some students, the local tutors were updated and performing well while for others, the tutors mainly repeated what was in the textbooks and were following the material from London quite closely. One student even pointed out that he had never seen one handout produced by local tutors. The lectures and discussions were on the whole quite good.

The Attitude of the Employers

In the first two years the ministries did not release people for studying. Some students had to take personal leave to sit the exams. So, people easily gave up and dropped out. Another reason is that people felt divided between work, family and studies. It was tough, especially for women. The attitude of the employers was reported to have become more supportive with the last cohort. UNAM had to go out to the ministries and asked for their commitment. The changing of classroom hours to morning sessions has been a definite improvement.

Tutorials from SOAS

These tutorials were organized as brief visits of SOAS tutors in connection with the preparation for examinations. The sessions normally took place over weekends for a total of 10 hours. These tutorials were considered very useful in that they helped to structure the materials to study.

Assignments

The students could choose the topic of the assignments. They received useful comments from the SOAS tutors within one month. These were useful because they helped on the examinations. The exams usually reflect the subject matters covered on the assignments. However, the students complained on the overlapping of assignments. Sometimes, the first assignment had not been returned by the time they had to submit the second one. One month is a bit too long. Another aspect that has been pointed out by the students, is that sometimes there has been some discrepancies between the comments that they have received (too positive) and the actual marks they received on their assignment. They assume that the guidelines the tutors receive are different from those of the students. Nevertheless, most of the time they received very useful comments so the students could see where they went wrong. The tutors were strict in marking, though.

Dissertation

The dissertation has been replaced by a 3rd course for the second cohort. The students seemed to be very disappointed by this change. They felt that, by dropping the dissertation, they were compromising their application and the quality has automatically been dropped.

Residential School

For the 95/96 cohort the three-week residential school was useful for preparing the dissertation. It provided opportunity for the students to have personal contact with the supervisor, as well as providing good guidance. Interaction among the students was also useful.

Level of Satisfaction

The level of satisfaction regarding the distance education approach reported in the questionnaires, suggested that:

- there were only minor problems regarding the use of technology,
- that there has been very few problems related to the support from the host institution,
- only 15% reported that they have received little support from their employer.
- The support from SOAS in home country was reportedly good, whereas when asked of their opinion regarding the support from SOAS in London 82% of the sample could not to answer since they haven't been to London.

3. Cost efficiency

Budgets and Expenditure for the Two Cohorts in Namibia

We have not had access to an authorized audited report that documents the total expenditure of the program in Namibia, this is not available at SOAS in London or at SIDA in Windhoek. We have to base our estimates on budgets from SOAS, The Ford Foundation, UNAM, and the documented expenditure registered at SIDA in Windhoek.

There are different budgets existing for the period 1996–97, but after having checked very carefully with the local co-ordinator at UNAM, Prof. El Toukhy confirms that the activities of the period 1996–97 are run according to the revised budget. The figures presented are therefore from the revised budget of SOAS, SIDA expenditure and budgets and estimates by Ford Foundation. For the period 1996–97 only the Ford Foundation has a document estimating expenditure per annum.

A printout (1.9.99) of the Disbursements of Sub-projects at the Swedish Embassy in Windhoek show that Sida's total disbursements to this project so far (Aug 95–Nov 97) have been SEK

2,452,381. All of these costs relate to the first cohort. In addition the Ford Foundation recommended a grant of USD 197,000.

The Ford Foundation took care of all disbursements in 1998. The understanding is that SIDA will foot the bills in 1999. So far in 1999, however, SIDA has not received any claims from any of the project partners (UNAM and SOAS). Since the activity within the project has been close to the budgeted level, a broad estimate might suggest that the second cohort has incurred

- i) the estimated costs of 1998 (SEK 1,7 mill), and
- ii) the estimated costs in 1999 (1,91mill).

The budget for 1998–1999 are attached to a letter (11th Dec. 1997) from Prof. Peter H Katjavivi to the Swedish Embassy.

Appendix 4. Table 3, Estimate of Total Expenditure, Namibia

Year	SOAS Budgets	SIDA Expenditure	Ford Foundation Budget	Total Expenditure
1995	GBP 150 000			NA
1996			USD 100 000	NA
1997	GBP 249 700	SEK 2,452,381	USD 97 000	Estimate
& -96	+GBP 89 125 = GBP 339 000	(GBP 181 000)		GBP 300 000 (95-97)
1998	GBP 136 325		USD 235 000	NA
1999	GBP 153 565	No claims as yet		NA
Totals	GBP 778715			

Comments:

1. Based on today's rates of exchange it can be assumed that the total expenditure between 1995 and 1997 was about GBP 300 000, or about SEK 4,1 mill. SIDA has covered just under SEK 2,5 mill.
2. We have only had access to budgeted amount regarding the funding by Ford Foundation in 1998.
3. Since there have been made no claims to SIDA regarding accrued costs in 1999, we have no way of ascertaining the costs regarding the second cohort.
4. The total costs of the second cohort are budgeted at GBP 289,890. Since the activities are close to what has been planned, we may also assume that the budget will be spent.
5. The total cost of the program in Namibia according to this estimate appears to become just under GBP 600,000, or less than the total budgets. This is not very surprising considering the poor student progression of the first cohort.

NB: Since so many of the figures are based on conversions from one currency to another several years back, there is no way of ascertaining the accuracy of these figures. All figures must be regarded with caution, since they are only meant to give an idea of the level of the costs.

The reason why the first cohort appears to be more costly than the second may be explained by the following

- i) there is no qualifying DEP course with the second cohort (SEK 1,9 mill in 1995)
- ii) there is no residential school with the second cohort (about SEK 1 mill)

Cost efficiency

1. The DEP course in 1995

If all the budgeted GBP 150 000 was spent on the DEP course each of the students (26) incurred costs corresponding to about SEK 72,115, or just less than the cost of a full MSc Degree taken by individual students in a stripped down version of the SOAS program. Each successful candidate, however, cost SEK 170,454. No matter how this is viewed; this is a very expensive bill for a six months preparatory course at foundation level.

2. The Postgraduate Diploma and the MSc. (1996–97)

In 1996 and 1997 a total of 20 (?) students were registered, and these students have finished at various stages in the program. If we continue to make estimates based upon round figures the total costs of 1996–97 are close to SEK (4,1–1,9) 2,2 mill. That means each student in 1996 – 97 has cost about SEK 110,000.

3. The total cost per student for the period 1995 – 1997 may – based on these broad estimates – approach SEK 182,000. Not all of them got their degrees, though.

4. Apart from a total of 15 successful candidates of the DEP course, the first cohort of the program has produced 14 candidates, 7 Postgraduate Diplomas and 7 Master's Degrees. If we apply roughly the same the same relative distribution of costs upon the different degrees as we did for the candidates of Mozambique, we can assume that the

- i) Postgraduate candidates count for 1,5, and
- ii) the Master's Degrees count for 2,5 of the total costs.

This renders the following cost per degree:

- i) Each Postgraduate Diploma has incurred 1/7 of 37,5% of the total costs, – about GBP 16,071 (more than SEK 200,000 at an exchange rate of 12,5 to the GBP) , and
- ii) Each Master's Degree has incurred 1/7 of 62,5% of the total costs, – about GBP 26,786 (close to SEK 335,000 per degree at the same rate of exchange as above).

It must be remembered, though, that SIDA has only reimbursed about half of the costs of the program in the period 1996–97. Against this backdrop it is irresistible to quote from the letter SOAS sent to the Swedish Embassy, 7th Aug. 1997, attaching the project proposal for the 1998–99 cohort. In motivating the project SOAS advocates that

“An international distance education program is well suited to meeting the needs indicated in a more cost-effective manner than sending professional staff for further education outside Namibia. Overseas training is expensive in terms of both finance and opportunity costs, that is, removing important personnel from their duties in Namibia.”

4. Alternatives to SOAS DE-program

Given the magnitude of cost per successful candidate, it may be of interest to explore realistic alternatives. In Namibia the enrolled are not of such high-caliber as in Mozambique. The effect of longer absence from work of the Namibian students may not have had such devastating impact on the performance of their institution. We can also take into consideration that the Namibian students all have completed a university degree or some kind of higher education, and they may therefore be considered as experienced learners who can effectively administer their own time and set aside adequate resources for studies. If these assumptions are correct we have several alternatives.

A basic version of a DE program

One alternative would be to run a stripped-down version of the DE program, in other words a more traditional distance education program. This would still mean a minimum of absence from work, but the program would have to be run for a longer period, say over three or even four years. The consequence of not offering residential school and local tuition would have reduced costs considerably. The local administration would be minimal, the administrative costs at SOAS would have been reduced, travel expenditure could have been cut down, and tuition in London and Windhoek would have been dropped. Even if the dropout rate of this model also would have been high, the output of this model could hardly have been considerably less than the dropout rate of

the program that has in fact been run. This is also an alternative that is being suggested by SOAS itself when being interviewed in London (Sept. 1999).

Cost estimates

SOAS was in 1998 offering this alternative to overseas students for just under GBP 6000, (about SEK 80,000) inclusive of registration fee and all course fees. As an example we may refer to a commercially run MBA Degree from the International Negotiation Academy, RSA, that is offered part-time over two years at a student fee of ZAR 16,900 per annum in 1999. That would mean a student fee of less than SEK 50,000 for the complete program.¹⁵ The university of South Africa, Graduate School of Business Leadership, offers a master's degree in distance education over three years at about ZAR 21,000, inclusive of prescribed books the first year, and electronic software in the second and third year.¹⁶ If this is a realistic cost for a master's degree any local bolstering of the program would still leave us with considerable maneuvering space compared to the costs of the present operation.

On-campus part-time

Another fundamentally different alternative is based on the observation that the students have in fact received 6 hours of tuition per week throughout each of the semesters, even if the program is referred to as distance education. This is not much less than the regular campus students are offered,¹⁷ or indeed choose to follow. Since we are dealing with experienced students, many of whom already have a BA, it is quite conceivable that tuition at this level is quite enough. The DE input from SOAS could then have been dropped altogether. Since the SOAS program is basically a standard MSc Degree that is being taught in a large number of English-speaking universities, any problems of finding a supporting and co-operating faculty outside of Namibia would easily be overcome. An agreement of co-operation would in this case have been between UNAM and the overseas university. Most university bursaries would welcome the increased turnover and status that such a deal would imply.

In this situation the students would have received standard textbooks, gone to lectures, sent their assignments to local tutors (or tutors abroad). The input of additional intensive weekend seminars run by experienced tutors – from South Africa for example – would strengthen the learning environment considerably. This approach is basically a decentralized approach, and it is quite common in many parts of the world.

In terms of costs a decentralized, part-time model would not need any of the specially designed DE material, no separate overseas administrative unit, and no residential school in London. On the other hand the costs related to local tuition and administration may rise marginally. Without being able to pin down the exact costs of this alternative, it is safe to assume that the costs will be considerably reduced. A qualified guess might suggest that this alternative might save as much as between SEK 150'–200' on each student that follows the program.

We ought not to forget, however, that this is an alternative approach that must be weighed against the loss of co-operating with an experienced organization in London as well as the input of well-designed, high-quality DE material from SOAS.

¹⁵ Their web-site can be found at www.negotiation-academy.com

¹⁶ Check out the following address: <https://sol.unisa.ac.za/>

¹⁷ At UNAM a postgraduate student would receive a minimum of 9 hours of tuition per week

Information and communication technologies and distance education

Lastly, we should not forget the impact that the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has had on distance education. By combining the use of e-mail and web-sites the DE-environment is being completely changed, and the drawbacks of previous DE is on the verge of being overcome. There are presently renowned universities that offer Internet based DE courses at postgraduate levels in USA, UK, Canada, and Australia. Such programs are also available elsewhere, but not in English. These platforms offer services like lectures, one-to-one tuition, discussion groups, libraries, administrative support, informal virtual cafes, etc.

If and when the communication infrastructure in Namibia could offer high speed – or satisfactory – electronic networks, the already installed computer lab at UNAM would become an attractive study center for DE students who could then use modern ICT platforms in their DE postgraduate studies. The software for utilizing the so-called third generation DE platforms is already in the computers at UNAM. It is not clear, however, to what extent the university, or indeed the Namibian Telecom, has enough capacity to support this alternative today.

Reference ought also to be made to a project called the African Virtual University. This is a project that was started last year and it is financed by the World Bank. Behind the WB funding there are also Nordic funds which are being tapped, and Nordic institutions ought therefore to be interesting partners for the WB in the implementation of the project. The aim of the project is to make academic resources all over Africa available to all student via the Internet. Networks involving overseas institutions are already operating. The languages of instruction are primarily French and English.

New strategy by the Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance has today decided to stop its support to formal educational programs such as e.g. the SOAS program and instead it wants to focus on traineeships and practically oriented courses like e.g. the IMF courses. In the permanent secretary's opinion it is better for the ministry to spend its money on practical training, study tours and internships rather than formal education, at least in the field of economics. There is an acute need for practical courses e.g. in Debt Management. The ministry today works with MEFMI in this regard. A few of the ministry's people have attended a two-month course given by the WB in Washington.

5. Quality

Government officials interviewed deplored the fact that the thesis requirement had been dropped from the present cohort, believing that this could diminish the quality of the MSc degree. A master degree without the thesis, in their estimation, is quite a different product from one with a thesis.

Also in Namibia, like in the other three countries, several expressed the opinion that it is more effective to study full time rather than through distance education while at the same time working.

Some noted the often very uneven quality of the students returning with degrees from both the US and the USSR. An extreme example is a student who received his economics degree from Romania without actually being able to neither speak nor understand Romanian. The degree was conferred on the basis of attaining the requirements posed with respect to class attendance. Other people have returned from Cuba with substandard education. Often such students have taken "soft" subjects like "Development" or "Public management", but seldom rigorous core courses like statistics, mathematics, or econometrics. Examples were also cited of graduates returning from Europe and the US with degrees of low quality.

6. Use and application of knowledge (Effect of program)

Work Situation¹⁸

Currently, 23 students are working in the public sector, three in the private and one in a parastatal. There has been only an insignificant movement from the public to the private sector. Nine students have, however, changed employer while 18 have the same employer as they did at the time of the course. Of the 18 students who maintained the same employer, however, 10 have changed positions. This means that about 70% of the sample students have experienced change in their job situations while they were students or after they had finished the programme.

Usefulness of the MSc Programme

During the time of their participation in the program 75% of the students reported that the program was “very useful” in carrying out their job duties. This number increases to over 85% when it comes to the usefulness of the program at their present work. It would thus seem that the majority of the students have been able to apply the knowledge and skills gained in the programme in their work. To the question whether the MSc program had helped the students in making changes in their individual working situation, 20 answered yes, 3 answered no and 4 did not answer. But when it comes to applying changes in their respective organizations, 17 students responded that they had *not* been able to apply such changes, 5 responded yes, and 5 did not respond at all. Changes in the organization are considered more difficult to implement since the decisions of such changes are being made at the management level.

GOVERNMENTS KNOWLEDGE AND ANALYTIC CAPACITY IN FINANCIAL ECONOMICS

Below we will report briefly from the situation in a few of the key government institutions involved in economic policy analysis and economic policy.

Bank of Namibia

Most of the SOAS students from the Central Bank were drawn from the research department or the economics department. There are several examples where SOAS graduates have in a concrete way applied methods and procedures which could not be used prior to their education. One example is in application of econometric methods. In general the quality of memoranda and other publications produced within the Bank is of much higher today than before. The mission was able to study one and the same chapter of the Bank’s annual report written by the same officer – one written before the training, the other after. In general everyone agrees that the research methodology applied within the Bank has improved considerably.

The Bank does not normally bond people who are on a part time course like the SOAS, nor does it exercise any penalty against those students who dropped out and did not pursue the course. Some thought that *“It was too easy to get out of the program. There should have been a bigger commitment for the student to stay within the program”*

In the local labor market it is possible to recruit economists with a BA degree but not with a Masters level degree. The Bank of Namibia cannot easily find trained economists by advertising in the press. Even though the Bank pays higher salaries than the rest of Government it is still very difficult to attract people away from the private sector.

Today the Bank has a policy to send its officers abroad for master as well as Ph.D. studies. The current plan is to send two to three officers abroad for full time studies each year, all of it paid for fully by the bank’s funds. The Bank is thus envisaging having at least three people studying abroad

¹⁸ More information on students’ career development can be found in Appendix; results from questionnaire-Namibia.

at any time. Since 1990 the bank has sent a total of four Master level and one PhD level student abroad for full time studies. The directors of both the Bank's Research and the Economics Departments are currently themselves abroad for full time studies. All the staff of the bank have been trained by the bank itself, in regular courses offered by the bank as well as outside courses sponsored by the Bank.

Ministry of Finance

Only one student from the Ministry of Finance has completed the SOAS course and two are taking it now. The Commissioner of Inland Revenue is a student in the current program. One of the Minister's deputy directors completed the SOAS course, and with his newly acquired knowledge transferred to a position of economic policy making. However he did not get a higher salary because of the degree. Many students have registered in the program and then drop out of the course. Of the four economics graduates that work in the economic policy department three have studied in the United States one received his degree from the SOAS program. Several Ministry officers have taken courses given by IMF in Washington. These courses which vary in length usually from a week or two up to three months are normally rather practically oriented courses geared directly towards the practical needs posed by the work situation in the ministries.

The minister of Finance today maintains two personal top level foreign economic advisers- one is financed by Sida. There are today, and there have in the past been, a number of different donor supported programs of economic advisers – e.g. young graduate volunteers financed by Britain. But generally these advisers have so far left little institutional effect as they leave. The good performance which they may have contributed while in the country has not been sustainable. A case in point is the *RIMSIM* macro simulation computer model taught to the government by the World Bank. In this particular case the government was warned that the Ministry of Finance does not have the means to maintain (and sustain) such a model and that it would therefore be a waste of time and resources to introduce it. A number of World Bank experts flew in to give courses on the *RIMSIM* model, and a lot of money was spent on it. Common sense models for budget building would have been much more useful.

Economic knowledge in the government is comparatively poor at higher levels, but there are said to be many bright young people in lower echelons. Most officials interviewed opined that the SOAS run MSc program should be continued. There is in the government a constant stream of tasks that require academically trained economists. The finance ministry's advisory department does not have enough staff trained to handle important responsibilities of advising the finance minister.

National Planning Commission

There is a serious need for economic graduates in the government and in the country as a whole. The situation in the government is more serious than in the private sector. Ministries have difficulty in keeping the best and most qualified persons. The type of economists that the government needs and wants could get up to three times higher salary in the private sector. It is not easy for donors to make use of the salary topping up mechanism as there is a very active and powerful public service commission which would object. The salary of a Permanent Secretary is about 230,000 Rand to be compared with 450–700,000 in the private sector for a comparable level officer. There is a lot of training undertaken in the public sector. NPC does apply bonded contracts for its students registered in the Sida financed SOAS course.

Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU)

One of the main providers to the government of research and investigations in economics and finance is the Government's foundation NEPRU, earlier financed by Norad and Sarec. Today 30–

40% of the institution's incomes come from consultancies for the World Bank and others. In its nine years of existence some 40 Namibians, mainly junior economists have worked there. Today it has a staff of 24 persons: nine junior researchers, two research trainers, one researcher and two senior researchers. According to NEPRU's director it is very difficult to recruit new black qualified researchers. The few that exist do not apply for jobs like this. NEPRU sponsors and finances graduate studies abroad for some of its junior researchers. So far a total of 10 persons have benefited. Today three of the institute's junior researchers are carrying on honor's courses through distance education in South Africa.

Bonded contracts

In the SOAS project there were no bonded contracts such that the students were obliged to return to their jobs and stay there for some time after having received the Master of Science degree. According to Namibian law however all government employees are automatically bound by such an obligation if they participate in a government funded education. Sida did not suggest that bonded contracts be used for the students enrolling in the SOAS course. In fact Sida was in principle against such contracts. In Sida's opinion, if one had had such a requirement, this might motivate students to move abroad. Judging from the documents Sida was under the impression that no such contracts were binding the SOAS students. But this, as the mission learnt, is not the case.

Foreign support to capacity building

Namibia is better off than e.g. Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana with respect to the government's knowledge and analytic capacity in economics. These other countries are more dependent on foreign advisers. As mentioned above, Namibia's government does not today have a program neither with the IMF nor the World Bank. The World Bank offered to lend Namibia money but the government did accept, nor does it need it. The same situation applies with respect to IMF.

In the past the world Bank provided a USD 400,000 grant to the University (UNAM) for a public service training institute, as well as USD 300,000 plus a few a few smaller grants for related purposes. The World Bank also has a capacity building fund covering 17 African countries, among them Namibia, over an 8-year period of a total of USD 500 million.

IMF gave support just after independence to help build up the system of budget and expenditure control. For three years there were two full time IMF experts and also some short term ones. The IMF project, which was financed by the UNDP with IMF implementing, was quite successful.

IMF used to have Article Four consultations with the Government every year, but now it is only every second year. Namibia has never had to call for IMF assistance and the government is determined never to have to do so. Namibia is a net capital exporter – today about 7–8% of GNP. So the country has no balance of payments problem and is therefore not a candidate of Bretton Woods intervention.

USAID today funds, with USD 240,000, a program for policy dialogue and co-ordination between the ministry of finance, planning commission and the Central Bank, as well as two other programs in the Ministry of Finance. UNDP finances a UN volunteer's program whereby young foreign graduates, with at least an MA level degree, work in the government as advisers. In UNDP's estimation this program has worked well. In 1995 there was a Roundtable conference in Namibia on Assessment of capacity development needs of the Namibian government, which resulted in the so called *Kappa/Gold report*.

7. Contribution to enhanced economic policy. Improved economic performance (Impact 1.)

The tracer study as well as the interviews conducted with students and others have shown that most students make good use of their knowledge in their jobs. By virtue of our inductive reasoning we can therefore conclude that this knowledge – since it is found to be relevant for the tasks of the government – also has contributed to enhancement of the government's economic policy and to improved economic performance.

In Namibia the relation between the programs output and effects on the one hand, and a direct impact on the country's economic performance can be said to be rather theoretical. There are several reasons for this. *Firstly*, the program was quite small in number of students. *Secondly*, most of the students were not holding high positions in the government. *Thirdly*, in Namibia there are many other programs whereby government officers are trained in economics. For these reasons it is not in practice possible to actually identify the lines of relation as depicted in the goal hierarchy model defined for this program.

8. Institution building (Impact 2)

The sustainability and localization of the program was discussed at length in three sessions with Prof. El Toukhy, Head of the Economics Department at UNAM. In one of these meetings we were also joined by the Vice Chancellor of the UNAM. The main points of these conversations can be summed up in the following points:

- a) The implementation of the program at UNAM has up to this day been resting mainly on the enthusiasm and competence of Prof. Toukhy himself. It should be noted that he is himself an expatriate and came to Namibia in 1991 as part of an Egyptian Technical Assistance Program to Namibia after the liberation. At the Faculty of Economics there are in addition to himself two persons who hold a Ph.D. These are also both foreigners. There are also six Namibians attached to the Faculty, all of whom hold an MSc. Altogether four of these are now on Ph.D. programs (2 in the UK, 1 in Holland, and 1 who follows a DE program by the Natal University, RSA). The competence development programs of these people are funded by external sources. They will have completed their doctoral theses by 2003-5. Only then can the MSc program at UNAM be said to have a realistic possibility of being run by Namibian resources. The people who follow these programs are on bonded contracts.

On a short-term basis, therefore, the sustainability and localization of the program appears to be in jeopardy if further funding is being held back. Likewise, there is at present nobody to fill the role of Prof. Toukhy, should he choose to go back to Egypt. The prognosis for a lasting impact at UNAM at this point must be judged to be uncertain, to put it mildly.

- b) The SOAS program is part and parcel of a long-term plan to set up a high caliber Economics Department at UNAM. In the five-year plan of the Faculty there is a concrete plan to launch a MSc run wholly by UNAM. The Department of Economics has also initiated a co-operation with Institute of Social Studies in The Hague plus the Maastricht School of Management. In order to increase the status of the degrees awarded by the Department of Economics Prof. El Toukhy claims the department needs international co-operation as well as to belong to a network of highly recognized universities.
- c) UNAM is interested in establishing direct contacts with Swedish universities. This point was underlined in a meeting where the Vice Chancellor of UNAM also took part. In the conversation reference was made to a letter sent to the Universities of Lund and Umeå where a tripartite project of co-operation in education is being proposed by UNAM. At UNAM the administration is now awaiting the response of the Swedish universities before approaching SIDA on this matter.

- d) There are concrete plans to set up a Business School at UNAM. The Department of Economics is a central player in this development.
- e) Prof. El Toukhy is convinced that co-operation with South African universities is unrealistic. This is because
 - i) RSA universities require their students to have a BA with Honors in order to continue on a MSc program (there are very few Namibian students who matriculate at this level), and
 - ii) there is at present no university in the RSA that has a DE course in Economics at post-graduate level.
- a) As a demonstration of institutional development Prof. Toukhy also points out the improved physical infrastructure of the department, i.e. computer lab, TV-sets, Video player, overhead projector, etc.
- b) Because of the tight financial situation in Namibia, all educational institutions will in the next year's budget suffer a 2% cut in their overall spending. The effects of this cut will of course have adverse effects on new developments at UNAM.

Summary

The Vice Chancellor pointed out that a sudden withdrawal of funds by the donors at this point might jeopardize everything that has been achieved. A much more attractive alternative to UNAM is the prospect of a gradual phasing out of SIDA support that is in phase with the five-year plan of the Faculty. This would, according to the Vice Chancellor, secure a lasting sustainability of the program with the UNAM.

A Phasing out over Three to Four Years

It is the opinion of the evaluation team that the institutionalization of the program is in its inception and that there is a fair chance of a lasting impact provided a donor offers continued funding to UNAM. The funding ought to be designed to be phased out over a period of three to four years in step with the five-year plan of the Department of Economics at UNAM.

9. Personal benefits to students (Impact 3)

The general feeling expressed by most students is that the program has been important to their personal development. They felt that they have not only a better grasp of the subject matter, but they have been introduced to new ways of reasoning. According to the results of the tracer study the students believe that the program has been beneficial in terms of:

- greater subject knowledge which leads to better performance at work;
- greater confidence;
- better job prospect; and
- salary increases.

10. Sida's Performance

Thesis requirement dropped

There was no intention on part of Sida to take away the dissertation requirement. It simply happened as a result of an – by itself legitimate – unwillingness on part of the donor to commit funds without first having seen the results of the previous cohort, and also because of the very long planning period required by SOAS to arrange a residential school for thesis writing. From the interviews conducted with the involved Swedish Embassy personnel it emerges that the program officers were not really aware of the rather dramatic consequences for the quality and the nature of the project's output that the deficient negotiating process would have had.

In a way it may seem as comforting that the donor did not exclude the thesis requirement by policy. The reason for it was a bureaucratic slip. But this raises two issues: *Firstly*, why did not SOAS alert the donor that for the second cohort the donor would be getting a much inferior product for his aid money, namely a masters degree *without* a thesis. *Secondly*, even more important, it raises the question of Sida's policy of decentralizing decision making to its field embassies. Sida's decision was apparently taken without involving Sida's educational division. Had this been done, the Education experts would presumably have raised the alarm that the decision making process was risking the quality of the program.

Attachment: Summary of Tracer study

Questionnaire Results from Namibia

Introduction

Between 1995 and 1999 in all 43 people have participated in the program out of which 14 were women. Out of the 43 admitted in the program, 15 completed the Diploma in Economic Principles, 7 completed the post-graduate Diploma in Financial Economics and 7 completed the MSc in Financial Economics. Fifteen students from the 1998 cohort are awaiting the final results which will come out in December 1999.

This evaluation covers a sample of 30 students. Several replacements according to the sampling instructions have been made during the work course. The reason is that some students appeared twice in the list. They graduated from Diploma in Economic Principles (DEP) and then went on to register for MSc program. All sampled participants but one have been contacted. The questionnaires have been completed and returned in all cases but two. Among the returned questionnaires one was not properly completed and therefore excluded. The findings are consequently based on the final sample of 27 students. Because of the replacements we ended up with an overrepresentation of students of 1998 cohort in the sample as shown in Table 4.

Appendix 4. Table 4: Distribution of the population and the sample

Cohort	Admitted Students			Sampled Students		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1995	18	8	26	7	3	10
1996 ¹⁹	11	2	13	5	0	5
1998	11	6	17	8	4	12
Total	30	16	56	20	7	27

The Sample

The sample comprises 20 male and 7 female students in ages ranging from 25 to 44. As shown in Table 4. The average age for the students in the sample was 35 (as per August 1999). Looking at their educational background before entering the MSc program, 20 students had a background in economics, 4 in social sciences and 3 in other fields like, accounting and computer science. Out of the 27 students, 18 had received university education at undergraduate level (BA and BSc degrees), 4 had degrees at graduate level (MA, MSc), 1 had some university education at graduate level but no degree, 2 had Bachelor's Honors, 1 had diploma in economics, and 1 did not specify. This indicates that the great majority of the students had the right educational background and fulfilled the criteria of admission in the MSc program.

¹⁹ Note that the 13 students who entered the program in 1996, are those who qualified from DEP in 1995. These are same people and therefore we refer in the analysis to a total number of 43 students and not 56.

Appendix 4. Table 5: Students by age and gender

Age/ Gender	25–30	31–35	36–40	41–45	Total	Average age
Male	5	6	4	4	19	35
Female	3	2	1	1	7	33
Total	8	8	5	5	27	35

Work Situation

Currently, 23 students are working in the public sector, 3 in the private and 1 in the parastatal. There has been a flow from public to private sector although not so significant. Nine students have, however, changed employer while 18 have the same employer as they did at the time of the course. So, 25% of the students in the sample did change job which points to a significant mobility even though within the public sector. From the interviews some students indicated that they took the course in order to get a specific job. Tables 6 and 7 show the initial work situation at the time the students initiated the MSc program and the work situation today.

Appendix 4. Table 6: Employers at the time of the course and number of students

Employers	Number of students
Office of the Auditor General	1
Bank of Namibia	7
Central Statistics Office	1
Ministry of Agriculture	2
Ministry of Trade and Industry	4
Ministry of Defense	1
Ministry of Finance	4
National Planning Commission	6
State President Office	1
Total	27

Appendix 4. Table 7: Employers today and number of students

Employers	Number of Students
Air Namibia	1
Bank of Namibia	7
Ministry of Agriculture	2
Ministry of Trade and Industry	4
Ministry of Defense	1
Ministry of Finance	3
National Planning Commission	3
Office of the Auditor General	1
Global Consultancy Services	1
Namibian Harvest Investment	1
Social Security Commission (MoL)	1
Shell Exploration	1
TransNamib	1
Total	27

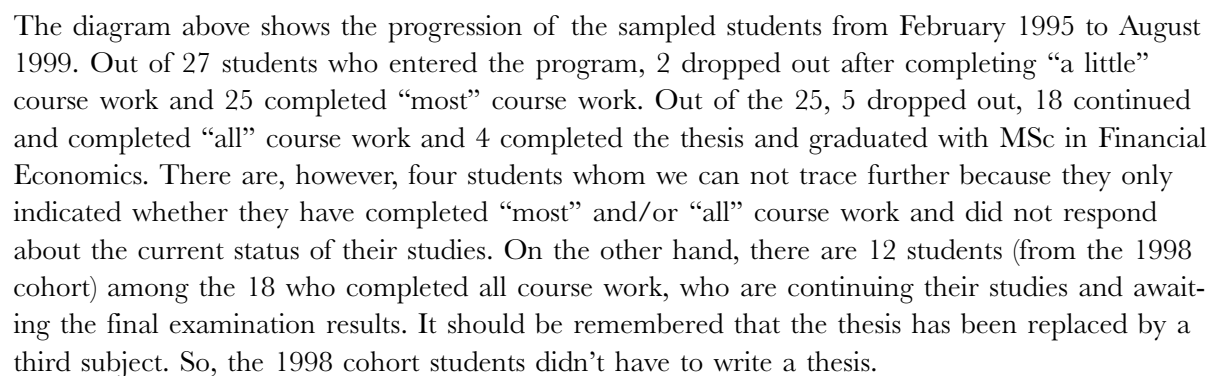
Out of the 18 students who maintained the same job, 10 have changed positions. As shown in Table 5, a total of 19 students (14 male and 5 female) have changed positions and duties between the time of the course and today. The status change column indicates our understanding of whether

the change in position has brought promotion (1), demotion (-1) or remained the same (0). There is one case in which we are uncertain: the deputy director who changed job from the public to private sector and became an economist. Although we tend to consider it a promotion because he may be earning more money, we still don't know the reasons why he changed job. Therefore, we classify him under the status 0/1. In general the promotions are not considered direct effects of the MSc program but indirect effects since the program helps the individuals in performing better in their work. However, two interviewed students stated that they applied to the program specifically because they were interested in getting their current job. In this case, the students managed to get the current job because of their attendance to or completion of the MSc program, i.e. that is viewed as a direct result of the MSc program.

Appendix 4. Table 8: Career development between the time of the course and today by gender

Cases	Before MSc course	After MSc course	Status Change
	Male	Male	+/-
1	Snr. Development Planner	Chief Development Planner	1
2	Snr. Economist	Chief Economist	1
3	Trade Promotion Officer	Chief Economist	1
4	Statistician	Data System Analyst	1
5	Deputy Director	Economist	0/1
6	Director Treasury	Finance Manager	1
7	Snr. Economist	Head of Statistics	1
8	Chief Statistician	Investment Analyst	1
9	Special Assistant	Manager	1
10	Head Bilateral Dev. Coop.	Managing Director	1
11	Snr. Economist	Principal Economist	1
12	Research Officer	Snr. Excon Officer	1
13	Cooperative Officer	Training Officer	1
14	Chief Cooperative Officer	Chief Cooperative Officer	0
15	Permanent Secretary	Permanent Secretary	0
16	Research Officer	Research Officer	0
17	Research Officer	Research Officer	0
18	Research Officer	Research Officer	0
19	Research Officer	Research Officer	0
20	Deputy Director	Deputy Director	0
	Female	Female	
21	Statistician	Chief Economist	1
22	Deputy Director	Commissioner	1
23	Assistant Economist	Economist	1
24	Snr Excon Officer	Manager	1
25	Economist	Trade Policy Analyst	1
26	Auditor	Auditor	0
27	Snr Research Officer	Snr Research Officer	0
	Total "same"		9
	Total promotions		18
	Grand total		27

When asked about “why did you apply to the MSc program?”, the students presented the following reasons: I was interested in the program (19); My bosses advised me to apply (2); I needed it for my work (10); and other (1) needed a higher qualification. Most of the students who said they were interested in the program also said they needed it for their work.



To this question, the students responded as presented in Table 9:

Appendix 4. Table 9: Participation in other programs

Type of Education or Training	Number of responses
Training workshops given by the Government	11
Other workshop	6
Course given by the Government	2
Other course	3
Study visit	4
University course in other field	1
Another university degree	1
Total “other programs”	28

Usefulness of the MSc Program

Table 10 shows that the majority of the students found the course “very useful” for carrying out their duties both at the present work and at work at the time of the course. One student found the course “not useful” and two found it “a little useful”. Although they didn’t explain why, we assume that it is because it has no direct application to their work. Few indicated that they took the course because it was necessary in order to get or keep their job. It should be mentioned that two of them has in fact changed job.

Appendix 4. Table 10: Usefulness of the course in carrying out duties

	At the time of the course	At the present work
Not useful, a hindrance	0	0
Not useful, not a hindrance	1	0
Perhaps a little useful	2	2
Rather useful	1	1
Very useful	20	23
Was necessary in order To get or keep the job	3	1
Total	27	27

Below are some comments made by the students which illustrate how the course has been useful to their work.

- Improved my overall knowledge of my job.
- Gave in-depth in the understanding of the inter-linkages of markets and accounts.
- After my first year for the MSc, I was confident to take up a position of trade policy analyst.
- I am now able to take more informed decision due to more and sound understanding of economic issues.
- Understanding the financial environment much better in terms of credit facilities, loan guarantee fund and other related issues that I am involved as they affect cooperative enterprises.
- It made me understand macroeconomics of my country and international finance for procurement decisions.
- Econometric background and enhanced understanding of Macroeconomics helps in analyzing the transport market (business analysis) and in coming up with appropriate recommendations for business strategy in terms of pricing, marketing, investment of pension fund moneys, etc.
- It covers essential and contemporary issues on money and capital markets. Approaches and methods are very useful.

- A module like Banking and Finance was, for example, very useful for my current tasks, namely economic and investment analysis.
- Quantitative methods course is very useful in forecasting, financial modeling, project screening. All four courses of the first year are very useful and informative and I use it sometimes in my job.
- It gave me a broader understanding of macroeconomics. I am now also able to analyze the economic situation of my country.
- The course has helped me although I have not completed it. The intention was not to change but rather to help me improving my performance and understanding the environment in which I found myself.
- Introduced me to advanced economic concepts which I found/find useful in my work as economist.
- Although the program has been very useful to me in both my previous and current jobs. I am convinced that its usefulness in the current job would have been enhanced if I was allowed to take a course in Bank Financial Management which I expressed interest for. Unfortunately, my request was not granted. This is one of the main reasons why I have not completed the thesis yet.

Applying changes in work and organization

When asked about if the MSc program has helped the students in making changes in their work, 20 answered “yes”, 3 answered “no” and 4 did not answer. But when it comes to applying changes in their respective organization, 17 students responded that they have not been able to apply such changes, 5 responded “yes”, and 5 did not respond at all. Changes in the organization are considered more difficult to apply since the decisions on such changes are taken at the management level.

Below are some of the students’ explanations on this regard.

- Improved the approach towards doing research and applying the theory on the job.
- Not necessarily but contribute to changes in some respect. In other words my personal contribution increased.
- Yes. Application of econometrics in analysis.
- I am not at a decision making level, and thus even recommendations are subject to approval by those in decision making. Thus I have not achieved much in this area.
- Yes. In terms of quality of planning regarding financial aspects. Not at the moment, but when completed this will be the case.
- The course has improved my capacity to put into context my job, the overall economy and how it is affected by changes in the entire world economy. I understand better what is required of me, thus I can perform my work in shorter time than in the past.
- Not yet, still continuing with the course but gave me useful thinking for future.
- Since I completed the diploma, I was asked to handle the budget in our division.
- I am now able to make and focus on realistic recommendations and decisions.
- Rather. It has contributed to the efficiency and quality of my work as a result of enhanced understanding of statistics and the workings of macroeconomics.
- Not really. Although my performance has improved and my understanding of certain government policies is better, my work is pretty much the same.
- I have added new dimensions to data collection and analysis. The output of my section is now of higher quality.

- Has not made changes yet, but my suggestions are very much welcomed and one day it could lead to changes.
- Improved comprehension of the tasks helped me to streamline the activities. However, I still have to consolidate my position in this highly accounting/financial management relate environment in order to make change in the organization.
- Not really because we are currently drafting policies on industrial development which is not that related. As regards changes in the organization, decisions are taken by management. We just recommend. It all depends whether they want your recommendations or not.
- Somehow. Especially confidence in expressing in economic terms.

The Distance Education Approach

Table 11 shows how satisfactory the distance education program has been to the students. Thirteen students expressed that there were some problems with the technology while 11 indicated that there were “virtually” no problems with it. It seems that the problems the students were referring to were particularly the delays in the reception of comments on the assignments and insufficient contact with SOAS.

As regards the support from the national host institution, 21 students stated that there were no problems at all while 4 felt that there were minor problems. It seems that the host institution has been very supportive and the local tutors have been very much committed and helpful. Most of the students (15) expressed satisfaction with the support they received from the employer. There are, however, students who faced problems in being released from work to attend the local tutorials and prepare for the examinations. This concerns mainly students from the 1995 and 1996 cohorts when there were still no clear regulations regarding the release of MSc students for study purposes. These became clear in 1998.

In relation to the support from SOAS in the home country, 14 students considered it satisfactory, 10 considered the support insufficient and 2 considered that there was lack of support which was a major hinder for them to overcome. Only 5 students responded to the question concerning the support received from SOAS in London. These were the students who attended the residential school in London and could therefore express their opinion. Among the 22 who did not answer, 12 were the students who belong to the 1998 cohort and did not have to write a thesis (thesis has been dropped).

Appendix 4. Table 11: Students' level of satisfaction regarding the DE approach

	Technology	Support from local Host institution	Support from the employer	Support from SOAS in home country	Support from SOAS in London
Major hinder	0	1	2	2	0
Major problems	1	0			
Minor problems	12	4			
No problems	11	21			
Little support			4	0	0
Some support			5	10	0
Good support			15	14	5
No answer	3	1	1	1	22
Total	27	27	27	27	27

General Comments on the MSc Program

In general, the students considered the program relevant, useful and very beneficial. They said it helped them to gain better understanding of micro and macro-economics and to execute their duties more efficiently. The students' general opinion about the program is presented in the comments that follow.

Positive Comments

- Very good program in terms of relevance and it is of high quality.
- The content is also very relevant especially to the third world country. The only problem is that the Research Method was not offered. DE approach is a bit highly advanced but less de.. compared with the residential approach.
- The content is suitable for distance education and I am satisfied with it
- This program is well organized in terms of course material than other distance education program I have experienced. Good quality and worth all resources (time and money) invested in it.
- The program is nicely set up such that any full-time employee is able to cope with it.
- Distance education can be viewed as the most cost-effective and un-disruptive approach, if employer grants sufficient time for studies.
- I have mainly benefited from quantitative methods course. Together with the other 3 courses in Part I, the program gives understanding and overview of the recent trends of the world economy.
- The quality of the program is commendable because with it I managed to secure a new grade on my job.
- The approach is perfect but the work overload was a major problem. Moreover, I have not done Statistics before which put me off completely. I would rather wish to have a choice between Statistics or Marketing.
- Distance education approach allows those who cannot be released from their work to study further. The quality and content are good and relevant. The focus should perhaps also include other branches of economics, not just financial economics.
- It is a good approach in educating working professionals. It allows you to use knowledge gained almost instantly.
- Content is excellent. Practical approach which made it easy to apply concepts learnt in work situation.

Other Comments

- I am satisfied with the approach as a whole. It could be of good quality, the only problem I am facing is that I cannot do a thesis that could have enabled me to go a step further after the MSc.
- Distance education approach is OK since one does not have to leave the work place, i.e., one would do course work and still perform his/her job duties simultaneously. This is very good. However, one of the shortcomings of distance education is less access to reading materials and references. In this regard it is recommended that more reading materials be made available.
- Time constraint (i.e. studying and working) is always not easy as opposed to residential approach to higher education where full concentration is given to course work.
- It is unfortunate that I could not go to UK for research methods, something which would have upgraded my research methods, but I am glad to have enrolled in the program. The content is generally good and the tutorials we had with local institution excellent but the seminars were not that fruitful at all.

- The program is of high quality but few things need to be changed to suit Africa experience. It is well structured but the time allocated and the volume of work do not match.
- The program itself is good and helps economists to improve in planning. However, practical courses is lacking. For instance, econometric syllabi should have enough time with more computer practice.
- Course material from SOAS is well-written and self-contained. Our tutors are also excellent. However, we do not have access to extensive literature – no extensive library to cater for post-graduate needs. We need access to a diversity of textbooks and formulas to get a broader view of things. DE is a bit more difficult. Students are left to largely guide themselves. Luckily, we have contracted tutors. It will not be easy for students coming from diverse backgrounds to comprehend everything on their own. Even if they pass the course, their knowledge will be marginal. They are limiting students' chances of furthering their studies. Mind you these are students who has first class passes in the undergraduate but are now reduced to marginal passes. It does not help the students.
- The residential approach will definitely be better because one will have more access to books and research material than we have at the moment.
- Good. However, I was disappointed when we were informed that there was no possibility of doing a dissertation due to financial constraints.
- It would be extremely useful if the sponsor would publish, say 10 copies of the theses, as this will encourage the students.
- Of course, with residential approach, the concentration is very high, but distance education provides you with the management skills.
- The residential approach is the most appropriate as one has the needed and required facilities nearby, while with distance education you might suffer for information, advise and facilities. DE requires commitment, responsibility and a lot of sacrifices.
- I was not very happy with final marks for one course and when I took this up with the program coordinator in London, I did not receive a satisfactory response (both first and second attempt I got the same marks). When one fails a course, you are only allowed to repeat that particular course once and you are not even allowed to repeat the assignment. I am not very happy with such kind of set-up. You are not even allowed to take another course to complete the program. In this regard the program is very inflexible.
- Lack of communication between students and SOAS. Communication would be sent to them without any response. Students not very clear as to where they stand as far as their studies are concerned.

Appendix 5

Country Information Cambodia

Attachment: *SUMMARY OF TRACER STUDY*

1. Introduction

The Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI)

In 1994 a delegation from Sida's Asia Country Division visiting Cambodia discussed with the *Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI)* a proposal for a MSc training program in Cambodia, since Sida's experiences of the MSc project in Vietnam had generally been good. Following this contact the CDRI director traveled to Hanoi to study the program, which had been running there already one year.

There was an on-going discussion between the country's two universities along language lines – English and French – about which would act as host institution for the program. Subsequently CDRI agreed to take on responsibility as contractor with SOAS, and to act as host institution for the distance education program. In accepting this responsibility CDRI interpreted to include not only to have a say in running the program, but also in planning the contents of it. CDRI was interested in working towards a “Cambodian adaptation” of the program, which would be reflected in the practical examples used in assignments etc., and also in the choice of dissertation topics. During the course of the program CDRI managed to cut down parts of the program somewhat thereby saving about USD 100,00 in projected program costs. The SOAS program was ended in December 1998.

CDRI received financial support from Sida already from 1992 during the embargo times, i.e. three years before the MSc program started. CDRI was set up in 1990 based on a study carried out by a research institute in The Hague. CDRI's main task is to train people in the government. CDRI was earlier conducting a 6 months course in economics run by an expatriate Cambodian.

Sida's relation with Cambodia

At that time there was no Swedish country frame program for Cambodia, and the Ministry of Finance was *not* Sida's counterpart in negotiating aid projects. Sweden was limited to finding its cooperating partners outside of the Ministries, and therefore approached the CDRI. Sida's negotiations about the country program are today with CDC, Cambodia Development Council. The country's finance minister is chairman of this council.

In 1995/96 Sida responsible country officer for Cambodia was still based in Stockholm. His main task was to transform the Swedish Cambodia program from disaster relief to a regular country program based on bilateral development co-operation with a Swedish country strategy for Cambodia. This meant moving the Swedish Cambodia program into a mode of close dialogue and co-operation between Sida and the recipient country's key ministries.

None of the Sida sectoral divisions were involved at all at that time. The Swedish aid to education was given through UNICEF, and all the other programs were co-financing agreements, mainly with the UNDP and UNICEF with the latter as implementing agencies. The SOAS project in Cambodia thus did not come about at the initiative of DESA, but of Sida's regional division for Asia, which later, transferred the program responsibility to DESA. At that time neither DESA nor any of the other sector divisions at Sida had visited Cambodia. Only SEKA, Sida's department for emergency aid, had done so.

Cambodia's transition

When the transition from a centrally planned to a market economy was started in Cambodia in 1993/94 there was an acute need for negotiation's skills in the government in order to be able to discuss the economic reform program with IMF and the World Bank. These skills were provided through a course offered by CDRI to government officials. After that came the idea of also training the government officers in financial economics. In Cambodia there was not a direct or very concrete relation that had been identified between the project on the one hand and identified specific needs of knowledge and capacity in a ministry on the other.

Economic development of Cambodia has suffered dramatically because of 30 years of war situation. Most persons with any higher education, who did not manage to flee the country, died or were killed during Pol Pot. After the Pol Pot era came 10 years of Soviet style economics. During these years all students received their training according to the centrally planned economic model. Therefore almost all decision-makers one meets in the government today received their training in the Soviet Union or in the former Eastern bloc countries. During the Khmer Rouge regime the country's entire educational system was ruined.

Only after the elections in 1993 did the country start its transition to the market economic system. Before a strong rationalization program was introduced a few years ago there were plenty of staff in the ministries, but the majority without the proper education or qualifications. The shift from centrally planned economy to market economy was very quick in Cambodia. The situation today is that almost all ministries have an acute lack of trained staff to carry out even basic duties. In spite of big improvements there is still little capacity to prepare economic plans and economic policy.

Today, as the country becomes increasingly integrated in the world economy by opening its borders to trade, investments and tourism, and with the membership in the many international co-operations – e.g. IDA, IMF, WTO to ASEAN – this problem becomes even more acute. Collaboration with the international institutions and organizations implies new tasks for the government which usually require advanced knowledge and analytic capacity in economics. The country's absorption capacity for foreign aid is considered to be very weak.

There is widespread corruption in Cambodia. The country's generals are not only military men but also businessmen and managing directors of the informal and illegal logging operations carried out by military units. Cambodia is today said to be the world's most unregulated economy. There are huge state incomes which do not find their way to the state coffers but instead end up in the pockets of the generals.

Other donors

Most bilateral aid funds to Cambodia, including Sweden's, have so far been channeled through UNICEF and UNDP. Only Japan and Australia had programs of their own. Also the French government supports higher education – mainly the faculty of medicine, the Institute of technology, the law faculty, as well as smaller amounts to agricultural education.

Apart from the Sweden's support to the distance education programs conducted by SOAS, there are currently the following scholarships offered in Cambodia for master's level education: 40 per year by Russia, 2 per year by China and Japan, and 20 per year by Australia. The Australian program, which is destined primarily for government officials comprises one year of English training in Cambodia followed by two years of graduate studies at a university in Australia. Entering students will already have a BA degree from Cambodia or, usually, from the Soviet Union/Russia. Russia today offers 40 scholarships per year for master and for doctoral studies. But students have to pay

for their own travel. These scholarships are today not very attractive so they usually do not fill up all the 40 places offered.

The World Bank/Japan joint scholarship fund, administered by the AsDB, is a global program where Cambodian applicants compete with other country students. There are currently two students from Cambodia – one MA- and one Ph.D.-student., both in economics. Also Germany provides Master level scholarships but there is international screening in Germany and very few are accepted. UNDP has several programs in capacity training in the government, e.g. in the CDC, which UNDP helped create. Modes of interventions are workshops, fellowships and study tours.

UNDP has its *Toch Ten* program, whereby expatriate Khmer are encouraged to come and work in Cambodia for a certain time. One of its former beneficiaries is the current finance minister, who decided to stay on. IMF and the World Bank entered Cambodia for the first time in 1993. Japan has granted large loans to Cambodia which were not tied to the ESAF conditionality package.

Objectives

Sida's main objectives in financing this program were

- to address the shortage of qualified economists in financial economics with a view to supporting the governments economic reform programs, and
- to contribute to the development of training capacity at the CDRI.

2. Delivery and execution

Sida's motive for supporting a distance educational program in MSc Economics was to address the severe shortage of professional economists in the public sector with expertise in Financial Economics. It was regarded as a means for strengthening Cambodia's capacity in the following fields:

- monetary policy at national level
- policy toward the development of the financial sector
- international financial policies
- teaching in the fields of money and finance
- research in the fields of money and finance

The degree concentrating on Financial Economics was deemed to be the most relevant to some key ministries and institutions. Of the 24 students who commenced their studies in February 1996, 18 were civil servants in the Ministries of Economy and Financing, the Ministry of Planning, and the National Bank. The program was delivered according to the standard schedule and input as set out by SOAS. To take the course the students had to give up all their side jobs. For this reason Sida decided to pay each student USD 50 per month.

Selection of Students

The first batch of students was selected by the CDRI. The CDRI director was very active visiting the heads of various ministries trying to raise their interest in this training. She was also pointing out the inherent responsibilities of the ministry by enrolling its officers as students to the program, i.e. the students needed the support of the ministry to successfully complete the program.

The recruitment was open to potential candidates from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Trade/Commerce, the National Bank of Cambodia, and the Cambodian Development Council. It was announced by letters to the ministries as well as via announcements in the newspapers and television. Flyers and leaflets were also circulated in the ministries. In addi-

tion, CDRI had to talk with the ministries to make sure that they would release the students to attend the program. CDRI had to report on students' progress to the ministries each year in order to get their commitment on paper.

A recruitment committee was set up at CDRI to screen the students. The committee included a senior staff member from the Ministry of Education, a representative from Royal University of Phnom Penh, an economist from the Institute for Democracy and several staff from CDRI. Initially, they received 65 applications (only 3 women applied), however, after the test examinations in English and Mathematics only 36 were admitted to the Qualifying Course.

The Qualifying Year

In 1995 the qualifying program was delivered jointly by Cambodia Development Research Institute (CDRI) and Center of International Education in Economics (CIEE), University of London. The students received a Certificate of Attendance issued by CDRI). However, in Cambodia the input of classroom teaching was increased considerably compared to the provision in Mozambique and Namibia.

The qualifying year was taught primarily as face to face teaching five days a week by local and CIEE tutors. CDRI provided intensive English Language Course, Academic Study Skills, and a computer refresher course half time over three and a half months. CIEE brought in tutors to provided tuition in Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Mathematics, and Statistics over three separate eight-week periods.

The qualifying year has been analyzed critically by CDRI in a comprehensive report of 25.08.97. The main point of this evaluation is that the qualifying program set out by CIEE ought to be strengthened by a better integration between the language and computer training on one side and that of the academic content on the other. Of the 34 students that attended the Qualifying Course, 24 were admitted to the MSc program. The selection was made on strictly academic merits.

The MSc Courses

The MSc program was delivered over the period 1996–97 according to the standard SOAS inputs. It was fortified by local classroom teaching twice a week at sessions of three hours. In the beginning it turned out to be impossible to recruit local tutors that had the necessary competence. In order to run the program as planned Sida recruited tutors from Sweden to be able to offer high quality local tuition. After the program had already started Sida realized that – as they had done in Vietnam – it was a good idea to contract a Swedish junior professional expert to take on the tutoring task. The CDRI director at first was opposed to this idea but later acquiesced. These tutors worked full-time and were seconded to CDRI who had the overall administrative responsibility for the implementation of the program in Cambodia.

In addition to the local tutors SOAS brought in their own tutors for intensive introductory sessions at the beginning of each new course module as well as refresher sessions prior to examinations.

The combination of all of these inputs secured a high quality program. In an evaluation report²⁰ “CDRI sums up the overall impressions of the program in August 1997 by stating that:

CIEE has done an outstanding job of delivering the program and packaging quality master's level courses for the purposes of distance education. Problems arising from the CDRI's perspective are

²⁰ Jane Williams Grube, 25.08.97

related – not to content quality – but to flexibility within the program to accommodate country specific needs.”

The overall impression of our evaluation is also that the students have been working extremely hard to meet the obligations of the program, and that they are very satisfied with the quality and contents of the program.

The roles of CDRI and CIEE

However, the quote above also suggests that CDRI and CIEE have not seen eye to eye on all aspects of the program. The main issues of discussion have been related to the role of the visiting and expatriate tutors vis-à-vis the role of CDRI, and in some cases the possibilities for making changes in the academic program of SOAS. These issues are listed in detail in the report that has been referred to. There has been a discussion between SOAS and CDRI about the orientation of the program. CDRI always maintained the position that practical examples and case studies for the course should be taken from Cambodia, a position which was not adopted by SOAS. In the opinion of CDRI's Director the residential school in London did not offer much and could have been left out.

In retrospect it may be possible that clearer role definitions at the outset of the program between CDRI and CIEE on the one hand and CDRI and Sida on the other, may have resulted in a smoother relationship between the parties involved.

However, when it comes to the academic content of the program it is quite understandable that SOAS is reluctant to make substantial changes on short notice in a distance education program. As pointed out earlier one of the basic characteristics of distance education is the very careful and resource-demanding preparation that is necessary in order to secure the quality aspects of such a program. Nor has any solid written documentation been put forward by CDRI that would justify the need for such amendments in the program.

Residential school in London was seen as very important by the students. It greatly improved their language skills. The visit to London also had a psychological value in providing incentive to study and to develop a sense of quality criteria for academic training.

Course content

CDRI has all through advocated that the course contains relatively more of “development” subjects and relatively less of theoretical and methodology contents like e.g. econometrics. The mission's position is that – while recognizing that development economics is obviously a very important subject – the purpose of the project is theoretical academic education to satisfy the governments need for knowledge in (theoretical) macro and financial economics. The need for more development economics will and is being satisfied by other programs.

Also, CDRI criticized SOAS for not having its material adapted to Cambodian conditions. In the missions estimation however this critique is not well taken in this context, for the purpose of the Sida financed program is to provide training in theoretical economics. It is not a course in applied development economics.

3. Cost efficiency

Total Cost of the MSc program

CDRI is the only institution that has produced audited reports regarding the total expenditure of the program. Based upon these documents the summary table underneath suggests the following annual disbursement of funds by Sida as well as program expenditure over the period 1995–1998:

Appendix 5. Table 1: Disbursement and Expenditure (All figures are in USD)

Year	Sida Disbursement	SOAS Expenditure	CDRI Expenditure	Total
1995	194,600	76,749	96,940	173,689
1996	376,664	185,283	46,021	231,304
1997	487,780	424,550	50,501	475,501
1998		57,086	16,862	73,948
Total	1,059,044	743,668	210,324	954,442

The balance of about USD 100,000 has been returned to Sida, and this has also been duly noted by the Sida record of accounts in Phnom Penh. At a rate of exchange (USD/SEK) of 8/1 this suggests that the total expenditure has been about SEK 8 mill, or consistent with the attachment to a note by Asiensekretariatet (1995-03-28) where a round sum of SEK 8,3 mill is allocated to the MSc program in Cambodia.

However, there is reason to suspect that this is not the whole truth about the expenditures in Cambodia. Not in any of the documents that have been made available is there any reference to the cost of the bilateral academic experts – BBE-*Biträdande Bilateral* Experter – that were seconded to the program in 1996 and 1997. They are clearly not included in the budgets of the program, nor are such costs being entered in the Sida records of accounts in Phnom Penh.

There are also noteworthy inconsistencies between the audited accounts of the CDRI and the Sida accounts in Phnom Penh as well as between the allocated sums to the project by Sida's Regional Asia Division and the Sida accounts. The records in Phnom Penh show that the *Agreement Amount* to the MSc program is SEK 4,5 mill and that the total expenditure has been SEK 2,9 mill. The entries in the records show that the Sida disbursement throughout the period 1996-98 has been SEK 3,7 mill (which is almost consistent with the recorded CDRI income in 1997) and that CDRI has returned SEK 0,8 mill in 1998.

The difference between the CDRI and Sida records amounts to SEK 5,6 mill, and the difference between the allocated sum by Sida in Stockholm and the sum entered in Phnom Penh is SEK 3,8 mill. These inconsistencies ought to be looked carefully into by Sida appointed auditors.

Comments

In order to simplify the calculations the following estimates are based on a total expenditure of USD 175,000 in 1995 (the Qualifying Course) for 36 students, and a total cost of USD 780,000 in 1996–97 (the MSc program) for 24 students. This leaves us with the following costs per student at the various stages in the program:

1. The Qualifying Course: USD 4861 or SEK 39,000 per student
2. The MSc program: USD 32,500 or SEK 260,000 per student

This is a figure that tallies well with the cost of the program in other countries. However, the costs of the BBEs are not included in this estimate. If the total cost of the BBEs is estimated to SEK 1,3 mill, the cost per student in the MSc part of the program would be increased by another SEK 54,000.

Nor should we forget that the Cambodian Government has been extremely generous with the students of the program in that they have all been granted a 50% study leave throughout the whole program. This means that the contribution of the ministries that have been involved with the program has been some 17 man-years in 1995 and perhaps as much as 20 man-years for the 1996–97, – taking into account that the study year was discontinued by September 1997.

The reasons why the costs are so high are:

- the inherent logic of the cost efficiency of a traditional DE program has been jeopardized by introducing a substantial amount of classroom teaching and local tuition by local and expatriate experts
- the number of students is too low to warrant the administrative costs of a local administration as well as the SOAS administration
- the separate SOAS administrative unit that was set up in London for Cambodia is both extremely costly and probably unnecessary, taking into account that a DE program with smooth administrative routines can always accommodate a small number of new students without incurring extra operational costs

A final report of the first cohort in Cambodia with audited accounts has not been obtained.

4. Alternatives to SOAS DE-program

Scholarships

The Australian Government has since 1994 financed scholarships for full-time graduate studies in Australia. A total of 40 Cambodians have graduated so far, and another 50 are currently studying in Australia. The Australian graduate program covers all subjects and any university of the applicants choice – if he is admitted.

Australia has suggested that scholarships can be given privately directly to the students without the government taking any part in the decision process. (Like the Swedish Institute model) But the government does not want this, insisting that this kind of aid money be channeled through the government. Australia does have private scholarship funds in other countries.

The average cost of a student in Australia is about AS 50–60,000, including everything – airplane, housing, food and tuition. The tuition fee per year is about 8–14,000 AUD (some longer PhD programs seem to cost 14–6000 for the whole 3-year period.) Living allowance per year is AUD 14,000 covering food and housing plus other expenses.

Comparing distance education with regular full time studies

In comparing the distance education model with regular full time students going abroad for two or three years, several of the government officers interviewed said that the government needs both types of students. Because the ones who go to Australia learn the language much better, probably more economics, and also acquire more general knowledge. On the other hand they often need some time to adapt to Cambodian conditions after returning from abroad. The distance education graduates on the other hand perhaps learn less economics and definitely less language, but on the other hand they understand more of the tasks in the ministries because they have the continuity in the workplace.

The same attitude was taken with respect to the choice between academic training of the SOAS type on the one hand and shorter more practical courses like the IMF/UNDP programs on the other. They are both needed. But the short term courses offered by e.g. the World Bank are of course not an alternative that fills the need of solid academic background as a basis for a capacity build up in the government. Short-term courses have no real long-term impact at all. Sometime they could be useful for a specific need, but they do not provide a solid foundation of knowledge. Academic training at graduate level is needed.

As an alternative to financing new MSc graduates Sida could instead have financed the employment of returning emigrant and refugee Cambodians to serve in the administration. This would probably have been a cheaper and more efficient way to cater to capacity needs in the short run. But it might not have the same beneficial effect of building up a knowledge and capacity base in the ministries in the long run.

Also, according to experience recorded by some returning Cambodians it is difficult for an expatriate Cambodian, even with an advanced degree in economics, to provide advice before he has had time to build up trust. Without that the government will not use his advice. One returnee reported that it took him two years to build up a position of trust. The culture is such that Cambodians do not trust foreigners or outsiders. This does not necessarily have to do with corruption. Everything is being based on the fact that you trust someone, not on the education which someone has acquired.

5. Quality

Many observers of the program have received the impression that some of the SOAS graduates do not possess any real understanding of economic analysis, and that they are unwilling or unable to engage in critical thinking and independent work. It has therefore been speculated whether some students might have just memorized the course contents so as to be able to pass the exams and the thesis. Others have explained such an apparent lack of understanding of the subject matter by the fact that many of them do not really use the knowledge in their jobs.

Others claim that the cultural environment in Cambodia is different in that the Cambodian culture has never been one where people are stimulated to think independently and to discuss freely. Authoritarian regimes like the Khmer Rouge and the soviet government which followed have only worsened this situation. In environments like that “you just don’t think independently and you don’t take initiatives.”

6. Use and application of knowledge (Effect of program)

There is no doubt that the training has enhanced the economic knowledge and analytic capacity of the graduates. It is, however, somewhat uncertain to what extent the new knowledge has actually benefited the ministries. The tracer studies and our interviews with the students showed that most are using their knowledge in their jobs. On the other hand it is a fact that, because of a lack of a rational personnel policy in the government, many of the graduates are not in positions where they are able to – in an “optimal” way – make use of all their newly acquired knowledge in financial economics.

Many of the graduates today have side jobs to supplement their incomes. One is for instance a teacher in a management college. Some have been offered very high salaries to work in the private sector, but turned it down. Apparently they prefer to stay in the government sector, which allows them to take on several side jobs while at the same time retaining the still very considerable social benefits enjoyed by government employees. The side jobs of course diminish their capacity to focus on their main government tasks.

Governments need for economists

In the last few years there has been a vast improvement in the government’s knowledge and analytic capacity in market economics in general and financial and macro-economics in particular, but the needs are still huge. The economic and other relations with ASEAN, of which Cambodia is a member since April 1999, are today important for the government’s policy making, and pose big demands on policy analysis and formulation. Officers at director’s level and above in the ministries are of an older generation and generally possess little or no knowledge in market economics. The

general state of knowledge in the government is low. Very few people have the knowledge and or experience to provide advice or to prepare policy.

Central Bank

The five SOAS students in the Central Bank are engaged in analysis of documents and in providing comments as basis for decisions by policy makers, thus fulfilling the Sida objective at effects level. The SOAS graduates in the central bank are also active in training other people in the bank in macro- and financial economics. Two former SOAS students in the Bank deal with reserve management. In spite of the SOAS graduates the Central Bank is lacking of a core of well-trained economists in market economics. It has today only two or three economists at master's level.

Ministry of Finance

There are currently 10 SOAS graduates and 5 MBA-graduates from Thailand and the Philippines working in the Central Bank. The curriculum planning at the Institute of the Ministry of Finance is done by a SOAS graduate. Another SOAS graduate is responsible for the Asian Development Bank's program. According to information acquired in the mission's interviews the personnel department does not evaluate a persons education in order to plan his career accordingly. Instead people have to pay bribes and utilize connections in order to get ahead. Therefore one cannot say that, at least so far, the Ministry of Finance has made full use of the knowledge acquired by the SOAS graduates. Only a few of the SOAS graduate have been successful in securing appropriate and advanced positions.

In 1994 there were about 25 expatriate experts posted in the Ministry of Finance to help shape the country's economic policy. Today there is only one – working part time. There is an economic advisory team under the Minister for Finance consisting of five members. Of the five only one or two are trained economists, but from the Soviet Union. In all of the Ministry there is no Ph.D. at all from a western university, but there are two from the former Soviet Union.

The Ministry of Finance institute is today very active in preparing the staff mainly on practical issues like accounting etc. Foreign experts are used as teachers when available.

The IMF and the World Bank

The preparations work in the government regarding the PFP and other documents that govern the country's agreement with the IMF and the world Bank have, according to knowledgeable observers, become much better. Today the Governments participation in the PFP process is quite active. Cambodia has an ESAF (=Extended Structural Adjustment Facility) program with the IMF. In 1997 however the IMF declared the program "off-track" and suspended the ESAF credit. Because of the joint conditionality applied by the donor community, the World Bank was consequently obliged to suspend its balance of payments support, but not its project support. Among the conditions posed by the donor side, presently not fulfilled by the government, are to stop the unregulated forestry exploitation and to make sure that incomes due the state are actually paid into the state treasury.

Bonded contracts

As a national policy the government does not demand that *bonded contracts* be signed by the government officers benefiting from donor financed educational programs. Every ministry today has its own policy with respect to the bonding of students going abroad for studies. Only if a particular donor, e.g. Japan or Australia requires it the Ministry of Finance will impose a bonded contract. Australia has a requirement that the student stay at least 2–3 years after returning from the studies abroad. The Australian government monitors if the graduates are properly used and if they still

work in the government. The bonding of contracts in the Australian scholarship program started only in 1999 however. Today every application in the Australian scholarship program must be accompanied by the bond declaration. The Australian aid agency has suggested that the government should strike off the names of those who leave the program from the list of civil servants, as those who leave the government for a job in the private sector always want to stay on the civil servants list and work part time because that gives them very substantial civil servant social and other benefits.

The Ministry of Planning has so far not used bonded contracts, but all the returning graduates are still with the Ministry. Other instruments and incentives are used to persuade students to stay. People feel that they are important if their services are being demanded and if they can do something useful for their country, that they have an important role to play in their ministry. According to CDC policy they must sign a bonded contract – three years for master studies and five years for doctor studies. For 6 months to 1-year training the bonded contract should be at least two years.

Also UNDP supports the idea of having bonded contracts, but points out that bonded contracts may not always be effective since the civil servants often have many jobs. Often they will formally stay in their government job, but in practice work most of the time in the private sector. Also, it is not easy, from a moral point of view, to force a student to stay on when his work place has no personnel policy and often cannot offer the graduate a relevant job.

Personnel management

An important task on the government's agenda for reforming its administration is to establish a personnel policy and management in order to promote those officers, who have acquired education, to receive relevant jobs. One problem in this connection is that the older generation of directors still have about five to six years before retirement. It is also important to create an incentive system, as many graduates returning from education abroad, take jobs in the private sector when they can not find suitable employment with an attractive salary in the government. Higher knowledge and skills do not necessarily mean getting a higher position. One also needs connections. Perhaps that explains why almost 50% of students leave for the private sector. Many government officers are today recruited by foreign aid agencies and by foreign financed local NGOs.

There is now a proposal for a national program for public administration reform which the government presented to the donors in the latest donors meeting in February 1999. This program includes personnel planning and management, as well as a system of salaries and incentives. There are today about 1500 students graduating from the country's universities and institutes every year. But the government, due to the restrictions imposed by the administrative reform, is today hiring very few of these.

For a new cohort of SOAS students it might be a good idea for the prospective donor to attach conditionality regarding personnel and career planning for the SOAS graduates.

7. Contribution to enhanced economic policy; Improved economic performance (Impact 1)

In line with the *inductive* reasoning applied in the other country programs, also regarding the Cambodia program the mission concludes that:

- (1) The output target of graduating students having acquired knowledge and analytic capacity in financial economics has in deed been attained
- (2) Most of the students are using at least some of the acquired knowledge in their jobs, even though several of them have not been able to advance to posts which better correspond to their graduate level knowledge in financial economics, which they have acquired.

- (3) It is a fact that the Cambodian government – in spite of the present “off-track” status of its program with the IMF and the World Bank – has in recent years produced a vastly improved economic policy and economic management, which has led to the country attaining record growth rates of its economy.

With these points – basing ourselves on the methodology as described in the logical framework model above – the mission can conclude that the output produced by the Sida-financed MSc program in financial economics has in deed contributed to the country’s enhanced economic performance. We also note however that this contribution could have been greater if there had been in the government a more rational personnel policy which enabled the SOAS graduates to serve in posts more relevant to their enhanced knowledge in financial economics.

8. Institution building (Impact 2)

In 1994/95 it was not an option that the a University Faculty of Economics would take the responsibility for and manage the SOAS program. By choosing CDRI as the implementing agency for the MSc program it should have been clear from the start that there could be little institutional effect from this program. At least not in the sense of building up a national institution, which could in the future take over the responsibility for the program and run it without the intervention of SOAS.

Since most aid programs to Cambodia were of a disaster relief character, it was at least up until 1994/95 common to have *efficient delivery* of goods or effects/benefits as the main objective of the support. There were usually little ambition on part of the donor that programs would also build up institutions. At the time donors had little time to concern themselves with institution building. Therefore there was nothing strange about choosing a project and a mode of delivery which was not expected to have any positive institutionalization effect. The only strange thing was perhaps that the objective of institutionalization was prominently written into Sida’s decision memorandum.

Starting about 1996 donors in Cambodia have generally changed their programs to become conventional “development” programs (as opposed to just crisis emergency relief), and institutionalisation is today therefore of central importance in Cambodia just like anywhere else.

9. Personal benefits to students (Impact 3)

The interviews conducted with students and employers, the student survey, as well as the evaluation reports of CDRI, all go to show that the students on the whole are very satisfied with the training in MSc in Financial Economics which they have undergone. In general the students are convinced that the program has given them insights and competence that very few people in Cambodia possess, and conscious that this is a competence which may have strategic importance in the reconstruction of the Cambodian economy. In describing the benefits gained from this program, the students identified the following advantages:

- better understanding of economic and financial issues;
- better performance at work;
- greater confidence at work;
- improvement of the English language; and
- new job opportunities, like for instance with the NGOs.

The impact at individual level has thus been considerable. There were, however, students who were frustrated because they had not been able to apply their knowledge in the current jobs. This limitation was attributed to the fact that the ministry inappropriately assigned students to positions that have no or little relationship to what they studied.

The survey shows that only 8 of 18 students have received a higher position than they had prior to commencing their studies. This is certainly less than what could have been expected. Some students attribute this to a culture of nepotism and corruption that is said to pervade the country including the ministries, but also due to a lack of human resource planning. None of the interviewees expressed any optimism regarding the outcome of the announced Civil Service Reform.

These findings are consistent with the findings of a tracer study²¹ performed by CDRI last year.²² When confronted with this finding the employers pointed out that formal competence is not enough to rise in the Cambodian society. Other qualifications are also needed. One comment given was: *“good interpersonal skills is one qualification that cannot be disregarded when promotions are being considered.”*

It should be pointed out that the survey was conducted less than a year upon their matriculation. With this in mind, as well as the staff policies of Cambodian ministries, it may be considered as relatively impressive that more than half of the respondents have been able to influence their own working situation, and that almost 1/3 report to have been able to influence upon their institutions.

Five of the Cambodia graduates today live and study abroad – one in Japan, two in the USA and two in Australia. All the Cambodia students were members of the government’s party in power – NNP.

10. A Possible Continuation of the MSc Program in Cambodia

CDRI

The only institution in Cambodia that can take on the task of implementing a new MSc program at short notice is the CDRI. The CDRI with its present staff will have the necessary resources and competence to run a phase two of the program. However, the institute is final in its decision not to resume its educational role and offering its services to a new cohort of MSc students. It should be noted that this decision is within the present strategy of further developing the institute’s role as an independent research institution.

Interestingly, Sida is for the time being in a position to use some leverage with the CDRI if Sida wants CDRI to take on a new cohort. One thing is that Sida now funds about 40% of the total budget of CDRI, another is that Sida has its own representative on the Board of Directors of the institute. Quite another thing is of course if this is sound practice by a donor agent.

The Royal University of Phnom Penh

The combined human resources of the Royal University of Phnom Penh are deplorable, and the university has today no plans of offering a master’s program in any subject. It is not feasible to see how this institution could run the MSc program in the near future. This has been confirmed in meetings with different and well-connected persons.

Faculty of Law and Economic Science in Phnom Penh

There is at present a draft version of an application for a continuation of the program by the Faculty of Law and Economic Science in Phnom Penh. This is an institution that is supported heavily by French authorities and its language of instruction is basically Khmer and French.

In 1999 the Faculty offers four programs in Economy at BA level and two at Postgraduate level. The number of students this academic year is about 1000; – more than 800 at the BA programs and less than 200 at the postgraduate programs. The students pay an annual fee of USD 380.

²¹ CDRI, MSc Programme in Financial Economics. Tracer Study, First Survey, May 1998.

²² It may be of interest that the CDRI plans to perform a new tracer study of the first cohort in the year 2000. The study will focus on mapping the students’ career development.

In a meeting with Mr. Glodas, the present Director of the Faculty, it was pointed out that the Faculty today is unable to independently muster a qualified staff to launch the program. One teacher with a Ph.D. could possibly be recruited from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok. In addition, two fresh candidates with a Diploma d'Étude Approfondie from Lyon University, France, could also be recruited to teach on a SOAS program. France has also a program that aims at furnishing the Faculty with 12 new teachers with French degrees over the next three years. However, none of these candidates will have the necessary qualifications to teach on a master's level program.

It became clear during the conversation that the Faculty has as its strategic aim to become a university in its own right. The master's program is of course one important factor that may contribute to the realization of this objective.

If a MSc program is to be run by the Faculty of Law and Economic Science, this can only be done by recruiting competent expatriate personnel, coupled with the setting up of a formal partnership with a university that possesses the necessary academic resources. This could be SOAS or another university, – British, American, Swedish, etc. According to Mr. Glodas the institution is open to many and sundry alternatives at this moment. The degree awarding institution would from the start have to be the co-operating partner, although this is a concession that will only be agreed upon after some deliberations with the Faculty of Law and Economic Science.

The Faculty has already excellent computer rooms and classrooms of the necessary quality. Its library is relatively speaking well stocked, but it contains mainly French literature. It is presently not stocked to support master's studies in Economy.

Mode of Delivery

The academic and linguistic levels of competence of Cambodian students rule out the possibility of delivering a traditional distance education master's program in English. The program must be supported by a considerable amount of local tuition and classroom teaching. The number of lecturing hours per annum were for the first cohort close to what a regular on-campus student would receive when studying on a part-time basis.

With the 1st cohort it may seem as if the local tutors did what they could to cover most of the contents of the program by their teaching. Given the academic platforms of the students this was deemed necessary in order to take the students through the program. However, this approach is nowhere near the concept of traditional distance education or even the so-called mixed-mode (face-to-face tutorials once or twice a month to guide students through the particularly nasty parts of the program).

One ought therefore to consider carefully which mode of delivery is optimal for the Cambodian students. It may seem as if the program is to be delivered in Cambodia, a classroom-based platform ought to be the main mode of delivery. This approach would also greatly reduce costs since all of the SOAS administrative overheads disappear from the budgets. Assignments and dissertations could be handled by the local faculty provided they had the necessary qualifications, or they could be sent on to an international partner institution.

Given a cohort of some 25 students the costs of the program would not exceed the costs that the CDRI accrued 1995–98 plus the costs of two to three BBEs.

The tentative budget that is attached to the draft application of the Faculty of Law and Economic Science means in fact that the costs of the program would increase compared to the first cohort of the SOAS program. This budget can, however, be discarded altogether according to the Faculty

itself. A new budget ought to be drawn up upon a careful analysis of what the mode of delivery would be.

Target Groups

The target groups of a possibly new cohort in Cambodia are envisaged by the Faculty to be the following:

1. Students with a BA in Economics from the Faculty of Law and Economic Science.
2. Civil servants from different ministries.
3. Engineers. The Faculty is interested in matriculating candidates that possess the combined qualifications of engineering and economics.

To mix three groups of students which are as different as these may be a risky project. Their levels of academic competence will vary tremendously. Their social status and expectations will also interfere with the possibility of creating a homogenous and well functioning peer group.

Feasibility study

The selection of a new partner for a continuation of the program ought to be done very carefully, and the process ought to be governed by the possibility of localizing the program within a specified number of years. In addition, it seems to be a precondition with the Cambodian authorities that an Economics program should be conducted in English.

1. One alternative is apparently to choose the Faculty of Law and Economic Science as the Cambodian stronghold for a continued effort to institutionalize the program in Cambodia. However, the institution is not ready to take on this task in its own. It will either have to be done together with SOAS or a new partner. In dealing with for instance SOAS, the students can be signed on as individual students, and an agreement with SOAS can most likely be reached where SOAS send out their staff for local tuition. Most likely the SOAS staff would have to be supplemented with additional expatriate staff. This is not enough, however, to secure institutionalization of the program. A parallel plan ought to be drawn up to develop local competence at the Faculty. The existing co-operation with the French authorities is not satisfactory in this respect, in that it will supply teachers at MSc level, not the required Ph.D. level, who at the outset are capable of teaching the Economic courses in French, and not English.
2. A very hypothetical long-term solution would be to draw up a plan that would aim at developing the Royal University of Phnom Penh. This could be done by first strengthening the ties between the CDRI and the University. In this way, the university would come in a position where its academic resources in Economics would be increased considerably. First, it would have at its disposal a very competent and English speaking environment that could perform research and teaching at high level.

The second step would be to integrate parts of the institute into the university and transform this body into a Faculty of Economics. This organizational configuration would within a relatively short time – and at considerably less cost – be able to offer high quality programs in Financial Economics and related fields. However, this solution is not within the scope of the strategic plans of the CDRI, and it can be anticipated that this approach would also be highly unpopular with the CDRI administration as well as its Board of Directors.

Recommendation: All institutional possibilities ought to be examined closely before a possible candidate for a continuation of the program in Cambodia is being decided upon.

In examining the situation with a view to further supporting higher education in Cambodia the opening statements of *The National Action Plan for Higher Education in Cambodia* ought to be taken very seriously. The document sets out the parameters and objectives that are commonly associated with higher education:

generation and transmission of knowledge, provision of service, promotion and preservation of the national heritage, and social change. The three priority needs of Cambodian higher education are defined as system and institutional human resource development, review and revision of academic programs and rehabilitation of institutional physical plant and facilities.

The action plan contains very few – if any – references to the distance education mode.

A Somewhat Different Alternative

The assessment has documented that a MSc Degree Program can hardly be cost-efficient by combining distance education methods and on-campus teaching. However, if Sida continues to consider ministerial staff as an important target group for competence development in Cambodia, there may be a possibility to establish co-operation between the World Bank support to the *Economics and Finance Institute* at the Ministry of Economy and Finance and Sida funded activities in this area.

This institute has never been meant to offer university level programs. Its objective is rather to offer effective, short courses within very clearly defined themes that are important to ministerial staff when developing good governance practice.

Some of the course portfolio at the institute could no doubt be converted to distance teaching courses. Short courses in Management, Finance, Project Management, Computer Skills, etc. lend themselves a lot easier to the distance education mode than ambitious programs at master level. In addition such courses could be offered to large numbers of civil servants throughout the country, thus immediately creating the parameters that are necessary to achieve cost efficiency by the distance education mode.

The institute appears already to have some degree of success in that they trained 1,400 students last year and that they by September 1999 have trained a further 1,800 students this year. It is tempting to suggest that Sida ought to explore in more detail to what extent the distance education mode could be of interest to increase the potential of the institute. NB: This is an approach that is perhaps somewhat beyond the scope of the evaluation team, and this possibility was not mentioned in meetings with the staff of the institute.

Attachment: Summary of Tracer study

Questionnaire Results from Cambodia

Introduction

Sida has also financed a MSc program in Financial Economics in Cambodia for the period 1995–1997, at a total cost of 7,826,424 SEK. Altogether 24 people participated in the program out of which 23 completed their MSc and 1 failed. Since there were only 24 participants we decided to have the whole cohort in the sample. 18 students completed and handed in the questionnaires, 4 did not complete the questionnaires because they were outside the country, 1 was unwilling to fill in the questionnaire and 1 had moved and there was no contact. Thus, this evaluation will be based on a final sample of 18 students.

The Sample

The sample comprises 17 male and 1 female students who ranged in ages from 27 to 45. The average age was 34. (see Table 1). Looking at their educational background before entering the MSc program, 12 students had a background in Economics, 4 in Social Science and 2 in Banking. Out of 18 students, 15 had received university education at undergraduate level (BA and BSc degrees), 1 had some university graduate level but no degree and 2 had certificate in banking. This indicates that the majority of students in the sample had the right educational background to enter the MSc program.

Although there was only one cohort of 24 students in this program in Cambodia, 6 students in the sample indicated that they initiated their studies in 1995 while 18 indicated 1996. This is because the MSc program did in fact start in 1996 but all the students had to attend the Prequalifying course which started already in 1995.

Appendix 5. Table 2: Students by age and gender

Age/ Gender	25–30	31–35	36–40	41–45	Total	Average age
Male	6	7	0	4	17	34
Female	0	1	0	0	1	35
Total	6	8	0	4	18	34

Work Situation

Today, 15 of the students in the sample are employed by the public sector, 1 is employed by the private sector and 2 are employed by non-governmental organization (NGO). The flow from public to private sector is not significant in this case since only 1 student changed job to private sector. There has been a certain mobility within the public sector. Eight students changed job in this sector. Ten have the same employer as they had at the time of the course. Tables 3 and 4 show the students' initial work situation at the time they entered the MSc program and the current work situation.

Appendix 5. Table3 : Employers at the time of the course and number of students

Employers	Number of students
Caminco	1
Council for Development of Cambodia	1
Cambodia Development Resource Institute	2
Cambodian Investment Board /CDC	1
Ministry of Economy and Finance	6
Ministry of Planning	2
National Bank of Cambodia	3
National Institute of Statistics	1
Provincial Dept. of Agriculture	1
Total	18

Appendix 5. Table 3: Employers today and number of students

Employers	Number of students
Asian Development Bank	1
Caminco & CDC	1
Cambodia Development Resource Institute	2
Economics and Finance Institute/MOEF	1
Ministry of Economy and Finance	6
Ministry of Agriculture	1
National Bank of Cambodia	4
National Institute of Statistics	1
Royal School of Administration	1
Total	18

Out of the 10 students who maintained the same work, 5 have changed positions. As shown in Table 4, a total of 15 students have changed positions and duties between the time of the course and today. It should be noted that the status change column indicates our understanding of whether the change in position has brought promotion (1), demotion (-1) or remained the same (0). In case 2, the deputy director had changed employer but maintained the same position. Although this implies a change in duties, we chose to consider it same position (0) and not a promotion. In cases 3 and 6, we have staff from the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the National Bank who are at the moment attending training courses which may lead to a promotion later on. Therefore, we classified them under the status 0/1.

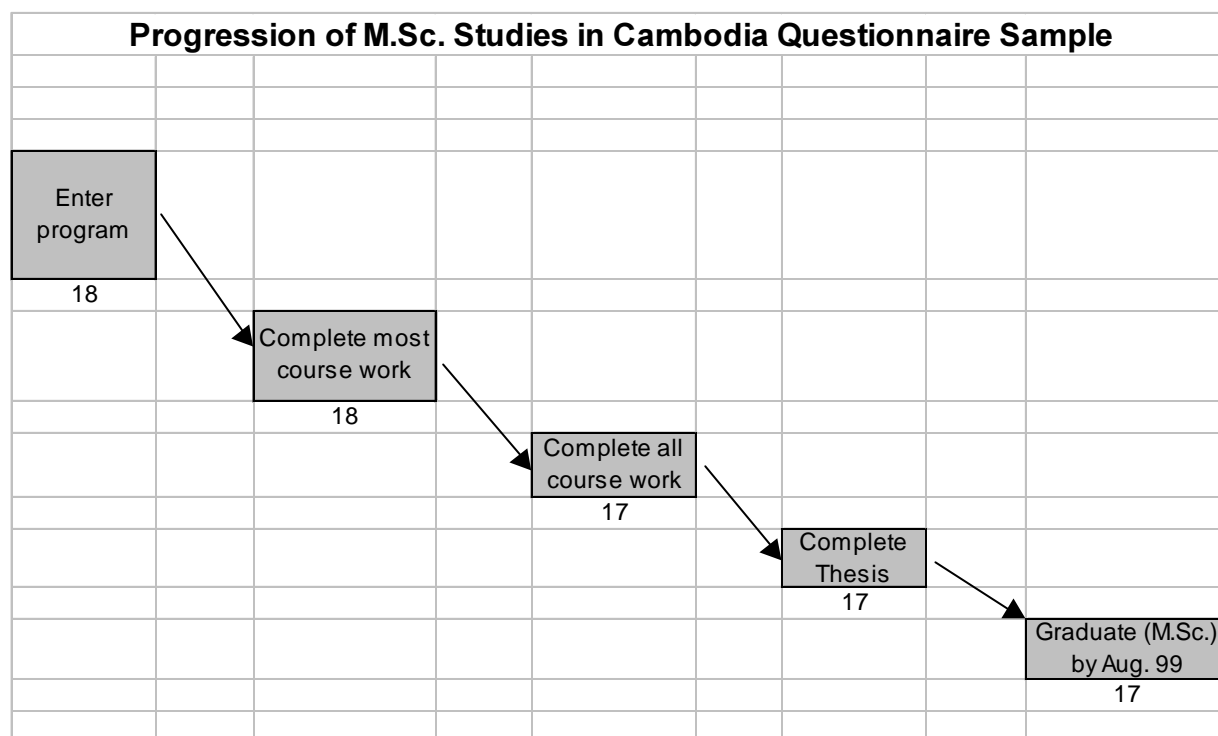
Appendix 5. Table 5: Career development between the time of the course and today by gender

Cases	Before MSc course	After MSc course	Status change
Male	Male	+/-	
1	Research assistant	Researcher	1
2	Deputy director	Deputy director	0
3	Staff	Trainee	0/1
4	Research/training assistant	Researcher	1
5	Snr. officer	Snr. officer	0
6	Staff	Trainee	0/1
7	Director	Secretary general	1
8	Staff Exchange Management Dept.	Chief of section treasury Division	1
9	Staff	Chief of section	1
10	Financial controller	Financial controller	0
11	Financial controller	Financial controller	0
12	ADB unit chief	ADB unit chief	0
13	Deputy chief	Deputy chief	0
14	Deputy chief	Deputy chief	0
15	Statistician	Deputy chief	1
16	Staff Veterinary Office	Staff International Coop. Office	0
17	Information/administration officer	Materials specialist	1
	Female	Female	
18	Deputy bureau chief	Deputy director	1
	Total "same"		8
	Total promotions		10
	Grand total		18

Participation in the MSc Program

When asked about why did you apply to the MSc program, the students in the sample responded as follows: I was interested in the program (15); My bosses advised me to apply (4); I needed it for my work (6); and other (1) needed for my future work. Five of the students presented more than one alternative.

The diagram below shows the study progression of the students in the sample. Out of 18 students who entered the program, 17 have graduated in MSc in financial economics. One student has completed “most course work” of part I but failed one subject and dropped out. Two indicated that they completed “most course work but not all” although they completed the thesis and the MSc. This is due to misunderstanding. They should have indicated that they completed “all course work”.



Have the students participated in any other study activities after they began the MSc program?

Almost all the students in the sample have also participated in other training programs, as presented in Table 6.

Appendix 5. Table 6: Participation in other programs

Type of Education or Training	Number of responses
Training workshops given by the Government	8
Other workshop	11
Course given by the Government	1
Other course	5
Study visit	3
University course in economics or related field	1
Another university degree	1
Total “other programs”	30

Usefulness of the MSc Program

As seen in Table 7, the majority of the students (14) found the course “rather” and “very useful” for carrying out their duties both at present work and at work at the time of the course. There are, however, 2 students who found the course “perhaps a little useful” for their previous work but “not useful” respectively “rather useful” at work today. One student indicated that the course was “not useful” for the work at the time of the course but “rather useful” for the work today. Two students who found the course “rather” and “very “ useful for their previous work, found it “perhaps a little useful” for their work today. One student did not answer.

Appendix 5. Table 7: Usefulness of the course in carrying out duties

	At the time of the course	At the present work
Not useful, a hindrance	0	0
Not useful, not a hindrance	1	1
Perhaps a little useful	2	2
Rather useful	1	4
Very useful	10	9
Was necessary in order to get or keep the job	3	1
Total	17	17

We present below some of the students’ explanations on how the course has been useful to their work.

- Understanding the maroeconomics, finance, econometrics and the writing of thesis help improve the quality of work.
- The program is useful because I am working in the education institution. As trainee today for ASEAN customs office it is useful because I have some background knowledge to talk and study economics.
- It provide me with a better understanding on how economy works. Also it gives me the ability to think and analyze economic issues in a more rational way.
- I could not pass such a tough selection test to enter the École Royale d’Administracion (ERA) without having gone through the program. The program provided me a very good knowledge in economic, very good skill in writing both in English and in my language. Hopefully, when I finish my study, I will be highly promoted in the Government sector.
- It provides me more knowledge about the international financial economics. This makes improve my duties in reviewing the socio-economic development report as well as NBC’s report.
- Not relevant for my work. (did not say why)
- Yes, particularly in investment and project appraisal and in making judgement of financial decision regarding project implementation.
- The program would be useful in carrying out my duties if my employers consider and recognize my degree so that I can have appropriate responsibilities and duties.
- The program provided good knowledge for joining meeting with IMF and WB.
- The knowledge on statistics helped me in conducting the National Health Survey 1997 and the Baseline Survey for Health Sector Reform 1997. The knowledge on micro and macro-economic principles has helped me with ideas to develop draft field test and supervisory systems and training for all project districts.

Applying changes in work and organization

When asked about if the MSc program has helped the students in making changes in their work, 9 answered “yes”, 6 answered “no” and 3 did not answer. But when it comes to applying changes in their respective organization, 9 students responded that they have not been able to apply such changes, 5 responded “yes”, and 4 did not respond at all. Changes in the organization are considered more difficult to apply since the decisions on such changes are taken at the management level.

Below are some of the students’ explanations on why they are/are not able to make changes in their work and organization.

- Some but not a lot. Change from data collection to extensive writing. After the MSc studies, the organization has focussed more on research.
- The MSc studies can help me to make change in job and I can work quickly and better. But I have no authority to change the organization. Everything are under the higher level.
- I hope so because I did participate and contribute my efforts in different activities of my institute.
- As a result of economic knowledge improvement my duties can be carried out easier. My organization has been changed.
- Of course, especially strengthen my knowledge in financial economic and banking in the context of market economy. As one of the top leaders of the NBC, I’ve used my knowledge and experiences to improve the organization of NBC.
- Improve a lot the quality of work.
- No, because my employer is not interested in my MSc degree and I do not have the opportunity to express the new capacity of understanding. My position does not have any power to make changes in the organization.
- No. My degree has not been appreciated or supported by the organization. There has not been any promotion or consideration from the employer.
- No, because my employer is not interested in my know-how. I am not in high-ranking position to make changes in the organization.

The Distance Education Approach

Table 8. shows how satisfactory the distance education program has been to the students. Eleven students expressed that there were minor problems with the technology while 7 indicated that there were “virtually” no problem with it. As regards the support from the national host institution, 10 students stated that there were no problems at all while 7 felt that there were minor problems and 1 felt there were major problems. The problems related to technology refer to the limited number and low quality of computers available. The students had access to eight computers in evening time. Not always they could travel in the evening for question of security.

50% of the students in the sample expressed dissatisfaction with the support they received from the employer. Four students have indicated that the lack of support from the employer was a major hinder to overcome and 5 indicated that there was little support from the employer, but they managed anyway. There are, however, students who found that there was some support from the employer (4) and even good support (5).

In relation to the support from SOAS in the home country, the majority of students (15) considered it satisfactory while 2 students considered that there was some support and for 1 student there was just a little support. Most of the students (15) were also satisfied with the support they received from SOAS during the residential school in London. One student did not respond because he did not attend the residential school.

Appendix 5. Table 8: Students' level of satisfaction regarding the DE approach

	Technology host institution	Support from local employer	Support from the in home country	Support from SOAS SOAS in London	Support from
Major hinder	0	0	4	0	0
Major problems	0	1			
Minor problems	11	7			
No problems	7	10			
Little support			5	1	1
Some support			4	2	1
Good support			5	15	15
No answer	0	0	0	0	1
Total	18	18	18	18	18

General Comments on the MSc Program

In general the students considered the program satisfactory, useful and of good quality. The students' general opinion about the program is presented in the comments that follow.

Positive Comments

- The content of the program is very good and up-to-date. The quality of teaching and material are very good but the way of writing theses should be improved. We need a break between the courses.
- Good quality of teaching but should provide more documents and books for reading.
- I am very satisfied with the program. Everything is good except that the experience I got is not as much as the students in UK.
- This approach provides chance for employers, especially those who cannot leave their duties for studying abroad, to attend the postgraduate studies.
- Topics or lesson given to me are very up-to-date and useful to understand and learn how world economy works.
- DE approach is a good way of teaching foreign students. The quality of teaching and the course content is very suitable to the current issues of the economic development.
- The course binders are very helpful for self-study. The program is of high quality and useful for leaders and policy makers.
- The program is good and suitable to Cambodian economic reform.

Other Comments

- Although the distance education approach is reasonably good, it cannot be compared to the residential approach because of the language skill and the study environment.
- Lecturer/Tutor must hold a doctor degree. We should have oral examination and the courses should be based on applicable way rather than theoretical way.
- It is a good opportunity for those who cannot leave their families, but it seems that the course which we had was too expensive!
- I want research topics to be flexible and chosen by the students, not to limit to certain issues.
- If the program is well organized and the material for each subject are adequately provided (like the program I graduated from) there is no difference between distance and residential approaches. But the students might have to work harder than those studying through residential school because they have to work part-time as well.

- DE provides better incentive because it has strict rules and regulations and encourage students to study more than that of residential.
- The big difference between DE and residential approaches is the availability of course materials, i.e. a big library at SOAS that can provide good facility to all students.
- Some tutors did not have appropriate approaches in teaching, especially those who did not have PhD degrees. SOAS should not provide data for dissertation but let students research relevant documents by themselves.
- The disadvantage with DE was that students could not communicate with other students from other classes in other countries.
- DE is less practical due to the lack of documents and facilities. This may lead graduated people bear narrow views.

Local tutors recruited oversea by Sida should be highly competent and understanding.

Appendix 6

Acknowledgements

We wish to express our sincere thanks to all the persons listed in Annex 6 for agreeing to meet with us and sharing of their knowledge. Special thanks is due the respective National Counterpart institutions – University of Namibia, National Economics University in Hanoi and the Cambodia Resources Development Institute for helping to arrange our program, and to the Swedish Embassies in Maputo, Windhoek, Hanoi and Phnom Penh for facilitating the missions access to project files. We are also grateful to Anton Johnston and Anders Emanuel and others at DESA for their cooperation and helpfulness in accessing files.

Appendix 7

Persons interviewed

Mozambique

Government of Mozambique

Fondo, Jose, Fransisco	Ministry of Planning and Finance, Director
Lambo, Domingos, Juliao	Ministry of Planning and Finance, Director
Pirez, Maria Eugenia	Ministry of Planning and Finance, Adviser
Simao, Albert S	Instituto Nacional de Desenvolvimento, Chairman
De Sousa, Clara	Banco de Mozambique, General Manager
Couto, Pedro	Ministry of Planning and Finance, Director
Santos, Otilia	Ministry of Planning and Finance, Director
Paulo, Manuel	Ministry of Planning and Finance; senior Expert
Fernando, Antonio	Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications
Lucas, Maria José	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Commerce
Mahumane, Albino	Head of Department, Ministry of Industry and Tourism
Chamusse, Anastacia	Chief of Control Unit, Bank of Mozambique
Comiche, Ilda	Head of Research Section, Bank of Mozambique
Novela, Arminda	Technical Position, Bank of Mozambique
Chirindza, André	Advisor/Project Manager, Ministry of Health
Matetiane,Dinis	Head of Finance Department, Zambeze Valley Development Authority (GPZ)
Mwitu, Patricio	Head of Department, Inspection of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism, Ministry of Commerce
Saranga, Joana	General Manager for Foreign, International Relation and External Debt, Bank of Mozambique
Maleiane, Adriano Afonso	Governor, Bank of Mozambique

Donor agencies

Arulpragasam, Jehan	The World Bank, Economist
Casey, Daphne I	UNDP, Deputy Resident Representative
Lonstrup, Esther	Embassy of Denmark, Counsellor
Ouma, Marianne	UNDP, Economic Advisor
Tengroth, Lars	Embassy of Sweden; First Secretary
Svensson, Maude	Embassy of Sweden; senior Economist
Hammarström, Bo	Embassy of Sweden; First Secretary

Others

Andersson, Per-Åke	Harvard Institute for International Development
Sjölander, Stefan	SAAC AB, Consultant

Valentine, Theodore R.	Harvard Institute for International Development
Paulo, Manuel	Task Officer of International Relations, Ministry of Finance
	National Local Co-ordinator of SOAS Programme
Gobe, Artur	Previously Dean, Faculty of Economics, UEM
Vietnam	
<i>Government of Vietnam</i>	
Nguyen Trung	Office of the Government, Ambassador
Le Vinh Ke	Prime Ministers Research Commission, PMRC, Senior Expert
Dang Quoc Tuyen	
Nguyen Duc Thinh	Ministry of Finance, Dept.of Taxation; Deputy Director
Nguyen Bich Dat, Dr.	Ministry of Planning and Investment, Director General
Phan Manh Hung	State Bank of Vietnam; Deputy Director
Vu Manh Hong	State Bank of Vietnam
Nguyen Ngoc Huy	Ministry of Planning and Investment, Senior Officer
Nguyen Minh Tu, Ph.D.	Central Institute for Economic Management, CIEM; Director
Do Thi Nguyet Anh	Ministry of Finance, Department.of Taxation
Hoang Hai	Deputy Chief, Financial Market Division, Institute of Finance Research, Min. of Finance
Mai Thi Thu	Ministry of Planning and Investment
Nguyen Bich Lam	Specialist in National Accounts Department, General Statistical Office
Tran Bich Hanh	Analyst of Foreign Exchange Markets, Bank of Foreign Trade of Vietnam
Vu Manh Hong	Economist, State Bank of Vietnam
Nguyen Thi Hai Ha	Researcher, Financial Market Division, Institute of Finance Research, Min. of Finance
Lan Anh	Deputy Director, Vietnam Industrial and Commercial Bank
Trieu Quoc Viet	Acting Manager of Commercial Division, Vietnam Leasing Company
Dang Duc Cuong	Financial Specialist, World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme
Thianh	Deputy Division Chief, State Bank of Vietnam
Nguyen Cong Nghiep, Prof.	Director, Ministry of Finance, Institute of Finance Research
<i>Donor agencies</i>	
Pham Minh Duc	The World Bank; Economist
Nguyen Nguyet Nga	The World Bank; Economist
De Tray, Dennis	International Monetary Fund, Senior Resident Representative
Holmertz, David	Embassy of Sweden, Hanoi; First Secretary
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Donor agencies

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SOAS

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Appendix 8

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