

# Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET)

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Research Co-operation**



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**Sida Evaluation 05/33**

**Department for  
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# 1. Summary and Conclusions

SASNET was created through a grant from Sida/SAREC and Lund's University in May 2000 to create an institutional base in Sweden for academic competence building and thematic work on present day South Asia. The long-term goal was to strengthen the relatively weak academic competence in Sweden in the field of South Asia.

Before an extension after 2005 it was agreed that an evaluation of SASNET should be made. The purpose of the evaluation was "to improve the performance of the SASNET network and to provide information to Lund University and Sida/SAREC about its organisation, work process, effects and consequences as well as an overall analysis of the working of the network". This external evaluation has been preceded by an extensive internal self-evaluation which has been a useful source of information.

At the outset it has to be kept in mind that SASNET is a very small enterprise, both measured in financial terms and in people actually employed, with an aim to fulfill a very large task. Taking this into account SASNET has in the very short period of its existence produced remarkable achievements and become very visible in the area of South Asian studies in Sweden. Its visibility is a result of the gateway/website and the energy of the two persons employed to run the undertaking. It is not yet possible to assess the impact of SASNET to create a capacity of new scholars in the field, as is discussed below, but at least through the work of the node it is now possible to acquire an overview over the number of scholars who are active in the field today in the 148 university departments identified (see table 1 and 2). This is far better than was the case previously or what is possible in any other similar area.

The activities, which were identified to fulfil the immediate objectives of SASNET as outlined in the original project document, have all been implemented. Below we discuss those achievements and some of the problems that have been met during the implementation phase. Many of the achievements have been astonishing, like the gateway, while others have been much more slow to implement such as the quest for multidisciplinary. As could be expected the results have been best and more visible in Lund than in the other centres of South Asian studies elsewhere in Sweden. This phenomenon partly stems from the physical distance to the node, partly to the fact that one of the staff members when not working 50% for SASNET works on similar activities for Lund University, and partly to passivity from the stakeholders of the network. A network will only function when those who are parties thereof actively participate in its work. We found from our interviews that most stakeholders were positive to the network and use it more or less frequently but very seldom contribute to it. This question of making all stakeholders using the network actively participate, requires serious consideration in the future if SASNET is going to have the same impact in other centers as it already has in Lund. SASNET was conceived as a facilitator while the actual implementation of projects in the field of South Asian studies rests with the stakeholders.

For an enterprise, which tries to use the most recent techniques and communication skills, continuous updating and renewal is necessary. This applies not only to the website but to all activities. We discuss a number of such issues below from reintroducing the question of a chat page on the web, to more formalized procedures as regards the planning grant programmes. However, to implement co-operation between disciplines and across faculties as well as institutions has been more difficult in practice. This is not to underestimate the efforts made and the results achieved, particularly between different departments of social sciences, and this problem is not specific for SASNET. However, as interdisciplinary co-operation has been accorded such priority in the work plans it needs more attention. Considerable efforts have to be made to also integrate natural sciences more actively into the activities of the network. We found great interest in certain natural science environments for such a collaboration.

In addition to its networking activities SASNET has also acted as an advocacy agent for South Asia and South Asian Studies in Sweden. Again most of the tangible results can be seen in Lund with a new Master programme started and run now for its second year by the Institute of East and South Eastern Asian Studies and the appointment of a professor in Indian Religion at the department of Religious History. To a lesser extent SASNET has also contributed to similar developments in other centers for Asian studies in Sweden. What was stated by almost all those interviewed was however that SASNET has contributed to making South Asia and studies thereof more visible and discussed everywhere. First and foremost the gateway, but also conferences and seminars held for different stakeholders as well as personal interventions by SASNET staff have contributed to this.

SASNET has also had ambitions to assist its stakeholders to increase the contacts between the Swedish and the South Asian research community. Activities to implement these ambitions have been trips to the region by the SASNET staff, inviting scholars from South Asia to Sweden and the creation of an advisory group consisting of six senior Asian scholars. Lack of funds has seriously hampered these activities, and the results are not as good as was planned for. The idea of an advisory group seems to us of utmost importance for a successful future development of the network and it is therefore recommended that more efforts are made to make this group more operative and helpful to the process. Another more general problem facing everyone with programmes in South Asia is to avoid dominance of contacts with India. This has been taken into account by SASNET but should also be observed in the future. Other contacts outside Sweden particularly in the Nordic countries seem to have been very successful and rewarding.

As regards the organization and administration of SASNET it must again be underlined that the size of the node is small and its tasks immense. The funds available barely allow for a staff of one and a half persons and after a small amount is set aside for the grants very little is left for other activities. The devotion and energy of the two staff members allows in any case a great number of activities and the voluntary work by many of the stakeholders adds to this. As stated below costs are held down to an extent that it might sometimes be counterproductive. In all it seems to us that the funds are well spent and that the major objectives have been reached within the project. As time passes and SASNET is becoming more established some of the functions need to become more formalized. Rules and regulations do exist on most counts but they need now to be refined and in particular to be transmitted and explained to all the stakeholders. We found some complaints on lack of transparency. Even if this is only a perception it must be taken seriously and be confronted. The question of succession must also be taken seriously. It will not be easy to replace the present hardworking enthusiasts when they choose to retire.

After a period of extreme activity and experimentation, and taking the smallness of the staff into consideration, we also find that it is now time for consolidation and prioritization. Concentration on fewer activities can also lead to deepening of the ones which will continue. As already has been stated, this will also allow for increased decentralization to other centers in Sweden.

Taking all things into consideration the evaluation team concludes that SASNET without doubt makes a major contribution to the creation of interest and capacity in the field of research in and about South Asia. The impact seems to be great and the costs are low. It has acquired national recognition, involving all universities and institutions interested in South Asia, though quite understandably with more benefits accruing to Lund University than the others. Lund University also made it clear to us that they are happy with the present set up and are prepared to continue to meet 25% of the total cost even with a slightly increased budget for the coming five years. Consequently we recommend SAREC to continue its support to SASNET for a new period based on basically the same activities as at present. The work of SASNET needs consolidation in the coming phase including certain forms of increased formalization. In view of our formulated targets of multidisciplinary and decentralization of activities, we recommend that the support be increased in the next period by some 50%. It will be first after that



period the real impact from the efforts will be measurable. It is our belief that networks require continuous funding to maintain the network and to firmly establish the opportunity for new young scholars to become active members.

## 2. Introduction

In 1999 the Swedish government developed a strategy for Swedish relations with Asia and presented it for the parliament (Skr 1998/99:61). In this strategy the government presents how the relations with South Asia can be broadened and deepened. All government institutions were requested to act in accordance with this strategy. Development cooperation plays an important part in this. Sida was requested to engage in that work.

Development of research and higher education in regard to South Asia occupies a key role in the new strategy. It was felt that academic competence in the field of South Asia was relatively weak in Sweden. Though many universities do carry out research on South Asia, Sweden does not have a critical mass of scholars and expertise in the field. “There is today no institutional base for academic competence building and thematic work on present day India and the rest of South Asia” (Skr 1998/99:61).

Sida reacted to the directive through its research department SAREC, and among other things, set aside funds for the creation of a centre or network to be co-ordinated at one of the Swedish universities on the condition that the university would also make its own funds available for the project. A second condition was that the project should work nationally in all of Sweden. Three universities competed for the funds (Gothenburg, Lund and Uppsala). Lund University presented a proposal that was most national in character and also with the largest involvement by the university both in terms of personnel and finance.

In May 2000 Lund University was selected for the task, SASNET (Swedish South Asian Studies Network) was created, and a planning period started lasting until the end of that year after which funding was assured by Sida/SAREC for two periods: 2001–2002 and 2002–2005. The annual budget was 2 million during the first period and 2.2 million for the second (75% from Sida and 25% from Lund University). Statutes for the work were issued by the Vice-Chancellor of Lund University in June 2001 and a Board created shortly thereafter.

Before another extension it was agreed that an evaluation of SASNET should be made. The purpose of the evaluation was “to improve the performance of the SASNET network and to provide information to Lund University and Sida/SAREC about its organisation, work process, effects and consequences as well as an overall analysis of the working of the network”.

The evaluation should “result in an overall assessment of SASNET in relation to the aim of the network and the various tasks carried out. It should also result in an assessment of the priorities followed and analyse the time and economic resources spent in various activities and the outcome of this. Alternative ways of organising, prioritising and making use of economic resources should also be discussed” (Terms of Reference).

The first phase of the evaluation – a self-evaluation by SASNET’s root node and main nodes – was concluded in April 2005. It is a serious attempt to cover all aspects of the work so far and contains, with its many appendices, very useful information. This external evaluation is based on the self-evaluation, relevant documents and interviews with a large number of stakeholders.

According to its Statutes “SASNET is a national network for research, education, and information about South Asia. The aim is to encourage and promote an open and dynamic networking process, in which Swedish researchers co-operate with researchers in South Asia and globally. The network is open to all sciences. Priority is given to co-operation between disciplines and across faculties, as well as institutions in the Nordic countries and in South Asia. The basic idea is that South Asian studies will be most fruitfully pursued in co-operation between researchers, working in different institutions with a solid base in their mother disciplines” (Statutes).

In order to meet these aims the network root node in Lund is supposed to initiate, stimulate, and support South Asian studies at Lund University and within other Swedish universities.

*“The main tasks of the network are to:*

- in various ways initiate, stimulate, and support research co-operation via planning and programme grants for networking (e.g., meetings, travel, visits of guest researchers, co-ordination, etc.)
- in various ways initiate, stimulate, and support academic South Asian studies in Sweden, or studies relevant to South Asia, e.g., via grants for networking in developing undergraduate and graduate courses in Sweden and the Nordic countries, if possible in partnership with universities in South Asia
- encourage PhD studies specialising in South Asia, including networking among individual research students in institutions that do not specialise in South Asia
- promote student and researcher exchange between Sweden (the Nordic countries) and South Asia
- build an information system for South Asian studies in partnership with academic and public institutions, media, business communities, and NGOs
- contribute to co-ordination of consultations between researchers and different public institutions, business organisations, and NGOs” (Statutes).

At the outset, it should be kept in mind that SASNET is only one small activity in the sphere of promoting development research and education in Sweden in general and in relation to South Asia in particular. In our discussion we found a deep and very encouraging interest and engagement in development questions all around the Swedish university system and many devoted scholars are engaged in this work with very small means. We also found that there are a number of different funding arrangements, which could be tapped for specific purposes. However, although appreciating all other efforts taking place we concentrated our own efforts only on SASNET and its particular activities. We also wish to make the point that the major efforts as regards South Asia should of course be made in that region. However, again we are very sympathetic to the idea that in order to interact with that region Sweden requires a minimal critical mass of capacity with in depth knowledge of the region and its developmental efforts.

### **3. Assessment of the SASNET Activities – The Four Major Pillars of SASNET**

“The SASNET model is an alternative to the practice of a centre formation, where a few scholars from various disciplines come together to create an institution, more or less open and sensitive to changing academic trends. SASNET draws on contemporary modes of scientific production, interaction and advances in information technology” (self-evaluation). During the five years of its existence SASNET activities have been geared to the following four pillars:

- an Internet gateway to South Asian studies
- a number of joint programmes and projects including conferences involving Swedish, South Asian and other scholars
- networking in Sweden and South Asia
- planning of new research and education projects.

### 3.1. An Internet Gateway to South Asian Studies

SASNET's website provides the network with its main world-wide visibility. It currently has 14 sections, providing major information sources on Swedish academic activities in South Asia and provides a massive source-base of information on the South Asian countries. The website has been developed in a professional and attractive way (making use of Paul Klee's design of 1922, which provides an elegant and functional first opening page). The number of pages of the website have steadily grown over the years. Starting in 2001 with 193 sub-pages, it currently carries 605 sub-pages. A daily scan of links is performed, including a daily updating of information. The monthly newsletter has nearly 1000 subscribers and in April 2005 a total of 37,500 visitors to the site had been recorded since its initiation.

This gateway has three functions of which the first two are the most central:

- The *first* is to form a basis for linking up and connecting Swedish scholars of all academic disciplines working full or part time on/in South Asia. Through the monthly e-mailed newsletter, all subscribers are informed on seminars, conferences, concerts, meetings and other activities in relation to South Asia organised in Sweden or abroad. Besides the university community, this newsletter is received in wider circles in Sweden, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, staff members of Sida, SAREC, non-governmental organisations on an (inter)national level, South Asian students, scholars etc. It is further used internationally and provides Sweden with a successful and professional profile of activities in relation to South Asia.

All scholars we interviewed were highly in favour of the SASNET gateway and its newsletter. It is regularly used to locate colleagues and make new connections. It leads to developing a new form of co-operation. From several students we spoke to in Lund, it further became clear that the website plays a role in attracting foreign students to Sweden. Several of these students selected Sweden for their Master Studies as they learn about Swedish academia – scholars/institutions and their impressive work in relation to South Asia on the SASNET website. Both the Master courses in Uppsala and Lund could benefit in this sense, while international PhD students will find the gateway facilitates their knowledge on possibilities to obtain a PhD or post-doctoral training and possible funding in Sweden.

- The *second* main function of the website is to provide a wide range of information on South Asia. The website is extremely well set up to locate information on each separate South Asian country and provides a most valuable collection of data and further access to other websites such as academic journals, local newspapers and resource bases. During our mission everyone whom we spoke to said that they periodically used it and tended to be unanimous on its usefulness in supporting students in pursuing their research interest in South Asia. For BA/MA students it also forms an excellent resource base. Academic specialists well established in their respective fields, whether in the hard or soft sciences, would tend to concentrate more on websites specialised in their fields of study. But this can be expected and one should accept this as a realistic limit of the scope of the website. It should not aim for more, as this would also not be practical. But these specialists did consult the website for special events, addresses they wished to locate and mentioned the usefulness of being able to point young students to this site for further information. Furthermore South Asian scholars on South Asia (living in Sweden or elsewhere), made a certain use of the gateway in relation to their own countries

of origin, and maybe even more to gain information on neighbouring countries. Last but not least several non-governmental organisations in Sweden, involved in South Asian topics are also regular enthusiastic users of the website.

- *Thirdly*, the gateway also provides certain information on Sweden, which is relevant to students coming to do research in the country, such as visa requirements. As more students come to study in Sweden, it might be advisable to expand this level of information.

The evaluation team is duly impressed with the gateway which has been developed and sincerely compliments Lars Eklund for the hard work and vision he has put in so successfully. The team realizes the great effort taken to go into other gateways, checking the workability of other sites, before adding them to the SASNET information data. Such an enterprise needs daily updating. Mention should also be made of the exceptional assistance both root node staff members provide when asked to advise and assist in locating forms of support. In addition to students a wide circle of people interested in developing activities with South Asia benefits from this form of support. The energy and time put into this activity is exceptional and leads to substantial results. This is the first and so far only one of this kind of Gateway providing comprehensive information on South Asian Studies. All other websites on “South Asian Studies” are mainly confined to the programmes of a respective organisation or a particular theme.

The team members would like to mention that as this gateway has now been developed and is used regularly all over Sweden and abroad, it is advisable to renew ways of actively tapping certain users of the gateway for their specific relevant knowledge in their own fields. For example:

- This applies especially to the interdisciplinary approach (more information on natural science projects and expertise in South Asia). Further examples of fruitful interaction and cooperation between scholars of the social sciences and humanities, with scholars of the natural sciences should be promoted, in order to make users (especially young students) aware of the potential in this field of (future) interdisciplinary research.
- Scholars from South Asia, now living permanently in Sweden, could be approached and requested to check their specific knowledge of the library and data resource bases.
- The same request can be made to visiting scholars as well as to the South Asian members of the Advisory Committee.

In this respect we may suggest that a general e-mail to all would not work effectively because of the busy schedules of professionals. But telephone contacts and person to person meetings with specific proposals may be tried. As a team we for instance also found certain sources of information missing in the otherwise so excellent website and were happy that SASNET staff so readily took our suggestions on additions on board.

*For instance, adding the well developed virtual library of the ICSSR, Delhi, with its extensive research data and linkages from many Indian universities and research institutes, provides an exceptionally valuable research tool. We also made the suggestion to have links with several networks and websites run by the Higher Education Commission in Pakistan and that similar links can be explored from Sri Lanka and other countries. Further, although the Human Development Report of the UNDP is on the website under library (<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/library.html>), it is suggested to also place the UNDP indicators per country on the basic fact sheet of each South Asian country. By adding these social and gendered indicators and data, a better balance is achieved with the CIA data on economics and military issues, also listed on each country's basic fact sheet.*

*Besides this, SASNET, depending upon availability of scholars, can develop certain themes such as Gender, AIDS, Environment, Public Health (providing links to other relevant sites and also information about research projects, scholars, libraries, bibliography etc) on which a number of Swedish scholars in collaboration with South Asian scholars are currently working. This would also be useful to NGOs and policy makers involved in development work.*

A second suggestion is to re-attempt to offer the possibility *to chat over the internet* on specific topics. This could strengthen local level cooperation and give SASNET members an opportunity to move from being passive consumers to more active participants in the next phase (in which SASNET has become an established part of the Swedish South Asian scene). Lars Eklund informed us of his initial effort to initiate such interaction in the early years of SASNET, which led to little positive response. As the gateway is used so much more after five years and a substantial number of scholars and policy makers we interviewed indicated an interest in this facility, we suggest renewing the chat facility on specific topics. For instance a chat site for gender issues, health, education, social development issues, democracy and other issues which would hold an interest for scholars of different universities. Although many scholars in the South Asia network are already friends and have known each other for many years, there is definitely a substantial interest in widening this network in many circles. A chat facility could hopefully contribute to the strengthening of newly emerging ties between Swedish scholars.

### **3.2. Organizing Conferences and Meetings**

SASNET has made a great effort to stimulate and organize one major conference a year on South Asia in Sweden. As a culmination of its efforts SASNET core-staff organized the very successful 18th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (ECMSAS) in Lund in July 2004. This conference, in which 360 scholars on South Asia from all over the world participated in 44 panels was indeed the largest gathering ever on Swedish soil of South Asia oriented researchers, covering all fields from the humanities and social sciences to technology, natural sciences and medicine. The ECMSAS conference was greatly appreciated by all people whom we spoke to. It provided an excellent opportunity to meet and interact with Nordic as well as international scholars. SASNET was also very successful in allocating travel funds for South Asian participants, resulting in a higher percentage of them attending than in previously held conferences (in total 47 South Asian participants with travel grants).

Also the format in which the separate workshops and the papers of the participants could be accessed on the internet, has resulted in appreciation and praise from (inter)national participants. In fact the organizing committee of the next EASAS conference to be held at Leiden University (2006), has gratefully accepted SASNET's offer to use the same format for its conference.

In conclusion one can say that SASNET's being prepared to have the conference in Sweden (Lund) and the great effort taken to make it a success, have contributed substantially to placing Swedish South Asian studies on the map.

Returning to the issue of conferences in Sweden, while being most positive towards the conferences held so far, several people interviewed were in favour of *additional smaller workshops* to be held within one academic city or between two cities, to increase familiarity with each other's work and each other. SASNET organised two workshops for PhD students which received enthusiastic support. This should become a regular yearly activity. It provides a stimulating occasion for younger students to participate in a larger community of scholars on South Asia, than within their own department. This seemed a good suggestion, as it could involve local scholars in active organising and would strengthen the interlinking of South Asian scholars even at a more local level. It would also strongly contribute to Sida's aim to create a community of Swedish scholars with a good knowledge capacity in Sweden. Further it would to a large extent become knowledge which could be shared.



### 3.3. Networking in South Asia and Sweden

Networking in Sweden has been the *raison d'être* of SASNET ever since its start. In addition to the activities already referred to above the central node has done its best to support all activities that seemed worth supporting among its stakeholders. The establishing of Master programmes in South Asian studies in Lund and Uppsala as well as creation of a South Asia programme at Österlen's Folk High School are perhaps the most visible activities that received support from SASNET. But many other activities also received, if nothing else, moral support. It seems to us that SASNET has in its short period of existence become a major centre of knowledge and support that is contacted continuously by the stakeholders on all small and large matters of concern.

Networks were also created with other centres active in the field of South Asian studies in the Nordic countries, Europe and the rest of the world. The Nordic networks seem to be the most rewarding and exchange of services and certain activities seem to be both possible to expand and rewarding.

SASNET core staff has put a great deal of effort into networking in South Asia by personal visits to various universities and research institutes. However there has not been a follow up of the visits and no effort has been made, perhaps because of the smallness of the core staff and resource constraints, to strengthen the network. In 2003 SASNET's board constituted a South Asian Reference Group, which consisted of six senior South Asian researchers, for the root node and the board to consult once in a while about SASNET's overall aims and activities. At present there are the following five members: Dr. Rita Afsar, (Bangladesh), Professor Zulfiqar Bhutta, (Pakistan), Dr. Tek Nath Dhakal, (Nepal), Dr. Dipak Malik, (India), Professor Kumudu Wijewardena, (Sri Lanka). So far very few efforts have been made to seek help and involve the Group in networking. We feel that the Group needs to be activated.

SASNET has also been helpful in establishing the Nordic Centre in Delhi. It provides three guestrooms with facilities. This is an important base for Swedish researchers during their stay in India.

During the coming funding-period this strategy of networking in South Asia requires further planning and consolidation. Much has been achieved by the small staff, but it seems clear that in the future some form of decentralization of efforts within Sweden has to take shape. Along with the root node staff, the team suggests a higher involvement of different universities in Sweden and their staff working on South Asian topics. Such members of SASNET's network could in coordination with the SASNET board come to a format for inviting certain Asian scholars to Sweden, crucial to SASNET's activities and influential and recognized in their own fields at home, either for a lecture series in the different universities linked to SASNET, or through combining the lectures with a certain research/writing period in Sweden to complete a manuscript. With such an approach the scholars can become acquainted with several of the network-members, become friends with a few and build up a form of academic exchange etc. After experiencing such hospitality in Sweden and building up contacts over time, one can expect a certain input within their own institutions and networks at home for getting the knowledge on SASNET and its possibilities known in wider circles. Several of these South Asian scholars can then become valuable members of the South Asian Advisory Board of SASNET, due to their firsthand knowledge and experience of the network. In such a format a greater involvement with SASNET, its members and knowledge of Swedish South Asian studies can be expected and a fruitful basis for long term cooperation can be slowly built up.

### 3.4 Planning and Networking Grants

SASNET has initiated a grant programme for "Planning and Networking" to the Swedish scholars working on South Asia. It spends around 37 per cent of the funds for this programme. The objective is to provide financial support up to a maximum of 150 thousand SEK for planning of inter or intra-disciplinary research and/or education programmes in South Asian studies. It also provides "continued

networking funding” which has already been planned with the help of a planning grant from SASNET. The grant amount is very small and may be called seed money for developing a fuller long term project. The grant facilitates the following activities:

- Arranging meetings with Swedish researchers who can be involved in a network around the programme or project.
- In a programme: Employing a programme co-ordinator for one month, full time; In a project: One month’s salary to plan a research project,
- Inviting a guest, for instance an internationally renowned scholar in the relevant field,
- A trip to South Asia by the programme co-ordinator or project leader in connection with the planning.

Applications are invited from Swedish scholars twice a year. The details about the objectives of the grant, eligibility, main requirements in the applications etc. are put on the web page. From 2001 SASNET has so far completed six rounds of the grants. It has received 132 applications and awarded grants to 48 scholars of around 3.5 million SEK. On an average 65,000 SEK was distributed, varying from 23,000 to 125,000 SEK. Five applications were rejected outright on the ground of ineligibility as the applicants were not based in any Swedish institution. Eight projects received an additional grant hence they are not included in the 48.

The planning grants cover three types of activities (1) Research, (2) Education, (3) Other. Out of 48 projects supported 35 are research projects, ten are on education and three are for other purposes: one was for a study of language courses in India; one was establishing the Nordic Centre for India so that Swedish scholars have a residential facility in Delhi; and one was the “Haellquist Book Donation Project” to support the development of the infrastructure for South Asian studies in the Nordic region. Among the three types of grants a sizeable part of the grant has gone to research projects. However educational projects in terms of the proportion of the total applications have gained the larger share. They constituted 15% of the total applications but 21% of the applicants for the programme succeeded in getting a grant. An education grant is meant for developing courses or methods of teaching on South Asia in Swedish universities. This is indeed a long-term investment for developing interest and research on South Asia. Research Projects are categorised into (a) Research Planning and (b) Research Network-grants. Often both the objectives overlap.

#### *Purpose of Grants*

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>No. of Applications</b>	<b>% of Applications</b>	<b>Grants received*</b>	<b>% of Grant recipients</b>	<b>Projects supported*</b>	<b>% of Projects supported</b>
Research	105	83	42	75	35	73
Education	19	15	11	20	10	21
Other *	3	2	3	5	3	6
Total	127	100	56	100	48	100**

\* Nordic Centre in India, two grants; and Book Donation Project

\*\* 56 grants were given to 48 projects. Those projects, which received grants several times often received smaller grants, so the right column gives a better representation of the actual distribution of funds.

Of the 127 applications 56 – i.e. 44% – received a grant. This is a higher rate of success compared to other Swedish Research Councils, which have approximately a 10% success rate. This furthermore meets an objective of “seed money”.

For the period 2001 – 26 August 2003, a total of 33 projects were supported by SASNET. 15 Research planning projects have resulted in ongoing research projects with long-term funding. Nine, mostly educational projects, received additional finances from the universities themselves. Thus the funding has led to the intended results (planning of education, workshop, etc.) and continued projects with long term funding. It is significant that at least 24 projects received continued support in various forms. A very conservative estimate is that the planning projects have generated more than SEK 15 million for South Asia related research and education projects during the period 2003 – 2005. This is a significant achievement (Appendix F2 in self-evaluation).

## Recipients

As PhD. students get funds from their universities, there were few applicants from this category. Among the faculty 66 per cent of the grant recipients have been from junior positions. In some cases this was their first grant which enabled them to network with other scholars in Sweden and South Asia and develop their research. SASNET thus fulfils its objective of encouraging younger scholars who otherwise have limited resources. This process has to be strengthened. Senior professors already have contacts and can manage funds from many other sources.

*Successful applications by positions: Number of grants received*

University	Faculty Positions			Total
	Professor	Associate/Assistant Professor	PH. D. Student	
Göteborg	1	3	1	5
Lund	8	11	-	19
Stockholm	4	6	3	13
Uppsala	6	9	-	15
Others	1	2	1	4
Total	20	31	5	56

\* Note: In this table and the following one, the total of 56 grants has been used as the basis for the tabulations.

SASNET's planning and education grants have spread to all universities in Sweden. It has acquired national recognition as a Swedish Programme, although Lund has a slightly higher share than other universities. The number of applications was also more from Lund than other institutes. Lund University has 22% of faculty working on South Asia in Sweden. Because of the location of SASNET scholars from Lund have more knowledge about SASNET and its planning grants.

## Interdisciplinary Projects

As mentioned above one of the objectives of SASNET is to encourage and facilitate interdisciplinary studies in South Asia. Interdisciplinary includes not only within social sciences or natural sciences but also across sciences. That is collaboration between social sciences and natural sciences including medicine and health. Of the total applications 44 per cent have come from natural and medical sciences. They received a 43 per cent share of the grants. This is almost in proportion to the number of their applications. Among all faculties, humanities is the most successful in receiving grants with its applications. SASNET has thus provided a common platform for social and natural sciences. However natural scientists despite working in the South Asia region are not specifically focusing on South Asia in the way sociologists, anthropologists or political scientists do. They work on a problem. Hence the nomenclature "South Asian Studies Network" is problematic, as one natural scientist commented. It has come from the social science category and therefore gives the impression of being a network of social scientists.



Nonetheless some natural or medical scientists are keen to work in South Asia particularly on the issues of health, environment, natural resources etc.

*Number of applications and distribution of grants by major sciences*

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>No. of applications</b>	<b>% of applications</b>	<b>No of successful applications</b>	<b>% of total successful appl.</b>
Technology & Natural Sciences	36	27	15	27
Medicine	23	17	9	16
Social Sciences	56	42	20	36
Humanities	15	11	10	18
Other	2	2	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Appendix F2 in Self-Evaluation*

*Successful applications by mono or interdisciplines: Number of grants received*

<b>University</b>	<b>Mono- or interdisciplinary</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>Single discipline</b>	<b>Inter-discipline within faculty</b>	<b>Inter-discipline across sciences</b>	
Göteborg	3	2	-	5
Lund	9	9	1	19
Stockholm	8	4	1	13
Uppsala	7	3	5	15
Others	2	2	-	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>56</b>

Most of the projects that received grants are of mono discipline. One third of the total projects involve collaboration within social sciences or to a lesser extent within natural sciences. Seven projects involve a research collaboration of social and natural scientists. Though the number looks small, it is not insignificant when taking into account the current situation in relation to the social and natural sciences. The platform to bring social and natural scientists together, in order to work on a common research agenda within an interdisciplinary approach, has not yet developed.

Within the limitations of its scope, SASNET could provide this platform and facilitate the process. However the wider academic setting cannot be called conducive as the process of interdisciplinary research and teaching has yet to be initiated within the country-wide university structures. However it should be recorded that SASNET organised the Marstrand PhD Symposium as well as the 18th European Conference which were good attempts in this direction. Over the past two years, SASNET has actively been engaged in the development of Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies, and of the Arena for Global Sustainability Issues (AGESI), which is now about to take off. SASNET is also currently supporting a panel on 'Health, Globalization and Marginalization in South Asia' at the NASA conference in Aarhus 3–5 June 2005.

### **Evaluation of Applications**

While inviting applications for a grant, the Planning Committee states the following are the main criteria to be followed for the evaluation of the applications.

1. Relevance for South Asian Studies and/or relevance to South Asia (with relevance for South Asia could be meant, for example, programmes or projects useful for the academic, technical, economic, social or cultural development in South Asia as well as such a development in the relationship between Sweden and South Asia).
2. Scientific or educational quality of programme or project to be planned judged by its inter- or intra-disciplinary approach and theoretical and methodological framework.
3. Quality of the proposed planning judged by the number and background of individuals and institutions included, including doctoral students in a programme, and proposed activities.
4. Qualification of main applicant and her/his institutional environment.
5. Detailed budget in relation to the proposed work to be carried out.

These criteria are general. Therefore it leads one to feel that some applications tend to get rejected because “it is not adequately developed theoretically”, or “does not generate new knowledge”, or “methodologies and analytical approaches to be utilised ...are not specified” etc. These comments are important but they need to apply uniformly to all proposals. What is therefore needed is to evolve some objective criteria to have a uniform quality for the proposal and which can help new young researchers to write a better research proposal. The Board and Planning Committee can evolve the criteria so as to avoid the impression of arbitrariness in the evaluation.

The applications are evaluated by a reference group consisting of: Prof Pamela Price, Department of History, University of Oslo, Norway, Dr Neil Webster from the Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark, and Dr Malin Åkerblom from the International Science Programme, Uppsala University. As is normal practice at Swedish universities the members of this committee will sit for six years (three plus three years) whereafter a new committee will be selected. They are from different disciplines and with wide research experience. This committee has consisted of more or less the same members since 2001. The members read all the proposals in advance, make comments on each of them, and rank them. Then each proposal is discussed at a meeting. Their recommendations are placed before the Board for the final decision. Several scholars with whom we talked felt that the evaluation system should follow the anonymous referee system and get the opinion of the experts in the field. In the complex development of natural and social sciences no one can, however learned, know about all the fields. However it is important to note here that the Planning Committee puts lots of effort into evaluating each proposal. The committee gives reasons for accepting or rejecting the application. These reasons are conveyed to the candidates. Hence all possible transparency is maintained. We have found that in a few cases the scholars have taken the Committee’s comments seriously, reworked the proposal and submitted it again. And, in a few cases the revised proposals succeeded in getting grants in the next round. However, some of those who have not received a grant are unhappy with SASNET. We have studied the applications, though briefly, and found that there had been an objective evaluation done as humanely as possible. There is also transparency in the process as all the candidates are informed about the committee’s decision and given reasons why the application was not favoured for the grant. A foolproof system to the satisfaction of all at all times is hard to achieve. At the same time it is necessary to have regular revision of the guidelines involving a larger number of scholars. We feel that the procedure has to be further formalised by an anonymous referee system, evolving relatively more objective criteria, putting all the titles of the approved applications with the decisions of the Committee on the SASNET web site. A brief abstract of the outcome of the project should be disseminated. As new issues arise, a revision of the guidelines involving larger number of scholars is called for at regular intervals. Today the Board and the Committee have to specify as clearly as possible on the following issues:

“ When is an application a research planning grant and when is it for something that is more akin to a research project? How much should one expect from previous research planning grants awarded when considering a new application from the same candidate(s)? If an application has not led to an application for funding elsewhere, should SASNET provide further funding for a ‘new phase of planning’? How far should previous research performance in general be a consideration?”

## **4. Evaluation of SASNET and its activities**

### **4.1. Goal achievement**

As can be seen from the above analysis SASNET has to a large extent been able to implement the programme which was originally outlined in the project plan and detailed in the statutes as summarized in the introduction. Lack of funds has been the limiting factor each year leading to that in particular the grant program had to be cut down below its expected size. Some of the years the wage bill could not be met which led to one of the staff having to some extent to be funded elsewhere. Quality is more difficult to assess. However from the analysis made above and the points made in the many interviews most activities also seem to meet the high expectation on quality. A large number of the planning grants have led to actual implementation after funding has been found and everybody we met praised the gateway. The seminars and workshops have been judged relevant and interesting and other activities were by most seen as important. The two issues, which require further work in the future, are the questions of multidisciplinary and of increased activities outside Lund.

The major pillars of activities are slowly but steadily leading to the formation of a Swedish network and community of scholars, which requires strengthening and continued support over the coming years. The ultimate aim is a broad and multi-polar network in which any node may take the initiative and where the root node is interacting with all the other nodes on a reciprocal basis. Ultimately this will lead to the mobilizing of organizational and financial resources for new programmes and projects. Currently 148 Swedish departments and institutes are nodes in the network.

Over the coming years this network should be further extended, but simultaneously become more decentralized in relation to its initiatives within Sweden. Local university staff can as members of SASNET take their own initiatives to get to know each other within one university city as well as between two cities. This emphasis on a further decentralizing of initiatives from the root node to more local levels was voiced regularly during the interviews. It is a compliment to the originators of SASNET, that members feel the need to participate and develop further initiatives at this local level. The evaluation team feels that such efforts should be stimulated as they ultimately strengthen the internal consistency and make the community of Swedish scholars on South Asia more of a reality.

SASNET has in other words become a reality in the Swedish arena of South Asian scholars. More scholars have become involved to varying degrees in cooperation and exchange and this poses new challenges for the upcoming five-year period.

In this context the issue of multidisciplinary cooperation, being an ambitious but valuable target in itself, will require a greater input and specific attention during the coming five years if the currently started initiatives are to find a follow up in other departments. More effort will have to be made if this great challenge, especially between the natural sciences and the social sciences and humanities, can become a reality. The evaluation team found several instances of such interest and also research taking shape – also financed originally by SASNET seed money. The team suggests as promotional measures to look into

the possibilities of making space on the website especially for reporting on potential and actual cooperation on a multidisciplinary level. This could be further supported by appointing at least two SASNET Board members from the natural sciences and seeing to it that specialists on each field are available to judge the grant applications. Elsewhere in this report a suggestion on a referee system is made.

## **4.2. Cost effectiveness**

Analyses of cost-effectiveness have become ever more important part of evaluations. In general, it is safe to state that cost-effectiveness analyses of projects are methodologically weak. They often suffer from lack of comparative data, and they rarely contribute to the assessment of the project in question. This is certainly the case with evaluations of social sectors and of research.

For SASNET, the data available covers expenditures. These are collected by Lund University's administration and can be found in the annual financial reports and are summarized in table 3 below. The Swedish Government Audit in accordance with the rules and regulations of government institutions audits the accounts of Lund University including the ones of SASNET. We have not found any reason to question the accounts.

The lack of funds available to the SASNET network project has led to a high degree of cost-consciousness. The present cost squeeze at Swedish universities in general adds to this precarious situation. The evaluators found that this cost-consciousness in some cases could even lead to solutions which seem to be counterproductive for example in cutting the costs too much when travelling in South Asia.

## **4.3 Impact**

Impact should be measured against the original objectives defined in the Asian Strategy of the Swedish Government namely to increase the capacity within the research and higher education community working with and on South Asia. This objective is not explicitly referred to in the Agreement between SASNET and Sida or in the Statutes of the network but was confirmed to the evaluators in their meetings with officials of the government and Sida. Impact is always difficult to measure and requires a baseline study. There are very few data on the number of scholars who devote their time to specific regions within the Swedish university system. SASNET has put considerable efforts into building up statistics on South Asia and has now a fairly well documented list published on their website and which is appended in table 1 and 2 below. However good this may be we have no baseline to compare with. Trying to find out the situation of the stakeholders in the different universities we did not find any evidence of large increases during the relevant five-year period. (However to the ones which are active, SASNET has meant a great deal.) The reason for the lack of evidence for the increase in number can depend on a number of facts: 1) Lack of funds for major new activities. In fact funds have been less than before in the past year in particular for social science research and for PhD studies. 2) Consolidation and increase of quality in already existing activities. 3) The time since SASNET was created has been too short to really have already had an impact. Having said this, it should be noted that a number of new activities have been noticed in this short period such as the creation of one Master course for South Asian studies in Lund and one in Uppsala, one new professorship in Indian Religion in Lund, increased activities at Padrigu in Gothenburg and a special course for South Asian studies at Österlen Folk High School.

## **4.4 Sustainability**

On a technical level SASNET is sustainable. It is wholly owned and run as a department of Lund University and as far as we could see is seen as an important part of the profile of that university. The university wants to see itself as an international university with special emphasis on Asia, which explicitly should also include South Asia.

As regards financial sustainability the situation is more complicated. SASNET is financed to 75% with funds from Sida and 25% from the university. SASNET is supposed to be a national institution and it is therefore difficult to see that Lund would be prepared to pick up the full bill and maintain that direction. Funding from Sida is therefore required for at least one more period in order to fulfill the national ambition of the project. Hopefully after that period the other stakeholders will find the network so important and useful that they are prepared to meet some of its cost. The ultimate solution would be that the national education budget would meet the additional costs to keep SASNET a national project.

## **4.5 Organisation**

SASNET is an Institute within Lund University and falls directly under the Vice-Chancellor's Office. As has already been mentioned above statutes for the work has been issued by the Vice-Chancellor. The Board was constituted under these statutes and its duties are also formalized there. The Board should be re-elected every three years and this was accordingly done in early 2005. The Secretariat or as it is called here, the root node of the network, is staffed by one and a half persons, professor Staffan Lindberg (half-time) and Lars Eklund. Administrative support is rendered to a certain but limited extent by the university administration. SASNET rents a room in the South East Asian Institute, another autonomous institute within Lund University with which SASNET today has very good relations.

The major problem of the organization is the smallness of the staff, which leaves very little room for flexibility and new ventures. The devotion and energy of the two persons involved is the major asset of SASNET, but points also to its vulnerability for any changes. Informality has allowed the staff to be flexible, but as we have stated above as the network becomes more established some of the functions need to become more formalized. Rules and regulations must be refined and transmitted and explained to all stakeholders.

The coming period should therefore be utilized to consolidate SASNET as an all Swedish network. It is understandable and acceptable that Lund University accrues slightly higher benefits, due to the location and the additional funding received from Lund University. Yet this places a challenge to transparency of procedures at all levels, where the issue is also one of image-building. All procedures must be as transparent as possible and opportunities to decentralize initiatives should be looked into and stimulated in the next period. The tremendous input of the root node staff during the initial years must be met with support from all the stakeholders at each university involved in the network.

# List of people interviewed

## Government:

Anne Höglund, deputy assistant undersecretary (kansliråd), Unit for Asia and Oceania (ASO), Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Lisbeth Stålgren, Unit for Asia and Oceania (ASO), MFA.

Oscar Schlyter, Unit for Asia and Oceania (ASO), MFA.

Fredrika Oldbrandt, Unit for Asia and Oceania (ASO), MFA.

## Sida Asia Division,

Jan Essner, Deputy head

Jan Bjerninger, Director

## Sida SAREC

Berit Olsson, Head of Department, Sida/SAREC

Barbro Carlsson, Head of Division, Human Sciences for Social Development, SAREC

AnnaMaria Oltorp, Deputy Head of Division for Human Sciences for Social Development, SAREC

## Universities in Stockholm:

Professor Bo Lindblad, Division of International Health (IHCAR), Department of Public Health Sciences, Karolinska Institutet Medical University, Stockholm

Social Anthropology at Stockholm University

Dr. Eva-Maria Hardtmann, Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University

Professor Emeritus Gunnar Jacks, Division of Land and Water Resources, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm

Associate Professor Prosun Bhattacharya, Division of Land and Water Resources, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm

Professor Bo Lindblad, Division of International Health (IHCAR), Department of Public Health Sciences, Karolinska Institutet Medical University, Stockholm, Research in Karachi and Lahore in Pakistan and in India

Assoc Professor Sanjevi Carani, Centre for Molecular Medicine, origin South India

PhD in public health sciences, Zarina Kabir, origin Bangladesh

Helen Conte, lecturer in nursing at KI, recently started research cooperation with Aga Khan University Nursing, Karachi, Pakistan

Ayesha da Costa, PhD candidate in International Health from R.G. Gardi Medical College, Ujjain, India  
Professor Vinod Diwan, epidemiological and tuberculosis research in cooperation with GMC Ujjain, India

Dr Shahzad Akram, PhD candidate in endocrinology from AKU, Karachi, Pakistan

Professor Marie Vahter, immunology, KI cooperation India

Postdoc Liam Good, Functional Genomics KI, cooperation India

## **Uppsala University**

Malin Åkerblom, Associate Professor and Deputy Head of International Science Programme

Associate Professor Gunnel Cederlöf, Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology

PhD Candidate Åsa Hole, Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology

Professor Emeritus Gunilla Gren-Eklund, Division of Asian and African Languages and Cultures;  
Department of Linguistics and Philology

Dr. Mirja Juntunen, Division of Asian and African Languages and Cultures; Department of Linguistics  
and Philology

Associate Professor Ashok Swain, Department of Peace and Conflict Research

Sten Widmalm, Assistant Professor in Comparative Politics, Department of Government

Associate Professor Hans Blomkvist, Department of Government

Dr. Ranjula Bali Swain, Dept of Economics

Associate Professor Anju Saxena, Division of Linguistics and Computer Linguistics; Department of  
Linguistics and Philology

Professor Gunilla Lindmark, International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH), Department of  
Women's and Children's Health

Peter Schalk, Chair Professor of History of Religions, especially Hinduism and Buddhism, Dept of  
Theology

## **Göteborg University**

Professor Björn Hettne, Dept. of Peace and Development Research, PADRIGU (Chairman of  
SASNET board),

Dr. Camilla Orjuela, Dept. of Peace and Development Research, PADRIGU

Dr. Gunilla Blomqvist, Dept. of Peace and Development Research, PADRIGU

PhD Candidate Rodrigo Tavares, Dept. of Peace and Development Research, PADRIGU

PhD Candidate Stellan Vinthagen, Dept. of Peace and Development Research, PADRIGU

Dr. Monica Erwér, Dept. of Peace and Development Research, PADRIGU

Professor Wil Burghoon, Centre for Asian Studies, CEAS, Dept. of Environmental and Regional  
Studies of the Human Condition

Professor Olof Olsson, Dept of Cell and Molecular Biology

PhD Candidate Ferdinando Sardella, Department of Religious Studies

Dr. Eva Rosén Hockersmith, Department of Religious Studies

## **Karlstad University**

Professor Kjell Härenstam, Dept. of Religions, Division for Social Science

Associate Professor Marc Katz, Dept. of Religions, Division for Social Science

Professor Gerhard Gustafsson, Dept of Geography and Tourism

PhD Candidate Per-Olof Fjällsby, Dept. of History

Inga-Lill Fjällsby responsible for instruction and research, International Council of Karlstad University



Ulrika Andersson, Cultural Geografy Student.

Madeleine Augustsson, Religious History Student

Henrik Janne, Religious History Student

### **Lund University**

Professor Rajni Hatti Kaul, Department of Biotechnology, Centre for Chemistry and Chemical Engineering

Professor Bo Mattiasson, Department of Biotechnology, Center for Chemistry and Chemical Engineering

Professor Torkel Wadström, Division of Bacteriology; Department of Medical Microbiology, Dermatology and Infection

Associate Professor Åsa Ljungh; Division of Bacteriology; Department of Medical Microbiology, Dermatology and Infection

Professor Olle Qvarnström, Division of Indic Religions, Department of History and Anthropology of Religion; Centre for Theology and Religious Studies

Dr. Martin Gansten, Division of Indic Religions, Department of History and Anthropology of Religion; Centre for Theology and Religious Studies

Dr. Sidsel Hansson, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE)

Dr. Leif Stenberg, Islamology, Dept. of History and Anthropology of Religions; Centre for Theology and Religious Studies

Researcher Catarina Kinvall, Department of Political Science

Boel Billgren, Deputy Head of the International Office

Caroline Runeus, Head of the International Office

Björn Wittenmark, Assistant Vice-Chancellor

Hans Modig, Director for the Vice-Chancellor's office

Dr. Jan Magnusson, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE)

Professor Roger Greatrex, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE)

Associate Professor Alia Ahmad, Department of Economics,

Associate Professor Neelambar Hatti, Department of Economic History, Chairman of the Nordic Centre in India consortium board

Dr. Pernille Gooch, Human Ecology Division, Dept. of European Ethnology

Melissa Kelly, Master student in Asian Studies

Lynn Burter, Master student in Asian Studies

Keshab Prosad Bhattari, Master student in Asian Studies

Eva Hägerstrand, Deputy Coordinator, The Swallows India-Bangladesh section



**Communication – e-mail, telephone,**

1. Prof. Pamela Price, Dept. of History, Oslo University, Norway
2. Prof. Neil Webster, Danish Institute of International Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark.
3. Prof. Zulfiqar Bhutta Husein Lalji Dewraj professor of paediatrics and child health, Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan
4. Prof. S.K. Thorat, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India
5. Mr. Vimal Trivedi, M.c. (Statistics), Centre for Social Studies, Surat, India

*Table 1: Researchers and teachers according to faculty involved in South Asia related research and based at Swedish academic institutions*

<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Professors</b>	<b>Senior researchers</b>	<b>PhD candidates</b>	<b>Total</b>
Nat. sciences & technology	22	31	24	77 (28%)
Medicine	12	17	10	39 (14%)
Social sciences & law	13	49	27	89 (33%)
Humanities	16	28	26	72 (25%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>63 (23%)</b>	<b>125 (45%)</b>	<b>87 (32%)</b>	<b>273 (100%)</b>

(Source: 9 June 2005 from the 150 departments and institutes listed under Research on SASNET's Gateway, which is constantly being updated).

*Note to table:* The statistics probably give a very good picture of the relative size of the various categories. MA and MSc students have not been included. Programme officers involved in various programmes have not been included. These two categories probably amount to about 50 persons, which means that around 300 persons are currently engaged in South Asia related research and academic education activities in Sweden.

*Table 2: Researchers and teachers according to city involved in South Asia related research and based at Swedish academic institutions*

<b>City</b>	<b>Professors</b>	<b>Senior researchers</b>	<b>PhD candidates</b>	<b>Total</b>
Göteborg	11	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	60 (22%)
Lund	17	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	59 (22%)
Stockholm	11	<b>28</b>	<b>23</b>	62 (23%)
Uppsala	13	<b>31</b>	<b>14</b>	58 (21%)
Other	11	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	36 (13%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>63 (23%)</b>	<b>125 (45%)</b>	<b>87 (32%)</b>	<b>273 (100%)</b>

(Source: 9 June 2005 from the 150 departments and institutes listed under Research on SASNET's Gateway, which is constantly being updated).

Table 3: SASNET expenses 2001–2004, budget 2005

In 1000 SEK						
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total
<b>Budget post</b>						
1. Salaries incl social costs	536	858	929	792	941	4056
	32%	35	42	34	40	37%
2. Travel	27	137	90	66	160	480
	2%	6	4	3	7	4%
3. Material	90	36	56	40	45	267
	5%	1	3	2	2	3%
4. Öresund activities	44	48	9	12	20	133
	3%	2	0	0	1	1%
5. Special activity root node	213	126	0	640	25	1004
	13%	5	0	27	1	9%
6. Administrative charges	187	246	204	179	215	1031
	11%	10	9	8	9	9%
7. Planning grants (incl fees)	568	1021	924	620	944	4077
	34%	41	42	26	40	37%
8. Total	1733,32	2572	2312	2449	2450	11074,37
	100%	100	100	100	100	100%

Source: Lund University Accounts

### Notes

1. Travel includes contact journeys in 2002, 2003 and the one planned for in 2005.
2. Material in 2001 includes technical costs for building the Gateway.
3. Öresund activities include all our activities at Lund University and with our partners at Öresund University in 2001–2002.
4. Special activity: 2001: Workshop on global networking; 2002: Marstrand PhD symposium; 2004: 18th EASAS conference at Lund; 2005: NASA Conference in Aarhus – panel on health.
5. If we regard Special Activity as a form of Planning Grants, the total proportion of the SASNET budget actually spent on planning is 46%. In addition, if we add the SEK 924.000 raised and used for the 18th EASAS conference, which is not accounted for in the above table, the proportion spent on planning is 53%.

# Terms of Reference for an Evaluation of SASNET

*Spring 2005*

*6 December 2004/Staffan Lindberg*

Decided by the SASNET board on 24 August 2004, by Lund University in September, and developed in dialogue with Sida SAREC, AnnaMaria Oltorp, during September–December 2004.

This process is based on the evaluation guidelines issued by the Directorate of Higher Education (Högskoleverket) in Sweden and Sida. Due respect should be taken to the fact that SASNET is a network organisation with its specific goals.

## Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to improve the performance of the SASNET network and to provide information to the Lund University and Sida SAREC about its organisation, work process, effects and consequences as well as an overall analysis of the working of the network.

The evaluation should aim both at an instrumental and a conceptual use. It should also aim at a process use in order to ‘create shared understanding or boost confidence and morale.’ (Sida Evaluation Manual, 2004: 15)

## Background of SASNET

After an initiative by the Foreign Ministry in 1998, Sida SAREC invited suggestions from Uppsala, Göteborg and Lund universities on how to set up a Swedish centre/network for South Asian studies in June 1999. In May 2000, Lund was given the responsibility, with a planning period lasting for the remaining part of that year, and funding for 2001–2002. An advisory conference was organised in Lund in October 2000, with participation of Swedish senior researchers and a fair representation of PhD candidates and concerned government officials.

SASNET was formally started in January 2001, with directions issued by the Vice-Chancellor of Lund University in June 2001 and with its first board meeting in August 2001.

### **The aim of SASNET is:**

SASNET is a national network for research, education, and information about South Asia, based at Lund University. The aim is to encourage and promote an open and dynamic networking process, in which Swedish researchers co-operate with researchers in South Asia and globally. The network is open to all sciences. Priority is given to co-operation between disciplines and across faculties, as well as institutions in the Nordic countries and in South Asia. The basic idea is that South Asian studies will be most fruitfully pursued in co-operation between researchers, working in different institutions with a solid base in their mother disciplines. The network is financed by Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) and by Lund University.

The directions issued by the Vice-Chancellor of Lund University are presented in Appendix 1.

In September 2002, Sida SAREC decided to fund a new three period, i. e. 2003–2006. An oral message was given that SAREC saw this as a programme that they could fund for altogether about ten years.

## Stakeholder Involvement

The main stakeholders are researchers and students, university leaders, government officials, and concerned representatives of civil society and business. Among stakeholders should also be considered researchers and teachers in higher education from South Asia, who interact with Swedish counterparts within and outside the orbits of SASNET.

A second layer of stakeholders consists of teachers, schools students, media & information personnel, etc.

It is envisaged that the stakeholders will participate in the evaluation in various ways. Some of them can answer a questionnaire administered via E-mails, some of them can participate in personal interviews during the two phases of the evaluation (see below).

## Evaluation Questions

The main task of the evaluation should be to describe and analyse the organisation, the process and the results of SASNET during the period January 2001–December 2004 given the directions issued by Lund University in 2001 (see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/directions.html>)

1. What are the main results achieved during the period?
  - a. Positive results?
  - b. Negative results or failure to live up to the goals?
  - c. Unintended effects and their consequences?
2. To what extent can these results be attributed to the work within SASNET? Could they have come about anyway for one reason or another?
3. How is SASNET's organisation and work process functioning in relation to the aims given? Work situation of SASNET personnel.
4. Is it effective given the resources at hand? How effective is the administrative support given by Lund University?
5. Is SASNET work process organised in a participatory mode, is it gender-sensitive and ethnically and culturally balanced?
6. How are the overall aims translated into action? Are some goals overemphasised in relation to others? Relationship between Directions, Board decisions and actual work carried out. Is this process satisfactory in relation to a continuous monitoring and adjustment of the various activities?
7. Does SASNET serve the overall aim of promoting and initiating research and higher education in South Asian Studies in Sweden? Does it promote interdisciplinary studies and education?
8. How does SASNET compare with other similar networks? (National and international comparisons)

We have here avoided too detailed and specific questions in order to allow the evaluators to be able to formulate these themselves in relation to their understanding about networking in research and higher education.

One way of organising the evaluation is to think in terms of the five criteria that Sida has laid down for its evaluations: effectiveness, impact, relevance, sustainability, and efficiency.

## Recommendations and Lessons

The evaluation should result in an overall assessment of SASNET in relation to the aim of the network and the various tasks carried out.

It should also result in an assessment of the priorities followed and analyse the time and economic resources spent in various activities and the outcome of this. Alternative ways of organising, prioritising and use of economic resources should also be discussed.

## Methodology

The evaluation will be carried out in four steps:

- a) Self-evaluation by SASNET staff, board members and network partners
- b) External evaluation by experts in the field
- c) After consultations between SASNET personnel and external experts, there will be a final report to Sida and Lund University. The final report will consist of the Self-evaluation and the Report of the External experts
- d) Comments and feedback from Sida and Lund University

The evaluation will be based on quantitative and qualitative data collected under step a) and b) above.

First SASNET will provide basic facts about its organisation, process and work results, then reflect over this in more qualitative terms. The material will include a report on the “results” of the distributed planning grants so far (concrete research and education projects developed, funding, etc.).

During this work, SASNET root node will involve the external experts in a dialogue so that the experts can ask for specific material to be compiled and/or presented by SASNET.

This material will then be given to the external examiners for further studies, including interviews with SASNET staff and partners as well as various stakeholders of SASNET activities. The choice of methods under step a) and b) should be open for the evaluators to decide.

The combination of self-evaluation (participatory evaluation in the Sida terminology, *ibid.* p. 19) and external expert evaluation should ensure both that there will be objectivity in the evaluation and at the same time a process of learning for the SASNET personnel and partners involved.

## Work Plan and Schedule

The self-evaluation will be carried out during November 2004–March 2004, the expert evaluation during April–June 2005, and the final communications and comments will take place during June 2005.

In September 2005, SASNET will apply to Sida SAREC and Lund University for funding during the period 2006–2008.

The self-evaluation phase is funded via the SASNET budget. The work of the external experts will have to be funded by Sida SAREC.

## External Evaluation

The evaluation team will consist of three experts, see below. The work is expected to take two weeks, one week will be a desk study at home, and one week will be spent in visiting SASNET root node at Lund, Sida SAREC and Foreign Ministry at Stockholm, and whichever SASNET partners they would like to meet with (Uppsala, Karlstad, Göteborg, etc.). At the end of this period they will deliver a report to SASNET, Sida SAREC and Lund University.

## Reporting

The self-evaluation will consist of a report of 20–25 pages with supplementary appendices and links to all relevant websites reporting on SASNET activities (including annual work reports, etc.) The expert evaluation will be a report of 15–20 pages, possibly with additional appendices.

A joint consultation between SASNET personnel, external experts, Lund University and Sida SAREC should take place in June 2005. This can be organised as Dialogue on an internet page.

## Evaluation Teams

### Self-evaluation:

Staffan Lindberg

Lars Eklund

Jan Magnusson

Assisted by:

Boel Billgren

Rajni Hatti Kaul

Bo Lindblad

Camilla Orjuela

Gunnel Cederlöf

Jan Essner

Dipak Malik, via Internet communication

Rita Afsar, via Internet communication

Zulfiqar Bhutta, via Internet communication

### External experts

Prof. Carla Risseuw, Department of Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies  
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Leiden (c.risseuw@zonnet.nl, risseuw@fsw.leidenuniv.nl)

Prof. Ghanshyam Shah, Political Scientist, Ahmedabad (gshah18@hotmail.com)

Mr. Lennart Wohlgemut, Director of the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala  
(lennart.wohlgemuth@nai.uu.se)

# Appendix 1

## Directions for SASNET – Swedish South Asian Studies Network, Lund University

### Issued by the vice-chancellor of Lund University on 2001-06-07

SASNET is a national network for research, education, and information about South Asia. The aim is to encourage and promote an open and dynamic networking process, in which Swedish researchers co-operate with researchers in South Asia and globally. The network is open to all sciences. Priority is given to co-operation between disciplines and across faculties, as well as institutions in the Nordic countries and in South Asia. The basic idea is that South Asian studies will be most fruitfully pursued in co-operation between researchers, working in different institutions with a solid base in their mother disciplines.

A network root node will be based at Lund University. The network root node will operate an Internet gateway for interaction and information on South Asian studies. The network root node will initiate, stimulate, and support South Asian studies at Lund University and within Öresund University.

#### *1. The main tasks of the network are to:*

- in various ways initiate, stimulate, and support research co-operation via planning and programme grants for networking (e.g., meetings, travel, visit of guest researchers, co-ordination, etc.)
- in various ways initiate, stimulate, and support academic South Asian studies in Sweden, or studies relevant to South Asia, e.g., via grants for networking in developing undergraduate and graduate courses in Sweden and the Nordic countries, if possible in partnership with universities in South Asia
- encourage PhD studies specialising on South Asia, including networking among single research students in institutions that do not specialise on South Asia
- promote student and researcher exchange between Sweden (the Nordic countries) and South Asia
- build an information system for South Asian studies in partnership with academic and public institutions, media, business communities, and NGOs
- contribute to co-ordination of consultations between researchers and different public institutions, business organisations, and NGOs

#### *2. The board*

SASNET will be led by a board consisting of 9-11 persons from:

- Lund University (3)
- Other universities and university colleges in Sweden (3)
- Universities and university colleges in the other Nordic countries
- PhD candidates
- Sida
- Business organisations and NGO's

Deputy members may be appointed for each category. The vice-chancellor appoints the chairperson, the members and deputy members for a mandate period of three years. At the time of elections for a new board, the board will appoint an election committee with a majority of members from outside the board. The election committee will put forward candidates to the vice-chancellor.

The board will direct all activities including decisions about the distribution of grants to various activities and networking programmes in accordance with the aims of the network. Larger grants are to be distributed after due applications and assessment by a reference group of established scholars in the field.

### *3. Network root node*

A network root node affiliated to the International Office at Lund University will manage the daily activities.

The network root node is led by a director (co-ordinator). The vice-chancellor, advised by the board, will appoint a director for a period of three years. The appointment may be renewed.

The director (co-ordinator) will organise the meetings of SASNET's board and manage the work at the root node. The co-ordinator will plan and carry out various activities in close collaboration with the board, the co-ordinators of SASNET supported programmes, as well as South Asian, Swedish and international network partners. Granted the idea of an open and dynamic network of activities, the director's main role should be that of a broker, connecting people and resources, starting up new activities and supporting the programme co-ordinators in their work.

The director (co-ordinator) should be a highly qualified South Asia researcher, university teacher, supervisor, administrator and programme-builder, with well-established research contacts in, and familiarity with, the South Asian region. Experience of work in a research council is desirable.

The network root node is responsible for running SASNET's information and communication system.

### *4. Reference group of South Asian Researchers*

SASNET will establish association with a reference group of South Asian researchers, with whom the root node and the board will consult about SASNET's aims and activities. The reference group will function as an advisory and evaluative body and should have at least five but not more than ten members. The communication between the members of the reference group and SASNET should primarily take place through modern communication technology.

### *5. Finance*

SASNET is financed by annual grants from Sida, grants from Lund University, and from any other grants that SASNET may receive from other funding bodies for short or long-term projects and programmes.

### *6. Institutional affiliation*

SASNET belongs to the division of Special Activities of Lund University and is affiliated to the International Office. SASNET may be moved to any faculty at the University by decision of the vice-chancellor.

### *7. Work report*

SASNET will submit an annual work report.

### *8. Monitoring*

SASNET's activities are to be evaluated at the end of each three-year period (the mandate for the board and the director).

### *9. Any changes of these directions*

will be stipulated by the vice-chancellor on the advice of the board or following consultation with the board.



## Appendix 2

### Budget for external evaluation of SASNET

Three experts will be engaged in this work

The work is expected to take two weeks, one week desk study at home, and one week visiting SASNET root node at Lund, Sida SAREC and Foreign Ministry at Stockholm, and whichever SASNET partners they would like to meet with (Uppsala, Karlstad, Göteborg, etc.).

<b>Fees, 3 x 30 000</b>		<b>90 000</b>
LKP		45 000
<b>Total cost for fees</b>		<b>135 000</b>
<b>Travel</b>		
Indian expert, India – Sweden	12 000	
British expert, England – Sweden	5 000	
Travel within Sweden 3 x 6 000	18 000	
Hotel, 8 nights á 1 500 x 2	36 000	
“Allowances” 7 x 700 x 3 <sup>1</sup>	14 700	
LKP for “allowances”	7 350	
<b>Total cost for travel</b>		<b>93 050</b>
<b>Material, photocopying, etc.</b>		<b>5 000</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>233 050</b>
Administrative charge, Lund University, 18 %		41 949
<b>Total cost</b>		<b>274 999</b>

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<sup>1</sup> Since there cannot be allowances for visiting experts, it will be treated as a fee and taxed. The tax is usually 25 %, so the amount that the expert can use is 525 SEK.

# Appendix 3

## SASNET

### Programme for expert interviews in Sweden 8–14 May 2005

#### Status report 26 April /SL

##### Experts:

Prof. Carla Risseeuw, Department of Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies  
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Leiden  
(c.risseeuw@zonnet.nl, risseeuw@fsw.leidenuniv.nl)

Prof. Ghanshyam Shah, Political Scientist, Ahmedabad  
(gshah18@hotmail.com)

Mr. Lennart Wohlgemut, Director of the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala  
(lennart.wohlgemuth@nai.uu.se)

#### Monday 9 May: Interviews in Stockholm:

##### Government

Foreign Ministry, 10.15; ref. Anne Höglund (405 31 39, 0709 53 02 52),  
Eva Walder-Brundin, Foreign Ministry, ASO,  
Address: Fredsgatan 6. (OK)

Sida Asia Division, 11.15; Jan Essner (69850 98), Jan Bjerninger, Sida, Sveavägen 20. (OK)

Sida SAREC, 13.00 (OK)  
(our funding agency), Tomas Kjellqvist, Berit Olsson, Barbro Carlsson (698 51 19),  
ref. AnnaMaria Oltorp (698 57 49),  
Address: Sida, Sveavägen 20

##### Universities in Stockholm

Bo Lindblad, and a group of researchers at KI, Sanjeevi Carani,  
Monika Berge and others Public Health, Karolinska Institutet, 14.30 (OK)  
Address: Karolinska Institutet, Solnavägen 1.  
Administration, first building to the right after the gate.  
Phone: 070 71 77 695

Carla Risseeuw:  
Social Anthropology at Stockholm University, Eva-Maria Hardtmann,  
Christer Norström and Pers Ståhlberg, 16.00 (OK)  
Address: Frescati, B-house, 6th floor.  
Phones: 16 32 09(Christer), 16 37 90 (Eva-Maria) eller 16 26 85 (Per)

Ghanshyam Shah:  
Ishtiaq Ahmed 16 26 24), Dept of Political science, Stockholm University, 16.00 (OK)  
Address: Frescati, Building F, Room F 738.  
Office number is: 16 26 24.

Lennart Wohlgemut:

Gunnar Jacks, Prosun Bhattacharya, Royal Technical Institute, 16.00 (OK)

Address: Institutionen för mark och vattenteknik, KTH, SE-100 44 Stockholm, Sweden

Address: KTH, Teknikringen 76

Phone: 790 73 99

## Tuesday 10 May

### **Uppsala University: Ghanshyam Shah goes there by train in the morning, and then goes to Lund in the evening by air from Arlanda**

Suggested time to arrive at Uppsala by train from Stockholm: 9.15–9.30

Beppe Karlsson to meet Ghanshyam at Railway station (?)

Malin Åkerblom Associate Professor and deputy head of International Science Program (who is one of three experts in our reference group for evaluating the planning grants applications) 10.00

Address: Dag Hammarskjölds väg 31 (OK)

Phone: (018)-471 35 74

Anju Saxena at the Dept. of Linguistics 11.00 (OK)

Address: Institutionen för lingvistik och filologi,

Engelska parken. Humanistiskt centrum.

Thunbergsvägen 3H, Hus 9, 2 trappor (Go to Intendenturen, Information desk and ask for direction)

Phone: 018 471 1457.

Ashok Swain, Peace and Conflict Research, Sten Widmalm and Hans Blomkvist at the Department of Government, Ranjula Bali Swain, Dept of Economics, 13.00 (OK)

Address: Department of Government, Theatrum Oeconomicum, Gamla Torget 2

Phone: (018)-471 33 32

Gunnel Cederlöf, Beppe Karlsson and Åsa Hole at the Dept. of Cultural Anthropology,

Gunilla Gren-Eklund and Mirja Juntunen, Indology, Uppsala University, 14.00. (OK)

Address: Dept. of Cultural Anthropology, Engelska Parken, Thunhemsvägen 3H

(Go to Intendenturen, Information desk and ask for direction)

Phone: (018) - 471 2596

Gunilla Lindmark and Lars Åke Persson at the Dept. of Women's and Children's health, 15.00 (OK)

Address: Drottninggatan 4, plan 4

Phone: (018) 611 59 98

Peter Schalk, Dept of History of Religions, 16.00 (OK)

Address: Teologen, Engelska Parken,

Thunbergsvägen 3 B, Hus 1, rum 1040,

tel 018-252682 eller 0704947669

Train from Uppsala to Arlanda airport: 18–19.00 ca

Departure Arlanda: 20.55, Arrival Sturup 22.00

### **Göteborg University: Carla Risseuw goes there and then goes to Lund in the evening (by train all the way)**

Departure Stockholm Railway station: 06.05

Arrival Göteborg: 09.14

Departure Göteborg: 17.40,

Arrival Lund 20.37

Somebody to meet at the railway station: Camilla or Monica?

Björn Hettne (Chairman of SASNET board), Camilla Orjuela, Gunilla Blomqvist, Stellan Vinthagen, Monica Erwér at Department of Peace and Development Research, 10.00 (OK)

Address: Världshuset, Brogatan 4

Phone: (031) 773 14 26 (Björn) 773 58 73 (Camilla)

Lunch: Padrigu?

Wil Burghoon at Centre for Asian Studies, 13.00 (?)

Address: Världshuset, Brogatan 4

Phone: (031) 773 26 49

Olof Olsson at Dept of Cell and Molecular Biology, 14.30 (OK)

Address: Institutionen för Cell och Molekylärbiologi,

Medicinaregatan 9C

Tel (office) 031 773 34 62

(mobile) 070 6015725

Ferdinando Sardella and Eva Rosén at Dept of Religious Studies, 16.00 (OK)

Address: Lennart Torstenssonsgatan 11

Phone: (031) 773 15 62 (Ferdinando)

**Karlstad University – Lennart Wohlgemut goes there and then he goes to Lund in the evening (via Arlanda)**

Departure Arlanda: 07.15

Arrival Karlstad: 08.10

Departure Karlstad: 19.30

Arrival Arlanda: 20.25

Departure Arland: 20.55

Arrival Sturup: 22.00

Time in Karlstad: 09.00 to 18.00 ca (including some time for writing up)

Per-Olof will meet at the airport.

**Preliminary Programme:**

**10–12**

Kjell Härenstam and Marc Katz, Dept. of religions, Division for Social Science, Karlstad University  
(054 700 13 01)

**13–14**

Gerhard Gustafsson, Dept of Geography and Tourism

**14–15**

Per-Olof Fjällsby, Dept. of History (OK)

In the evening together again in Lund

Hotell Ideon Gästeri, phone: 046 – 211 79 00

Address: Sölvegatan 28. Lund

The buss from Sturup airport goes all the way to nearby Ideon.

**Lund**

**Wednesday 11**

Meeting at SASNET's office, Lars Eklund and Staffan Lindberg, 9.00

Adress: Scheelevägen 15 B, second floor, room 2042

Phone: (046) 222 73 40

### **SASNET guest lecture**

Seminar on Indian Neo-liberal policies and its effects in India by Professor Venkatesh B. Athreya,  
Dept. of Sociology 13.00–15.00  
Address: Paradisgatan 5, House O, Dept. of Sociology, Conference1, room 335,  
Phone: (046) 222 88 62 (Staffan)

### **Thursday 12 May: Lund**

Rajni Hatti Kaul and Bo Mattiasson at dept of Biotechnology, 9.00  
Address: Department of Biotechnology, Center for Chemistry and Chemical Engineering,  
Getingevägen 60, Reception, Floor -1, (OK)  
Phone: (046) 222 82 64 (Bo), or 222 48 40 (Rajni)

Torkel Wadström, Åsa Ljungh, Division of Bacteriology; Department of Medical Microbiology,  
Dermatology and Infection, at Lund University, 10.00 (OK)  
Address: Division of Bacteriology, Lund University, Sölvegatan 23  
Phone: (046) 17 32 83

Olle Qvarnström, Martin Gansten, Sidsel Hansson, Leif Stenberg and others at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies and Catarina Kinnvall, Political Science, 11.30, incl. lunch (OK)  
Address: Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Allhelgona Kyrkogata 8  
Phone: (046) 222 90 62

International Office, Boel Billgren and Caroline Runeus 13.00 (OK)  
Address: Sandgatan 3 (Gamla Kirurgen, hus R), second floor  
Phone: (046) 222 93 83

Meetings with the deputy Vince-Chancellor Björn Wittenmark, University Director Peter Honeth and Hans Modig, 14.30 (OK)  
Address: University House, Ground floor, to the left  
Phone: (046) 222 70 03 (Barbro Mårtensson) or 222 70 04 Christina Bernsand

Centre for East- and Southeast Asian Studies, Jan Magnusson and Roger Greatrex, 16.00 (OK)  
Address: Scheelevägen 15 B, second floor  
Phone: (046) 222 37 44 or 070 376 59 47

Social science: Alia Ahmad, economics, Neelambar Hatti, economic history, Pernille Gooch, Human ecology (OK), 17.00  
Address: Department of Economic history, Ekonomisentrum, Tycho Brahes väg 1  
Phone: (046) 222 74 88 (Neelambar Hatti)

### **Friday 13 and Saturday Morning 14 May:**

#### **Analysis and report writing**

Here you may look at any material that we have not provided you with earlier, including for example, the applications for planning grants received (and compare those were supported with those that were not).

#### **Saturday afternoon 14 May:**

Meeting with SASNET root node: feedback on conclusions of evaluation, clarifications, etc., 13.00

#### **End of mission**

Desirable deadline for your report is before 23 June 2005. It should be about 15–20 pages long (see Terms of Reference for details).

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Nils Boesen, Bente Østergaard Madsen  
Department for Latin America
- 05/25 Desmovilización y Reintegración de Niños Soldados, en Colombia. Apoyo de Asdi a UNICEF, 2003–2004**  
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Department for Latin America, Department for Co-operation with Non-Governmental Organisations and Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Management
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sida@sida.se

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