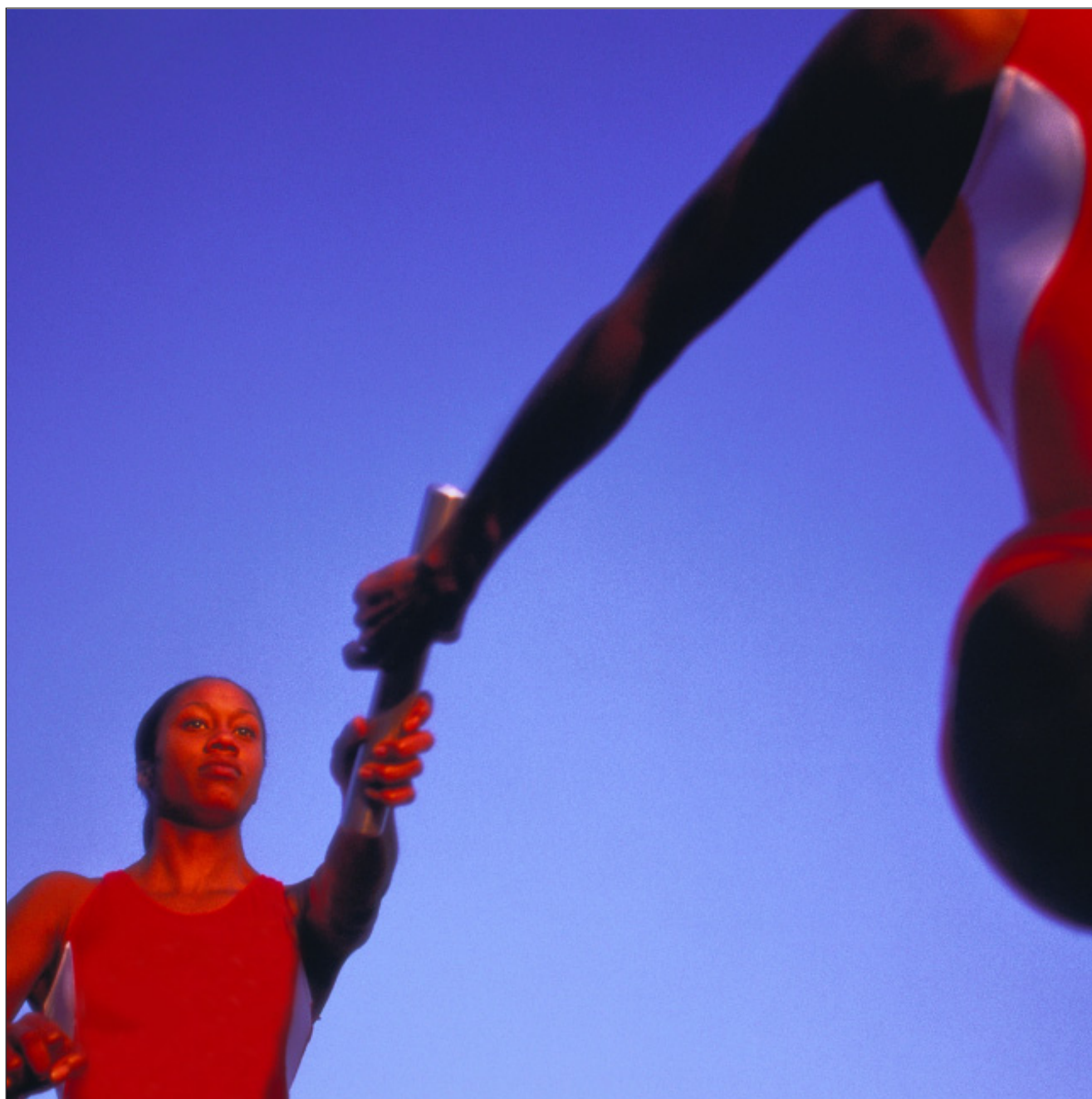


Vision for a strengthened field orientation



Vision for a strengthened field orientation

Action programme

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The Vision

Sida's main objective is poverty reduction. Poverty is multidimensional and requires holistic, well-integrated and cross-sector approaches. Poverty varies between different situations, and high quality analytical and implementing capacity is needed in the field. It is therefore essential to give high priority to knowledge and action at local level. At the same time, Sida's headquarters has broad experience, an institutional memory and professional expertise. Further, it has well-established interaction with a range of Swedish and international stakeholders.

Sida's vision is to create an optimal balance between an empowered and strengthened field organisation and a supportive organisation at headquarters, thereby creating the best possible prerequisites for fulfilling the poverty reduction goal. Flexibility will govern the allocation of resources and delegation of authority to the field. With the prevailing situation and the actual size and character of the programme of co-operation as the points of departure, more authority will be delegated to the field.

Sida will accordingly be an organisation where a strong field, in terms of resources, decision-making powers and access to international communication, and a correspondingly specialised home office will make possible a deeper and wider dialogue, a greater degree of partnership, and higher quality in programmes of development co-operation.

Sida will have more staff in the field and more staff at headquarters will work to support the field. Increasingly, experience gained in the field will be a requirement in the careers of Sida employees. The number of locally recruited programme officers will grow, and they will have postings at headquarters for training or for carrying out specific tasks.

Operational decisions concerning the long-term partner countries will normally be taken in the field. Policy work will be based on experience gained in the field and the field will be active in the preparation of new policies, methods and regulations. Sida has allocated a substantial part of its budget to human resource development and more will be used to strengthen the field.

All field offices with full delegation will be in direct communication with each other and with Stockholm. The technical environment will support frequent and efficient communication among field offices and with headquarters. Video conferences will replace some travelling.

Background

The purpose of this Action Programme is to facilitate the implementation of Sida's vision for a strengthened field orientation. A strengthened field is a field that is given responsibility and authority to make more decisions on development cooperation. "Full" or widened delegation is therefore the corner-stone of the process of increasing field orientation, but the Action Programme focuses on a range of issues that Sida needs to reassess, strengthen and implement in order to make the vision a reality.¹

The level of authority delegated to a field office, whether full, widened, partial or none at all, is decided from time to time, on the basis of the prevailing conditions in the country concerned. Delegation is always given within the framework of the country strategy, sector and administrative policies, the country plan, field office conditions and the prevailing situation in the country concerned. Full delegation implies that the field office has received full responsibility, to the extent possible, for the initiation, planning, preparation, decision-making, implementation, follow-up, quality assurance and evaluation of the development programme with a specific country. However, in the following, "full delegation" is used synonymously with "widened" delegation as a general expression for an increase in responsibilities.

In financial terms, full delegation means that the appropriation is delegated to the head of the field office without restrictions on decision-making powers (up to SEK 50 million). Full delegation implies the right to decide on all programmes and projects included in the Country Plan.

This change, which might seem "easy" in technical terms, will have organisational implications. It will result in a more decentralised organisation and will thus require changes with regard to management and control, quality assurance, staffing etc, both in the field and at HQ. We must expect that it will affect the working methods, strategies, management tools and the roles and responsibilities of many members of staff.

¹ In certain circumstances, Sida's management might choose to not delegate the full responsibility, but rather to widen the embassy's scope of decision-making powers

Some implications of the vision are known; others we will have to learn during the process. Some will be minor, while others will be more far-reaching. Now, at the beginning of the process, we have assumed that the most important areas to focus on relate to the changing roles of various departments at Sida, management tools, human resource management, communication and quality assurance.

Even if much of the focus of the Action Programme is on field offices with full delegation, other kinds of offices constitute the majority in numbers. An increasingly common category will be embassies at which Sida has stationed one or more individuals for very specific tasks (Regional Officers: 20 by 2004). A third important category is small “Sida” offices, which will require special consideration in a number of issues, see page 21.

Full delegation so far

– what have we learnt?

In January 1999, Sida delegated, on a pilot basis, full responsibilities to the embassies in Dar es Salaam, Hanoi and Managua. A follow-up was made in mid-2000. It concluded that there had not been any dramatic effects for Sida as a whole. However, gradual changes had been observed but these were mostly limited to the three embassies and the programme officers concerned at sector departments. The embassies had become more aware of their responsibilities for the entire Swedish programme of co-operation with the countries concerned and had developed a greater focus on increased partnership, local ownership and intensified donor co-ordination.

The quality of project decisions had neither deteriorated nor improved. The pilot programme had, however, led to a certain amount of uncertainty, irritation and frustration, particularly at sector departments. The embassies also felt a need to be more active in Sida's work on methods and policy development.

Short-term assignments had been a positive instrument for strengthening the embassies, and locally recruited programme officers were seen as "windows of opportunities" for fulfilling many of the obligations in the field. However, it was considered necessary to make structural changes in the provision of professional expertise. Effective administrative support at the embassies was stated to be a prerequisite for "full" delegation in order to generate expected benefits. A specific head of administration function was therefore required.

In summary, the report concludes that work had functioned well during the trial period at the three embassies and the report recommended a small enlargement of the number of embassies receiving full delegation. In January 2002, another two embassies were given full delegation – Maputo and Pretoria – and, in 2003, it is planned that further embassies will receive full delegation.

In mid-2002, a report was presented on experience gained from full delegation in Tanzania. The report takes stock of the situation after 3.5 years of full delegation. It confirms, in all essentials, what is stated above and it presents clear and well-founded proposals for obtaining the maximum benefits from delegation. In summary the report proposes the following:

The Field	General	Sida-S
– ensure high levels of competence – local quality assurance – ceiling for project portfolio – define management roles	– elucidate/change roles – establish consultations – strengthen togetherness	– increased importance of country plan – clearer guidelines, directives, etc

The report clearly points out that Sida needs to work on many issues in order to make full delegation work as expected. All the views presented in the Tanzania report may not be valid in all the other countries that have received full delegation, but it is the understanding of Tanzania that the issues for action proposed above are fundamental to a process of change. It will be a long process. The expected benefits might not appear immediately and the problems might become more obvious. Sida must thus believe in the vision and be prepared to make serious and concentrated efforts.

The action programme

Sida's vision is an important part of Sida's work to improve the efficiency of Swedish development co-operation. The vision will facilitate a differentiation of field offices, based on their respective commissions. The focus on clarifying the roles and responsibilities of both the field offices and headquarters, increased decentralisation etc will make it possible to make more efficient use of available resources.

The objective of the action programme is to support the implementation of the vision. The task is to take initiatives in order to transform Sida into an organisation with a greater degree of field-orientation. The starting point for the work has been the experience gained in the five countries with full delegation today. The team responsible for the action programme should act as a power centre, take initiatives, and make sure that action is taken on agreed measures. A main part of the work will be to structure, formalise, bind together and co-ordinate all activities which aim to strengthen the field. The team should also ensure that all involved are aware of what is going on, that correct priorities govern actions taken, and that the field is in focus during implementation. It should also make sure that lessons learnt during the project are properly disseminated throughout the organisation.

The work requires a constant dialogue among all divisions at Sida, including the field. Various working groups will have to be established to deal with different issues. Work will be process-oriented, indicating that the transition towards a greater degree of field orientation is on-going and is part of the action programme – not a result of the programme. Once agreements have been reached, components may graduate on their own merits and be processed and implemented by the line division responsible.

Continuous consultations will be held with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on all matters of mutual interest. Close co-operation will be needed in various areas, as the organisations are closely interlinked in the field.

Risks and opportunities

Increase in volumes of support in the years to come, a more global world, the positive results of the pilot programmes, the experience of other donors and organisations: all this indicates that the action programme is timely. The commitment and support shown for the proposals is high among Sida staff and it is believed that the overall environment for change will facilitate implementation of the action programme.

One risk is that the action programme encompasses too many aspects, which may slow down the speed of implementation and generate frustration among the staff. On the other hand, there is a risk that implementation may be too rapid, that not all members of staff will be involved, or that many will not be aware of the objectives and rationale behind the action programme. There may be legislation, agreements or suchlike, which prevent certain changes. Nor do we know the final results of “Globkom” (Parliamentary Commission on Swedish Policy for Global Development).

One major factor, which may hamper the speed of implementation of the vision, is the risk that Sida’s annual appropriations will be less than anticipated.

There are some factors of technical nature, such as the employment conditions of locally recruited officers, the possibility of expanding office facilities, the pace of the supply of IT tools in the field etc, which may cause problems and/or delays and give reason for reconsideration. Close consultations with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs are essential for successful implementation.

Components included in the action programme

The focus in the first year should be on creating stability in what has already been achieved. One starting point will therefore be to address the issues observed and noted at the five embassies with full delegation today. This will also form useful “lessons learnt” when more embassies are given greater responsibilities.

Although the emphasis of the Action Programme will lie on the offices with full delegation, most of the areas listed below relate to all Sida’s field offices.

The work ahead of transforming the vision into reality has to be carried out in steps. Some of the components proposed are of a medium-term character and need thorough preparation and consideration. Others are already relatively well prepared and could be implemented without delay.

Initially, the action programme includes the components listed below. However, this list might change during the project. The areas of focus are not ranked in order of importance.

- A. Redefining roles in the field and at headquarters
- B. Management tools
- C. Instrument for quality assurance
- D. Human Resource Management
- E. Communication capacity and IT support
- F. Small Field Offices

A. Redefining roles in the field and at headquarters

Sida’s organisation in Stockholm will be affected by the strengthening of the field. Sida’s vision for the field is therefore just as much a vision for all of Sida, including headquarters.

With the vision as the point of departure, work will start on devising a common platform for continuous dialogue, understanding and long-term planning between Stockholm and the field. In the short-term perspective, there will not be a dramatic change in Stockholm. However, a gradual transition to new conditions is essential for success in the medium term.

All three groupings of departments (ROV, REGFORUM and ÄMNESFORUM) need to discuss and work out a synopsis, together with the field, on the changes that can be foreseen, how these changes should

be managed, and when appropriate action should be taken. Various scenarios of the division of work and decision-making processes between the sector divisions and the field offices could be produced.

One starting point will be to learn from experience gained in the last 2–4 years of working with the different categories of field offices. In this, offices with full delegation are important, but not the only category to consider.

Action: The client has established a group to work with relevant parts of these issues and the issue of management tools. Representatives of Sida's three forums are participating in this group. Representatives of the field are linked to the group. The Action team will participate in the working group. The group will initially focus on the overall vision and descriptions of roles and profiles for the field offices and for the regional and sector departments based on the three categories of field offices. Other parts of the above-mentioned issues will be solved through a long-term process of dialogue and discussions at all departments.

B. Management tools

Sida probably has most of the management tools that are needed for the planning, management and follow-up of development programmes. Rather than develop new tools the ambition shall be to develop existing ones. However, as mentioned above, the tools need to be adapted in order to make them suitable for an increasingly decentralised organisation.

In a decentralised organisation, it is even more important that the instructions, plans and decisions that guide our work are clear and transparent so that all members of staff understand the goals, priorities and duties of the various units involved. Also, Sida's management needs to have sufficient opportunities to communicate goals, directives etc. to the field. Likewise, the follow-up reports from the field must give adequate information on the implementation of the development programmes. Therefore, the focus of the Action Programme should be on the format of country plans, directives for the annual planning of work and country plans, follow-up routines and systems etc., in order to verify that the field offices are properly equipped to assume the responsibilities and obligations delegated to them.

Embassies with "full" delegation will be responsible for the initiation and preparation of new development projects/programmes. For reasons

of quality control and to ensure that full use is made of Sida's sector knowledge, it is important to establish routines in order to make sure that, when relevant, other departments are involved in this process. The preparation plan (beredningsplan) could become an important steering document, in which the responsible unit, together with other relevant units, decides what should be done and who should do it. Likewise, the annual work plans could constitute an opportunity for the divisions involved at Sida to agree on the content of the programmes. Instructions for annual reviews, both at portfolio and programme level, might also be used more extensively to direct activities.

The departments concerned also need to discuss how working methods, sector policies etc. need to be structured and made available for a more decentralised organisation. The departments involved need to look into ways of establishing forms of management and control of a more normative character.

There might also be a need for further directives in the form of personal commissions (uppdrag). The commissions should be formulated in such a way that the recipients are able to acknowledge their receipt. Their content, form and relation to other directives need to be worked out. As far as possible, they should have the same basic format in all regions.

Directives given by Sida to embassies are transformed by local regulations into methods and routines to guide the embassies' work. It is important that these by-laws fully reflect the intentions of Sida's directives. This includes delegation of responsibilities, decision-making procedures, access to information, participation in meetings, etc. The work of the embassies is guided by annual work plans, by-laws, human resource development plans etc. The annual work plans should reflect the priorities and directives laid down in the steering documents and the strategic choices made by the field office.

Action: The issue will be included in the working group dealing with issue A) redefining the roles. The group will initially focus on –

- (i) development of country plans with a view to cover the "missing middle" between country strategies and country plans in their present form,
- (ii) coherent descriptions of the three basic categories of delegation,
- (iii) improved instruments for directives, feed-back, reporting, commissions, etc.

C. Instrument for quality assurance

A decentralised organisation requires clear and transparent management tools, systems and routines for directives, planning, follow-up and control. In the current process of preparing development programmes, Sida has various forums that act as checkpoints and platforms for dialogues in order to guarantee the quality of a number of aspects of our work. A large number of people are involved in these dialogues during the preparation and decision-making process. This critical mass at HQ, which contributes to guaranteeing quality, is not easily established in the field. It is thus important to establish how these forums and checkpoints should be used in a decentralised system.

Extended delegation to the field enhances the possibility for quality assurance since the field has good knowledge of local conditions and close contacts with partner representatives. On the other hand, it reduces the role of the departments in Stockholm in the decision-making processes. There is a need for methods to ensure that the knowledge of sector subjects, international experience, political priorities, etc, which is probably greater in Stockholm, is taken into consideration. Even large embassies are small in comparison with Sida in Stockholm – and the embassies therefore need to receive adequate support from headquarters.

Sida's system for quality control has therefore been reviewed and made suitable for the organisational changes envisioned in the plan of action. It now includes both (i) the need of field offices of an adequate system of quality control; and (ii) a central system to review and improve the quality control system at each embassy. This issue is also linked to the reassessment of our management tools, which should constitute an important component in these checkpoints.

The new quality assessment facility is based on a dialogue between representatives of Sida in Stockholm and the field offices. It covers aspects of Sida's different work cycles (Sida at Work). Parts of the work done in the inspections made by the field controller now form relevant parts of the new Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM). A QAM-visit should always be agreed on jointly by HQ and the field offices, and be carried out in the form of a dialogue between two partners.

Action: The Chief Controller has worked out a format for a QAM in consultation with all concerned. The Director General has decided that a programme for strengthening of quality assurance of Sida field operations shall be implemented (GD79/02). The programme is led by a Director reporting to the head of the Africa Department. The programme focuses during its first two years on embassies with full delegation and those that are planned for full delegation. The main focus on the QA is to a) ensure that embassies with full delegation are well acquainted with, utilize and follow Sida's steering documents, policies and methods; b) ensure that local quality assurance systems are in place; c) ensure good cooperation between relevant departments at Sida HQ and embassy; d) ensure that the embassy staff at all levels has relevant capacity and competence in realative to the requirements needed. The QAM function will be evaluated after two years. Issues regarding quality control at the embassies will also be part of the commission on roles and management tools.

D. Human resource management

With the increase in the responsibilities of the field offices, it is fundamental to address the issue of the human resources available at the offices. The present system of allocating resources might need to be reassessed in the context of the Vision. What would be the ideal mix of long-term and short-term staff, locally recruited staff vs. expatriates etc. for an office with "full" delegation?

All locally employed members of staff at field offices are assets of great value to Sida. With their specific background, knowledge and experience, they contribute to improving the quality of Sida's work. As a first step, priority will be given to measures that better utilise the potential of the locally recruited programme officers. This group of locally recruited officers is a heterogeneous group. Some of them were initially employed as secretaries while others came as sector specialists. Some have been with Sida for more than 25 years, while some were recruited recently. In 2002, there were approximately 75 locally recruited programme officers at 30 field offices. Within 2 to 3 years this figure may have doubled.

In the Action Programme, Sida will focus on this group in particular and discuss what needs to be done for the category as a whole, and on an individual basis, to improve their capacity to contribute to our results. At present, many locally recruited officers are left outside many important processes and are continuously discriminated against due to the language barrier. The issues to address include aspects concerning attitudes to-

wards locally recruited employees at HQ and embassies, and ways and means of involving them in a better, deeper and more extensive way in all aspects of the work. One starting point will be to establish definitions of the various categories of locally employed staff. This will make it possible to address the different groups with appropriate measures.

A number of issues concerning manning in the field need to be reviewed: Should there be a form of “basic manning” for embassies with full delegation? How many officers with different professional expertise are needed at an embassy to create the critical mass necessary for the task? How many of these officers need to be expatriate staff and how many could be locally recruited? How many of the staff need to be posted on a long-term basis? How many can be replaced by short-term assignments? Do all embassies with full delegation need the supposed full establishment of a Sida Director, Economist, Head of Administration, Adm. Assistant and Socio-Cultural Adviser, and Programme Officers for all sectors in the portfolio? How many of the Programme Officers could hold regional functions in their professional field? Is it time to learn from experience and introduce the post of Controller and Gatekeeper of PLUS? Will we manage in the future with existing arrangements where responsibilities for IT are concerned? What functions can we share regionally with other Swedish embassies and/or locally with other donors?

More delegation to the field offices will have the effect that officers in the field will be given more responsibilities and obligations. This should be reflected in the job-descriptions. Existing diplomatic titles such as Counsellors, First Secretaries etc. may have to be reviewed in light of the new mandates.

Today, formal training is very much concentrated to HQ, and field staff only participate marginally, sometimes only on a random basis (when they happen to be at HQ). Frustration in the field is increasing and is especially high at field offices where many new staff are recruited locally. More training has to take place in the field on the initiative of the field. There may be a need for more resources for human resource development but, in the first place, more local initiatives are needed, as well as co-operation at regional level. These issues are addressed in the ongoing review.

Action: PEO has received a commission from the client of the Action Programme and will consult other divisions when necessary. The commission includes all the aspects of HRM/HRD discussed above and the work will be carried out in steps, starting with issues given highest priority. The work will be broken down into –

- (i) recruitment policy,
- (ii) policy for locally recruited programme officers,
- (iii) human resource development,
- (iv) working environment,
- (v) the future role for PEO,
- (vi) the role of the head of development cooperation.

E. Communication capacity and IT-support

A Communication Vision.

The Vision will have the effect that we have to change the way we communicate within Sida in that we must get better at including the field offices in all of Sida's processes, such as methods development, project work, etc. We need to review the ways in which we inform the field of various issues at Sida. We probably cannot assume that forwarding a document or posting information on the Intranet is sufficient to spread information to the field.

Furthermore, we need to get better at using the new technologies available. How many of us have tried to arrange a telephone conference in order to include somebody in the field? The issue of communication is, of course, closely related to the issue of language and we need to review our use of the English.

Action: INFO is working on a communication strategy, including an internal survey and the formation of a communication strategy group.

Information Technology.

In general, the IT standard at field offices is good and it is improving continuously. However, resources are a constraint and the speed of upgrading the field offices cannot keep pace with the demands made by the field, unless more resources are allocated. It is important that there are clear priorities for IT investments in the field. Also, as we become more dependent on the communication technology for our work, it is

important to have a strong support and maintenance organisation for the field offices.

Today, it is possible for some field offices to borrow video facilities locally from World Bank Offices. Experience of this kind of direct communication between Sida headquarters and the field is positive. It is proposed that all embassies with full delegation be provided with their own equipment of this type as soon as possible. Better video facilities are also needed at HQ.

“Full” delegation makes it essential that the field offices are able to use PLUS, have direct bookkeeping, have access to Sida-Intranet to the same extent as HQ, and that communication is safe with a minimum of disturbances. Special emphasis needs to be given the inclusion of the field in INDIAN (=computerized handling of documents).

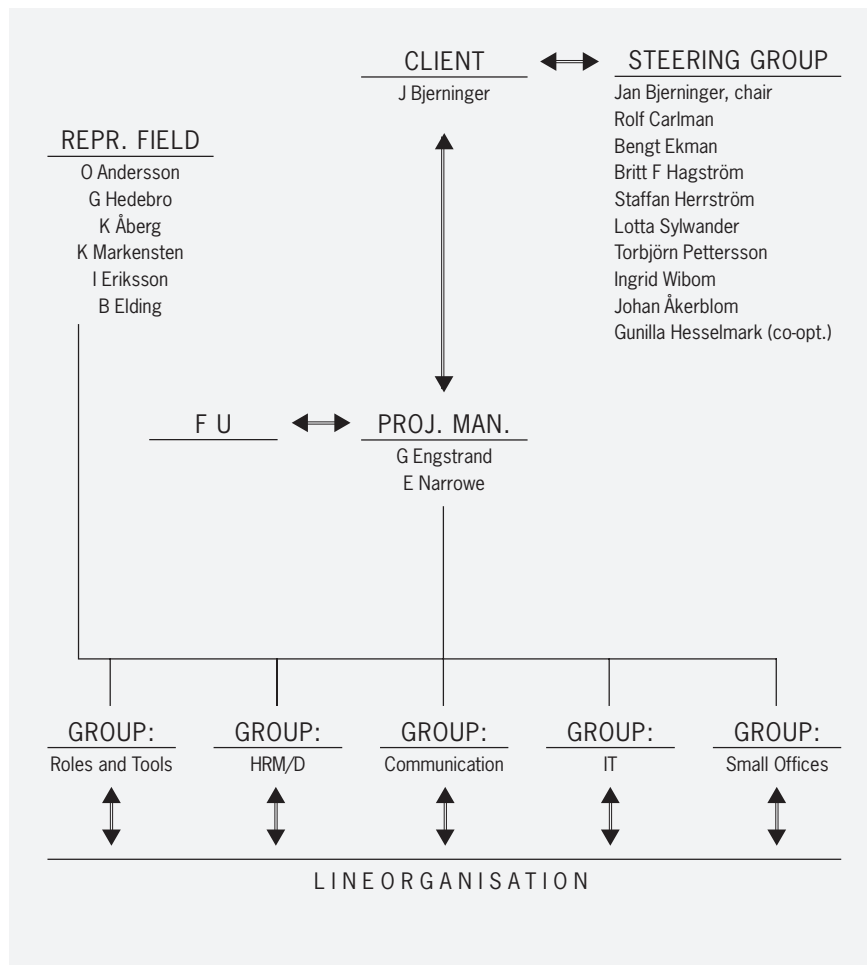
Action: EVU-IT presents a list of existing IT standards at all field offices, including a plan for continuous upgrading. A clear definition of roles in the IT field at Sida should also be proposed by EVU. EVU-IT also presents a proposal for procurement and installation of video equipment at embassies with full delegation. Improved co-ordination with FA/IT must be established. The support and maintenance organisation should also be reviewed.

F. Small field offices

In number, the most common field offices today are the small offices. This will also remain the case in the future. The small office is normally a separate Sida office manned by one or two expatriate staff or Sida officers at a Swedish Embassy, together with a few locally employed staff. These offices have special requirements where HQ is concerned in that they need a great deal of support and back up from Stockholm. It is essential that there is an effective and efficient support function, not only at FU, but also at other departments.

Action: FU makes a follow up of experience gained hitherto and presents a proposal for an effective support function at Sida HQ.

The action programme organisation



The organisation is not a plain project organisation. The organisation is set up to respond to the need to have a structure, which involves as many as possible in the line organisation. The implementation of the vision is ongoing. The Action Programme is therefore part of the process of making the vision operational.

All departments need to set aside personnel to take part in working groups, reference groups and the steering group. Staff in the field must be involved, one person as the co-ordinator in each region and at least one person at each of the embassies with full delegation and/or many locally recruited officers. There will be need for both internal and external consultancies.

Important tasks of the project management and lessons learnt:

The very first action has been to launch the Vision and the Action Programme. The objective is to make all members of staff at Sida aware of the content of the Vision and the Action Programme and to invite all staff to give their views on the subjects included in the action programme. A specific communication group has been established at INFO and the group will report continuously to the project team.

Sida should also hold seminars etc. with external speakers in order to learn from experience gained of decentralisation by other organisations. These persons could come from other Swedish organisations or companies or represent other donor organisations.

The project team will be responsible for reviewing experience gained at the delegated field offices during project implementation and for disseminating this information throughout the organisation.

Action: The Action Programme Team will report on the progress of the various working groups and on other issues of importance for the project. It will also be responsible for co-ordinating the various working groups and for keeping these groups and others informed of the processes in the rest of the organisation that are linked to the Vision.

Time schedule:

The project organisation has been established. The first phase of the Action Programme runs up to end of June 2004. Seminars will be held at all departments in Stockholm. At least one donor colleague organisation will be visited each year. All regions should be visited.

Appendix I

The vision (for 2004) as quantified at the outset of the action program

At a Sida Management Workshop in December 2001, the four regional departments presented draft visions of delegation to the field offices in the regions of Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. The Sida Vision for all field offices then read as follows (this could change due to political and other considerations and should thus be regarded as provisional):

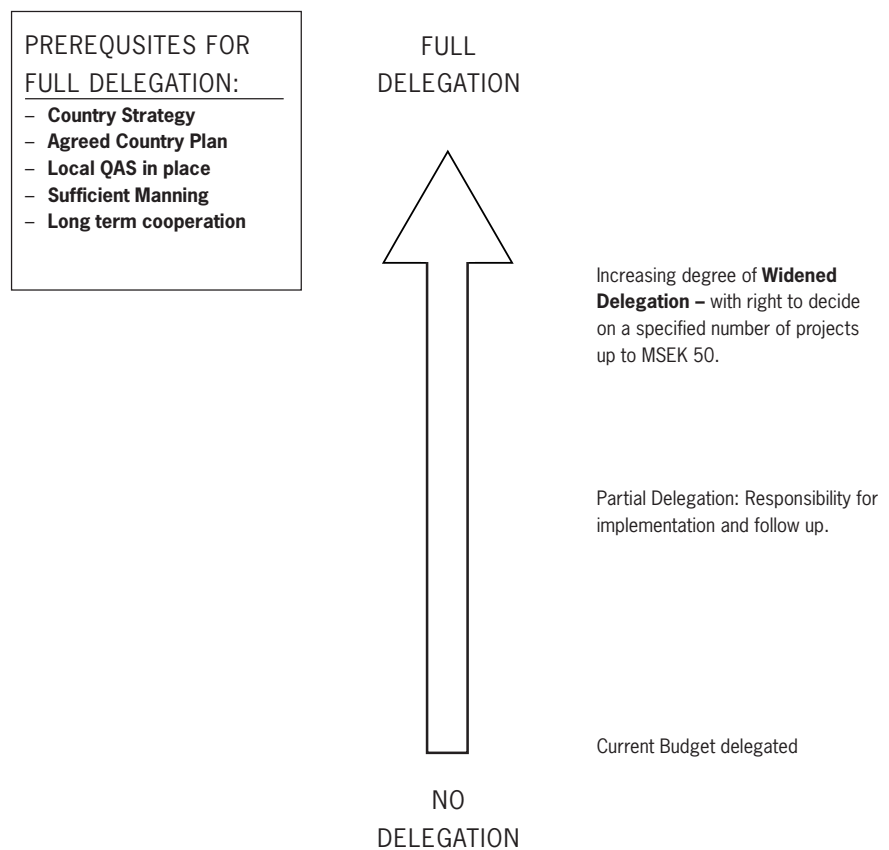
Widened delegation	Partial delegation	No or little delegation	
Embassies in charge of development co-operation or with a separate section for Development Co-operation Section (linked to an embassy in another country)			Individual Sida employees at an embassy
2004 = 15	2004 = 6	2004 = 10	2004 = 14
India			
Uganda			Reg. Indonesia
Kenya			Angola
Bangladesh			Ivory Coast
Sri Lanka			Reg. Thailand
Ethiopia		Afghanistan	Reg. Egypt
Laos		Reg. Caucasus/CA	Colombia
Zambia		Eritrea	Russia
Honduras		China	Ukraine
Bolivia	Rwanda	Macedonia	Serbia
South Africa	Gaza/WB	Albania	Croatia
Mozambique	Cambodia	Kosovo	Bosnia
Nicaragua	Zimbabwe	Moldova	Cuba
Vietnam	Guatemala	Mali	Senegal
Tanzania	Namibia	Burkina Faso	Peru

Bold = Situation 2003 Ordinary = Planned situation 2004

(N.b. This table may be revised as the circumstances require)

Appendix II

Different categories of delegation



Appendix III

ACTION PLAN; Vision for a strengthened field orientation at Sida														2002-10-23	
			OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAJ	JUN				
Project Document			Gd..		..Decision		..Distr.								
Communicate the vision			Interviews			OH-set	Intranet	Seminars	Seminars	Follow up !!					
Action Sub-Programs															
Roles and Tools		Memo	ToR-Group	Group meetings and other activities					Draft Report						
Changed Roles		Work at Department and Division level						Synopsis							
Dev.Info.Capacity				ToR;Comm.Plan				Draft Plan							
Communication-IT				Resource Allocation											
Human Resources Man/Dev				ToR;HRM/HRD				1st Report		2nd Report					
QAM/QAF		Decision Gd Sept 02								Evaluation AFRA, Sept 2004					
Small Field Offices				FU; ToR Nov 02				Draft Report							

Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.



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