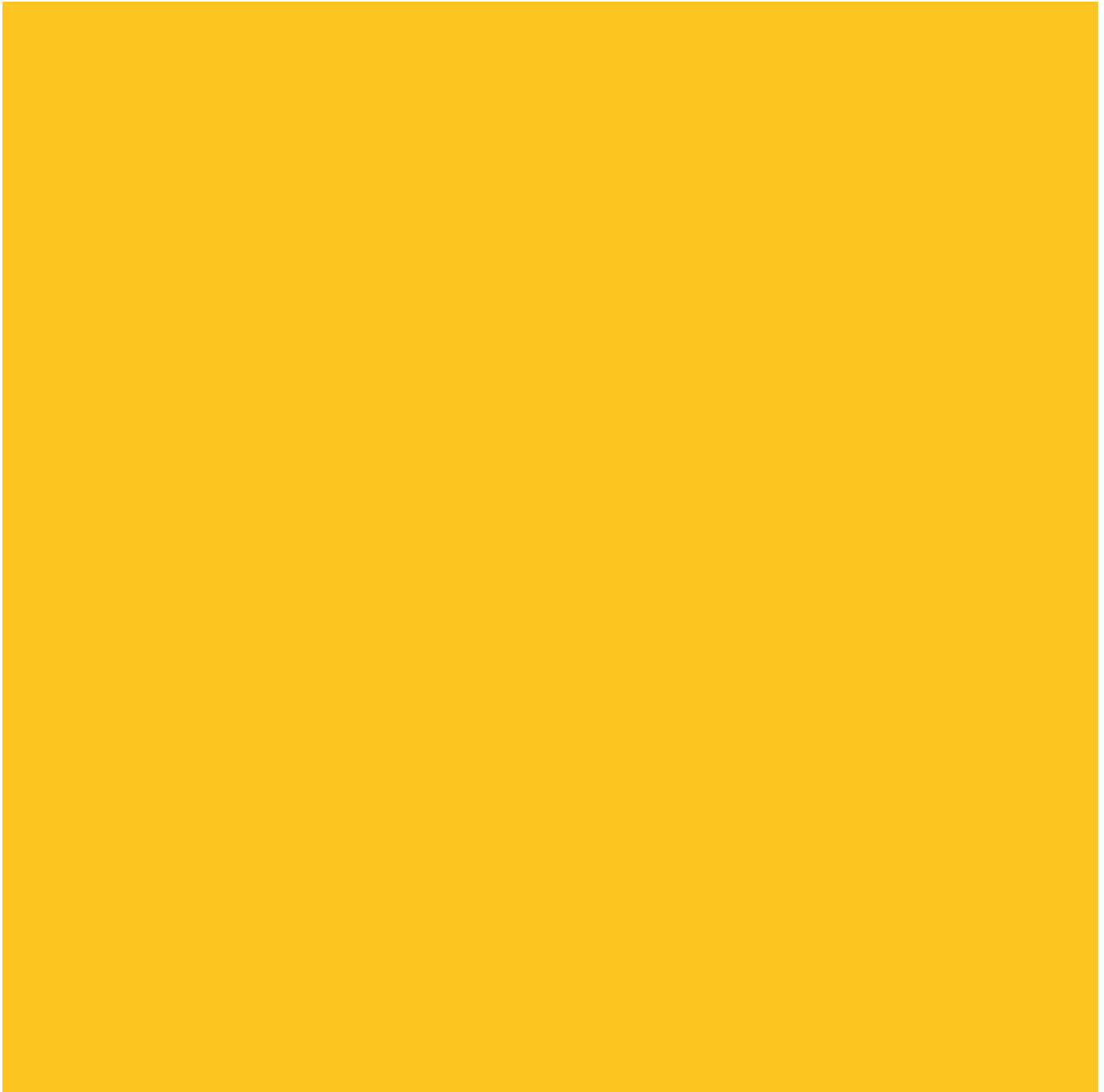


Current Thinking on the Two Perspectives of the PGD



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Preface

Sida's approach to the perspectives within the PGD and their relationship to the goal, perspectives and central elements was described in the paper, *Goal, perspectives and central components* adopted by the Director-General as a complement to *perspectives on poverty*.

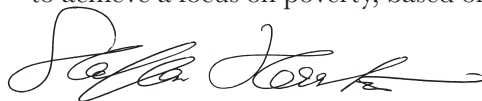
This Working Paper offers the reader more of an in-depth view of this approach, in which the principles of *non-discrimination, participation, transparency, and accountability* play a central role. The perspectives are to be emphasised and made an integrated part of the efforts for a clearer focus on poverty, rather than being treated as separate tracks. This approach appears natural already, as the perspectives not only act as starting points for poverty reduction, but have also proved to be effective tools in orienting development cooperation toward poverty issues.

The perspectives should thus be given increased relative importance in *Sida's management and human resource development*. The strategic prioritisations for 2007 now state that "we should increasingly use poor people's perspectives on development and the rights perspective, both to ensure the relevance in our contributions and to anchor our own professional actions in the realities of poor women and men". Each department and embassy has also been instructed to report at least one measure or process in their activities that includes the perspectives of the poor.

Even within *Sida's processes*, especially the project management cycle and the preparation of proposed cooperation strategies, the perspectives play a central roll. Country level poverty analysis and programme-based forms of support are areas where the perspectives should appear early on and be treated as an integrated part of the work, rather than something to be added late in the process or as an afterthought.

Finally, *Sida's roles* should be based on the perspectives. There is a focus on the dialogue role as this relates to the contacts that Sida has with actors in Sweden, in the cooperation countries and the donor community. This role deals with Sida's ability to conduct a dialogue regarding rights issues, and gives increased focus and more importance to the two perspectives in the dialogue with other actors, particularly in the efforts to implement the Paris Declaration.

It is my hope that this Working Paper, which consists of a report from a project group at Sida, can serve as inspiration in our continuing efforts to achieve a focus on poverty, based on both of the PGD's perspectives.



Staffan Herrström
Ac POM

Summary

The purpose of this working paper is to discuss the two perspectives in Sweden's Policy for Global Development (PGD) based on the measures that Sida will need to initiate and implement in order to best integrate the perspectives throughout the organisation. The need for this work was expressed in a Director General decision in 2004. The two perspectives are:

- Poor people's perspectives on development¹
- The rights perspective

The entire organisation should own the work regarding the two perspectives. In order for these to affect the entire organisation, measures are needed on all levels, both purely organisational ones, and those relating to all of the processes that Sida uses in its development cooperation. This paper seeks to focus on some of the specific measures that need to be implemented so that the perspectives have this kind of effect. The discussion contains a total of 27 suggestions² in the following areas:

- *Management levels and human resource development*
- *Sida's processes (cooperation strategy, project management cycle)*
- *Sida's roles (in the dialogue as well as regarding coordination and harmonisation within the international community)*

We emphasise that Sida should pay attention not only to results, but also increasingly on the quality of the *process* that leads to policies and decisions in development cooperation. The principles of *non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability* should guide not only the results, but the process, as well. As dialogue serves as a central instrument in advancing the basic values of the perspectives, increased ability to use dialogue is desirable. Applying the perspectives also requires greater attention to power issues and power structures in our partner countries, access to disaggregated statistics and qualitative information. The actual impact of the values represented by the perspectives will be determined to a large extent by their inclusion in the multilateral work areas.

¹ The perspectives of the poor has been reformulated in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as *Poor people's perspectives on development*, which was approved by the political leadership.

² See appendix 1 for a list of these proposals.

1. Introduction

This working paper originates from the project that the POM head of department commissioned in January 2005³, the primary purpose of which was to clarify what needs to be done within Sida's development cooperation to incorporate both the perspectives of the Swedish policy for global development (PGD)⁴. These are the *Rights perspective* and the *Poor People's perspective on development*. This project was based on a previous Director General decision requesting that "a limited conceptual effort be made regarding the rights perspective and the perspectives of the poor" (GD 126/04).⁵

This working paper, with its discussion and proposals, is primarily directed to the Director General and senior management of Sida, for decisions authorising further measures.

Structure

This paper is structured so that the reader is first given a brief background and overview of the PGD and relevant documents that led up to this new policy, as well as a full view of the international contexts within which the two perspectives must be considered.

Chapter Two discusses the perspectives in greater detail, and focuses how they have so far been applied within Sida. Examples of existing application are included to illustrate some of the total experience of working with the two perspectives that Sida already possesses. This section also discusses the principles that should serve as guidelines in efforts relating to those perspectives.

Chapter Three examines the practical steps that Sida needs to take in order to apply and integrate the two perspectives in development cooperation, based on the various levels, processes and roles of the organisation.

Finally, the two perspectives and the recommendations are linked to a vision of the future role of Sida with the PGD, including the goal of

³ See Terms of Reference POM 15/05 where the specific formulation states that "to clarify what is needed to satisfactorily integrate the two perspectives in Sida's development cooperation, and to contribute to existing development processes at Sida so that these efficiently consider the perspectives.."

⁴ See *Shared Responsibility: Sweden's policy for global development*, Govt. Bill 2002/03:122.

⁵ The commission for the project was given to a small project group, initially chaired by Inger Axell, POM, and also consisting of Lisa Fredriksson, DESO/DESA, Esse Nilsson, POM and Gösta Werner, INEC/IF. After Inger Axell took over as multi-lateral coordinator at POM on 15 September 2005, the other participants of the group took over the responsibility for doing the final edit of the working paper.

development cooperation, as a source of inspiration and guidance in international efforts to reduce poverty and enhance aid effectiveness.

Three important documents: PGD, PoP and UD-GUs working paper⁶

Sida has been working to eradicate poverty for 40 years. Thus, poverty and injustice are no new issues. Now, however, they are subject of a *clearer focus*, as they serve as the basis for *Sweden's policy for global development*, which, in December 2003, was adopted by the Swedish Parliament through the Government Bill, *Shared Responsibility: Sweden's policy for global development (2002/03:122)*. The perspectives of poor people on development and the rights perspective thus support the goal of the Swedish development cooperation, which is:

“to contribute to making it possible for poor people to improve their quality of life.”

As all policy areas, Swedish development cooperation should be based on, and permeated by the two perspectives. The rights perspective includes democracy, good governance and human rights, with gender equality and the rights of the child as key areas. These aspects are also included in poor people's perspectives on development, which also means that poor people should not be viewed as a homogenous group, that poor women, men and children must be seen as individuals, and that development should be something arising from within a society, created through the participation of poor people.

Perspectives on poverty (PoP) is Sida's own policy document that establishes the agency's approach to poverty based on a multi-dimensional concept of poverty that includes lack of power, choice and material resources⁷. PoP emphasises that a rights perspective, as well as the active participation by poor people are conditions for poverty reduction. The document and policy are well in line with both the basic philosophy and goal of the PGD.

In its publication, “Goal, perspectives and central components” (a supplement to PoP) Sida begins with the Government and Parliamentary policy decisions, and explains how the goal, perspectives and central elements relate to one another. A rights perspective was found to include issues in the central element of democracy and good governance, human rights and gender equality, but that it is more than the sum of these main elements.

Poor people's perspectives on development present a great challenge for ensuring that the problems, needs and interests of poor people are given a genuine and undistorted impact on development cooperation. It's a question of improving the possibilities poor people have to express their needs and advance their interests.

The purpose of the Foreign Affairs Ministry-GU's working paper about PGD, *Sweden's policy for global development: the rights perspective and the perspectives of poor people on development (2005)*, is to clarify what it would mean to broadly apply the two perspectives in all relevant policy areas in the Government offices. The paper declares that human rights, as it is generally defined internationally, represent fundamental global values.

⁶ These three papers further develop the analysis and proposed measures previously presented in the Government Communications on democracy and human rights in Sweden's development cooperation (SKR 1997/98:76), the Rights of the Child as a Perspective in Development Cooperation (SKR 2001/02:186), Human Rights in Swedish Foreign Policy (SKR 2003/04:20), and Sida's previous action programme, “Justice and Peace” (1998).

⁷ Perspectives on Poverty. Sida, 2002.

Poor people's perspectives on development means an expansion of the globally agreed goal of poverty reduction. The report is based on the content of the PGD, but in addition, underscores that even though the individual is the focus here, the poor people's perspectives on development, as a rule, must be dealt with at higher levels of society and social organisation. In practice, this can mean that a group of poor countries have a shared "perspective" on the issue of trade restrictions, or that children in a poor slum area have a "perspective" on their poverty, by virtue of being children. Even though considerations other than the needs of individuals must as a rule determine policy, before making any concrete decision, we must acquire a clear understanding of the meaning and consequences of the perspectives. Tension and goal conflicts must always be analysed, clarified and be made the subject of conscientious and thoroughly analysed choices.

Global developments

Until the beginning of the 1990s, there was only limited dialogue between people working with aid issues, and those who fought for increased respect for human rights. The agenda for development focused primarily on the efficient transfer of resources, economic development and increased social welfare. Those working with human rights concentrated primarily on civil and political rights and their violation by governments, and thus sought to strengthen the international system of norms. Today, we can see how the rights perspective brings together a number of areas. One of these is based on the international legal framework, another focuses on experiences of how a good aid programme can be conducted, and a third consists of the many social, cultural and political movements and debate venues both in the South and North.

The development agenda and rights agenda thus constructively converged during the 1990s, which is particularly expressed in the final documents of the various United Nations global conferences which repeatedly underscored the connection between peace, human rights and development. An increased emphasis on economic, social and cultural rights and a greater understanding of the necessity of viewing all rights in a unified context have made the human rights conventions into important and useful tools in development cooperation. Respect for human rights is also underscored in the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000. As a result, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should always be viewed in light of that declaration. World leaders, meeting at the United Nations' most recent conference held in New York in September 2005, agreed to intensify efforts to reduce poverty, achieve the MDGs, and increase the respect for human rights.

Today, the entire United Nations system, as well as many bilateral donors, has an official right-based approach to development and poverty reduction. However, these vary in focus, and a great deal remains to be accomplished in their implementation.

2. The Two Perspectives

The two perspectives are relatively well established at Sida, and a good deal of work is already proceeding in various parts of the organisation. This working paper focuses on areas that must be enhanced and given more substance. The proposals are based on the broad-based impetus characterising the two perspectives.

The central elements of human rights, gender equality, democracy and good governance are naturally part of the rights perspective, but this perspective is broader than the sum of its components. There are a great many proposals which would be able to guide efforts to improve these central elements, but this paper will focus on the rights perspective as a basis for all Swedish development cooperation, and will therefore remain at a more general level.

Similarly, we can see that through the years, poor people's perspectives on development have affected Sida's work through a variety of projects focused on poverty. As previously noted, the major difference is that the poor people's perspectives on development additionally focus on poor individuals, and gives recognition to their experiences of poverty. This concerns poor women, men and children, poor people in cities and in the countryside, and those who support themselves in the formal or informal economy. The individual must be made visible and be recognised. The guide for this is the perspective, needs, interests and conditions of the individual. In these processes, poor women, men and children will be active citizens who make demands on the decision-makers.

There is an important difference between the perspectives. The rights perspective is based on an internationally accepted framework, while there is no similarly clear framework for the poor people's perspectives. The latter is based on an individual's *experience* of poverty and the varying ability of individuals to take themselves out of that poverty. In a way, one can view the UN Millennium Declaration and the MDGs as a framework for taking poor people's perspectives into consideration. However, it should be underscored that the two perspectives both overlap and reinforce each other, and together form a framework for assessment and analysis. They can be seen as approaches and entry points to create conditions for change in the partner countries. The perspectives sharpen Sida's poverty focus, thereby serving as a basis for Sida's efforts in its various roles

During the years, Sida has acquired a broad base of knowledge and experience of poverty issues, through its mandate to reduce poverty and

injustice. The two perspectives are firmly rooted in the tradition of solidarity, poverty and injustice issues, which throughout the years, induced Sida to increasingly promote social mobilisation and participation, development from below, equality and ownership.

Fundamental principles⁸

The following principles have been identified as providing guidance for Sida's efforts with the two perspectives, and a greater focus on the process:

- A. Non-discrimination
- B. Participation
- C. Transparency
- D. Accountability

A. The core of the rights concept is the idea that all individuals have the same value and rights. *Non-discrimination* thus becomes a fundamental point of departure that prompts Sida to more clearly identify specific categories and groups of poor people as target groups and stakeholders in concrete contributions. Excluded, marginalised and discriminated groups must be given special attention, and must be identified. This requires access to statistical information that highlights the situation for the population in general, as well as for the specific groups.

Making poor women, men, girls and boys visible does not only require quantitative statistics, but also needs qualitative information. The qualitative analysis is often based on ethnographic material or methods of data collection that involve poor people, either as the communicators of the information to be analysed, or as data gatherers in a specific area. Qualitative information is valuable to highlight the individual behind the quantitative analysis, and for understanding the social relations, processes and values of a society.

B. The two perspectives are based on the pre-condition that women and men, and girls and boys must be given the opportunity to participate in, and influence, the decision-making process that affect them. *Participation* at various levels has always been an integrated part of the work of Sida. Mutual understanding and shared methods, however, have not always been easy to find.

Sida and many other development actors previously viewed *participation* as a way or method of satisfying the project objectives, and ensuring sustainable results. A broader approach is becoming apparent at the international scene, as participation is increasingly being viewed as a goal in itself, and a way to increase the awareness of those whom the assistance is intended to reach, increasing their influence, so that they can demand change and social justice.

Like the two perspectives, the goal of development cooperation is based on the view that participation both in decisions that affect private life and the governing of the country is a human right. Participation is also the key to demanding respect for all other rights. Participation thus becomes a core issue in the implementation of the PGD. Participation can be direct or indirect. There should be increased attention paid to the

⁸ The fact that these four principles have been identified as central and basic ones, does not mean that additional principles cannot or should not be expressed. The idea of using these principles to structure our thoughts was first brought up in the context of method work at Sida Stockholm in the beginnings of this decade, and was then used as the basis of practical work involving the MAINIAC programme in Kenya. The Government also included these principles as guidelines in the Government Bill regarding the PGD.

legitimacy and representativeness of those who claim to represent poor individuals and groups. The importance of participation for justice and meaningful conditions relate to all levels of society (both within the development and political processes and in formal and informal networks). Sida can therefore begin to apply the two perspectives by developing an increased understanding of the mechanisms and processes that promote broad-based participation, as well as the development of methods for meaningful and informed participation.

In the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the partner countries endorse the strengthening of the domestic consultation process, participatory approaches and the involvement of a broad spectrum of participants in the formulation and evaluation of the development efforts, including the macroeconomic processes.

C. The right to information is a condition for active participation in the different functions of society. *Transparency* in society are cornerstones of a just society, and are therefore of central importance to the two perspectives. The reporting of the various measures taken by the state (including local organs) shall be documented, public and accessible to the citizens. Opportunities for citizens to read public documents (e.g. the national budget) should be investigated and strengthened. In order to hold decision-makers at local or central levels accountable, citizens must stay informed. The fight against corruption, too, requires transparency.

D. One fundamental dimension of a rights perspective is the issue of *accountability*. People must be able to hold decision-makers accountable. The human rights framework imposes unambiguous responsibility on ratifying states. The obligation for states to fulfil the human rights conventions shall be reviewed and monitored. There must also be judicial methods of complaining of government failures to fulfil their obligations. In cases of decentralisation, the local decision-making bodies are considered part of the state structure, and must therefore satisfy the obligations made by central government regarding human rights, particularly the economic, social and cultural rights as the central government has. By ratifying conventions protecting human rights, governments have voluntarily allowed themselves to be examined, based on the principles discussed in this paper.

Need for increased understanding of power

The work according to these principles also requires a greater understanding of the formal and informal power structures in society. In order to contribute to the realisation of the rights of poor people, we must first understand more about power and power relationships. Who has power, who does not have it, and first and foremost, how to effectively challenge unjust power relations and unfair structures. Powerlessness, in the view of Sida, is part of how poverty expresses itself. One benefit of the two perspectives is that they compel an analysis of power relationships. These power relationships determine who is included and who is excluded from the opportunity to demand their rights, as well as the possibility of an individual or a group to affect and determine their own development. When gaining an understanding of power in a society, it is also important to understand the various arenas and levels of citizen participation. The recognition that poor people are active right-holders, rather than passive recipients, is a challenge to the existing power situation.

What has Sida done up until now?

Since the end of the 1990's, Sida has invested in internal training on democracy and human rights, including the rights of women and children, and some methodological development. A questionnaire to be used in country analyses, as well as a manual on the rights of the child in development cooperation, have been produced.⁹ Analyses of power relationships and power structures have been prepared for the formulation of country strategies for Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Mali, Kenya and Tanzania. Sida's gender equality training programmes have had a clear focus on both poverty and on rights, based on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In addition to Sida's own employees in Stockholm and at the embassies, local consultants have also been able to participate in these courses.

Sida also supports international NGOs that work with the development of methods and tools to give increase the impact of the two perspectives, as well as the work being done within the UN-system. Sida supported a workshop in May 2003 at which the rights perspective in the UN country analyses and country strategies was discussed.¹⁰ That meeting resulted in the adoption of "A Common Understanding of a Human Rights Based Approach to Programming", which is a very valuable tool that both promotes consensus among United Nations organisations, and contributes to advancing the work at country level.

Some of the most innovative projects relating to the two perspectives can be found within the MAINIAC (Mainstreaming in Action) project in Kenya. The purpose of that project, established at the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi in 2003 was to integrate the principles of non-discrimination, participation, accountability, transparency in all sectors of Swedish development cooperation. Close cooperation has been developed with representatives of the Kenyan state, Kenya's national MR Commission and the Kenyan civil society. Work is taking place in the following sectors: roads, water, rural development, governance, the legal sector and agriculture.

Several divisions at Sida have already begun internal processes to integrate the two perspectives in their own operations. Thus, Sida's educational division, for example, concretized what a rights perspective would mean for the educational sector, while SEKA/FOS and DESA have cooperated regarding the rights perspective in conflict management.

Sida's two latest agency-wide policies, on gender equality "Promoting Gender Equality", and on peace and security, "Promoting Peace and Security", also are based on both perspectives.

⁹ In the light of the PGU and Sida's new tools for poverty analysis at the country level, these will need to be revised.

¹⁰ United Nations Common Country Assessments, CCA, and United Nations Development Assistance Framework, UNDAF.

3. What Must Sida Do in the Future?

The Paris Declaration reinforces and clarifies the international direction by its clear position in favour of sector programmes, general budget support, harmonisation and uniformity among donor countries. Swedish policy, in general, is formulated to comply with the international agenda, but needs continued consideration and adjustments in order to work together with other actors on the international scene. Some of the questions that repeatedly appear at Sida are as follows:

- What do we do with the two perspectives when we are no longer expected to work at project level, directly with poor people, but rather supply our assistance in the form of programme support and general budget support?
- How do we apply the two perspectives in our practical work? In other words: What must be done to get the two perspectives to permeate all parts of our work (planning, programming, implementation and monitoring) and all operational areas, as well as serve as a basis for the performance of all of Sida's roles (i.e. the analysis, dialogue and financier roles).
- How can Sida help in applying the PGD in international contexts?

The following are proposals regarding practical steps that Sida needs to take to apply and integrate the two perspectives in development cooperation, based on the various levels, processes and roles of the organisation.

Sida's management and human resource development

The recently adopted "*Sida action plan 2005–2006 for increased poverty focus*" is based on the project "*From words to action*", which in turn is an attempt to operationalise both "*perspectives on poverty*" and parts of the PGD. The action plan shows two approaches:

1. Clear leadership and guidance by line managers
2. Learning processes and human resource development

Some of the recommendations contained in the action plan coincide with those presented in this report, and both papers consistently underscore the importance of having all levels at Sida work with poverty issues and meaningful incentives for change. A clearer focus on poverty, which includes a clear emphasis on the PGD, and thereby on the two perspectives, requires commitment from both Sida's senior management and the

departments, divisions, embassies and field offices. In other words, from the entire Sida organisation.

This requires a complete understanding of the two perspectives, both as to their substance and their application to all Sida-administered aid.

One practical example of this comprehensive view is the MAINIAC project at the Swedish embassy in Nairobi, where the following *internal* factors were identified as crucial:

- The commitment of the management and its demand for results;
- The linkage between politics and development cooperation;
- The presence of a critical mass of committed staff at the department or embassy;
- The allocation of sufficient time and resources.

Sida's processes

Development requires a focus on primarily two things: *results* and the *process* to achieve those results, and ensure that these are lasting. Both the result and the process should reflect the two perspectives. GD has recently initiated the project "Management for results for poor people" (2006), to promote a results-based approach at Sida, that would permeate all activities from planning, implementation and evaluation.

Cooperation strategy and project management cycle

The two perspectives have been discussed in several strategic documents that deal with cooperation strategies and project preparation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' report *Guidelines for cooperation strategies* states that "The strategy should indicate clearly and precisely how the goal of development cooperation shall be reached, and how perspectives and central elements shall be considered" (UD 2005/24624/GU:31).

The updating of Sida at Work (SaW) has included the integration of the previous *Sharpening the poverty focus in programmes and projects supported by Sida – preliminary guidelines from POM*, published by POM. SaW thus indicates that the two perspectives are meant to be integrated in all of Sida's activities. This regulation also applies to the work the project committees conduct on quality assurance.

POM's *Country Level Analysis for Poverty Reduction* (2005) provides guidance for an integrated analysis of multi-dimensional poverty. The intent is that this guiding document should be consulted as part of the preparation of a new country analysis, which, in turn, forms the basis for formulating future cooperation strategies.

The social aspects of the poverty analysis are especially important with regard to poor people's perspectives on development. This perspective represents an *approach* based on how poor people perceive their reality and conditions, their capacity and conditions which are matters for Sida to examine, interpret and highlight in development cooperation, as well as in the dialogue with government officials and representatives of the partner countries. This approach makes people living in poverty into important and active participants in developing their society, and utilises their voice, abilities and knowledge at all levels. It is this micro level that is the point of departure of poor people's perspectives on development. The dynamic direction is from the bottom up. This is also the level where we can clearly understand how poor people's living conditions are affected by participation or exclusion, and the extent to which they are able to, or allowed to, benefit from the gains from the processes of change.

Sida must act to understand, interpret and deal with poor people's perspectives on development, as described above, using the local community as its basis. Understanding the relevant circumstances and being able to propose practical and positive changes for these people requires thorough knowledge of the partner country and region, particularly because the discussion around an area such as human rights varies from one context to another. The existing deposit of knowledge must be expanded and improved through human resource development, both at Sida and in the partner country by means of support to special programmes.

The social analysis, as a part of poverty analysis, should be given more importance. This kind of analysis is based on social structures and relations in a society, and also takes into consideration power and political structures and relations (which can also be dealt with in a political analysis).

Social analysis, together with economic and political analysis, can provide a comprehensive view of how various structures in a society interact to produce a certain pattern. Examples of areas discussed in a social analysis include the social organisation and the social categories that make up a society, as well as the social and cultural belief systems that give a society a foundation and meaning. In addition, the analysis includes the social dynamics that influence and control the everyday life of poor people (participation, gender equality and power) and the social safety nets available. There must be an understanding of the assets and resources of poor people, especially social capital, as well as the interaction between formal and informal institutions and markets in order to understand how people are included or excluded. Finally, social analysis can lead to an understanding of the links between local and global relations, in areas where poor people play an active role (employment, environment and social movements).

A methodological project to develop a guide for the application of poor people's perspectives on development, and which is based on social analysis, has begun in Bangladesh in the autumn of 2005. However the development and understanding of methods that elucidate the links between the policy, macro and meso levels on one hand, and how contributions at these levels impact on the lives of poor women, men, girls and boys at the local (micro) level on the other hand, must be viewed as key areas. This is particularly true considering that Sida's assistance in the future is expected to consist increasingly of sector and budget support. Methods to consider include *Poverty and Social Impact Assessment, (PSIA)*, *pro-poor budget analysis* and *budget monitoring*. Within broader aid modalities, there is less of a direct connection between contributions and the target group. In order to make poor people's perspectives visible in this new aid architecture, separate and innovative tools are required. Sida must have its own expertise and capacity to perform and implement these analyses.

The lack of legal security affects poor people particularly. One especially serious aspect is the post-conflict situations, where lack of respect for the principles of law can result in crimes going unpunished. Many poor people assert that this lack of justice is one of the worst aspects of poverty. The feeling of arbitrariness creates a sense of powerlessness, and destroys faith in the future and entrepreneurial spirit. The lack of legal security also has crucial effects of the investment climate at both the macro and micro levels. Both agricultural and enterprise development requires that the private or in certain cases, collective rights of ownership and use are made secure.

Sida needs to increase its understanding of the significance of law in development. This refers to both the traditional legal systems and the

formal legal sector, as well as the links between them, and how they interact and influence each other.

Sida's roles

Sida's role as analyst has been described above in those processes where it is relevant. Sida's role as financier promotes good governance, anti-corruption and developing capacity. Dialogue too plays a major role in this. This working paper therefore primarily describes Sida's role in dialogue, both in the international debate on rights-based development cooperation and in donor harmonisation.

Dialogue

The PGD shows that human rights comprise a common, global values base. By ratifying the convention, virtually all countries in the world have committed themselves to a legally binding undertaking to respect, protect and live up to these rights. The values on which the articles of rights are based apply universally and are reflected in standards and legal perceptions represented in all major civilisations and religions. However, human rights must be experienced as being not only legal but also legitimate, particularly by those that they are intended to protect, the rights holders, but also by duty bearers, primarily government representatives.

Dialogue is an important tool for strengthening the international framework around human rights at the national level, and at the same time highlight the poor people's perspectives. All people are entitled to respect, wherever they were born and however they live. Dialogue must be conducted in an informed and skilful way. A balance must be struck between, on the one hand, *respectfulness* so that the rights, in spite of their basic universality, take many different forms, and on the other, *firmness* to prevent the undermining of the standards or dilution of the great progress that was made in the 1990s. In the same way, there must be awareness of how poverty manifests itself in a certain environment, and the emphasis must constantly be on the poor. Knowledge and careful preparation is vital, as well as a receptive, open and self-critical attitude. Even if the rights perspective and poor people's perspectives on development lead to a clear focus on groups that are marginalised and discriminated against, they do not automatically form a basis for prioritisation, and so political programmes, economic policy and administrative expertise must be utilised.

Finally, experience shows that in the practical work with development cooperation, it can be productive to use the principles above, i.e. non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability, as points of departure for discussions and dialogue, instead of unilaterally referring to convention texts.

The new Swedish development agenda laid down by the PGD reduces the importance of the traditional division at embassies and SDCs into a political aspect and a development cooperation aspect. Dialogue at political level – including discussions of human rights and strategic poverty reduction questions – becomes a natural part of the work for everyone employed in Swedish embassies/SDCs. Development policy and development cooperation are becoming increasingly integrated. This places great demands on all Sida employees in terms of both specific knowledge and dialogue technique.¹¹ Many Sida workers, not least field personnel, are calling for clearer guidance on how to handle dialogue in practice.

¹¹ See sources such as Jan Cedergren's report: "PGD and development cooperation". In addition, a project is being conducted through POM and INFO that is aimed at establishing how dialogue can be efficiently used in development cooperation.

It is vital that Sida remains conversant with, and applies, the information source created through the international monitoring system. For example, Sweden and Sida help to fund the activities of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, including special reporting bodies and other special mechanisms, as well as corresponding regional mechanisms. Sida can also contribute to that this system functions more smoothly by strengthening the partner countries' capacity to fulfil their role in the system, and thereby linking the local and national levels to the global. This is done today, for example, by strengthening the partner countries' capacity to fulfil their reporting obligations, and by supporting capacity of civil society to produce shadow reports. Most countries also have various national monitoring mechanisms apart from the court system, such as a special ombudsman or HR commissioners. In many countries Sida supports the establishment and development of these monitoring mechanisms.

Sweden is also the initiator and funding source of a new independent international commission on the legal rights of poor people. The commission's task, which links to the two perspectives, includes reviewing experiences of, and finding forms for, a formalisation of poor people's assets in a broad sense. A working group within Government Office, with Sida's participation, is discussing one possibility. During the commission's mandate term (2006–2007), Sweden's development cooperation through Sida could give the opportunity for the commission's proposals and conclusions to be tested through seminars in one or several partner countries.

In view of the new coherence policy, Sida should also follow the international debate and developments regarding the human rights area, and promote a development perspective on the issues. Generally it is vital to the success of Swedish policy that Sida's experiences from work with poverty reduction and human rights are cross-fertilised with other Swedish expertise in the field, such as in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The two perspectives should have a natural role in all dialogue with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, such as in dialogue concerning the annual directives and the letter of appropriation and cooperation strategies.

Civil society, including popular organisations, generally functions as both moulder of public opinion and communicator on the subject of rights and poverty issues. Consequently, civil society plays an important role in development work, both in Sweden and in the countries where cooperation takes place. For Sida, supporting these organisations and conducting an open dialogue with their members is a way of ensuring popular support and further application of both the perspectives.

International activities and donor coordination

As previously mentioned, the UN is working actively to integrate a rights perspective in all important programmes, regardless of whether they concern security, economic and social issues, humanitarian measures or development issues. Sida is supporting this work both financially and through board membership in different organisations. Within the UN family, UNDP and UNICEF have come a particularly long way concerning the rights perspective. In addition, ILO is by tradition an important "rights organisation".

In recent years, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida have jointly developed strategies for unified Swedish action in relation to the following seven organisations: UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO, ILO, UNDCP – now part of UNODC – and WHO, on matters of development cooperation. All strategies emphasise the rights issues.

Sida has an officer placed with the delegation in the Geneva, whose task is monitoring the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR, the interaction between this office and the rest of the UN system, as well as other Geneva-based international human rights organisations.

The EU has adopted a development policy in which human rights are to be a “cross-cutting concern”. This work has barely started. Sida is participating in a number of the European Commission’s executive committees, sometimes in cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and sometimes without such cooperation. The committees include one for democracy and human rights, and the regional committees. The rights issues in aid would be greatly advanced if the Commission introduced a clearer rights perspective to its aid.

The Government communication, *Human rights in Swedish foreign policy*¹², states that Sweden will “continue to work for integration of a rights perspective in the aid that is supplied through the UN and the European Commission”.

Sida’s participation in the decision-making bodies of different international organisations, such as the World Bank, IMF, OECD/DAC and the European Commission, entails responsibility for ensuring that policies, decisions and activities do not have a negative impact on the ability and capacity of the governments of the partner countries to implement and ensure human rights, particularly amongst the poorest groups.

Sida reviewed its multilateral work in 2005¹³. Many of the recommendations presented could, if implemented, have a decisive effect on giving greater focus to the two perspectives and their actual impact in Sida’s partner countries. The overall multilateral support to our partner countries is naturally considerably greater than the bilateral Swedish support, so major efforts are justified to influence the multilateral bodies, not least their development of country strategies. Of the committee’s recommendations, only one decision has been made so far regarding the organisation resulting in that POM is responsible for multilateral coordination and has been given five positions from MULTI.

Since 2004 OECD/DAC/GovNet has had a working group for human rights and development – Task Team on Human Rights and Development – of which Sida is vice-chair. The activities of the working group comprise a consulting study about experiences of working with human rights in development cooperation¹⁴, a workshop in Paris in October 2005 for presentation of the study, as well as producing an “action-oriented policy paper” that first GovNet and then DAC will discuss and adopt at the end of 2006. This paper will for example handle new challenges and opportunities brought about by the new development cooperation agenda based on the principles of the Paris declaration and the shift towards aid forms such as budget support and sector programme support.¹⁵

In OECD/DAC/POVNET a project is being conducted on risk and vulnerability and more specifically about how poor people manage risks.

¹² SKR 2003/04:20: Human rights in Swedish foreign policy.

¹³ *Review of Multilateral Work at Sida*, 27 April 2005.

¹⁴ OECD/DAC/GOVNET; “Integrating Human Rights into Development, A synthesis of donor approaches and experiences”, by Laure-Hélène Piron & Tammie O’Neil, ODI, Sept, 2005.

¹⁵ A common view around the rights-based development cooperation like that expressed by the UN system in “A Common Understanding...”, see above, is very unlikely to be achieved. However, the possibilities for rights-based cooperation at country level are being discussed in smaller groups of like-minded donors, for example at Nordic level.

4. Conclusion

The PGD starts a new and intensive phase at Sida, in which practical experiences of using the two perspectives as points of departure must be done in cooperation with the partner countries and other donors. This work must be documented, evaluated, and continually developed.

One purpose of this working paper is to show the potential that the two perspectives can unleash in future development cooperation. By beginning with the reality faced by people living in poverty, formulated in terms of rights, we can contribute to consensus-based processes of change.

Sida now has a unique role to play on the international arena by showing the importance of the two perspectives in achieving our shared international commitments against poverty and for more effective development cooperation.

The way in which we choose to work with the two perspectives will be a crucial factor in whether, and to what extent, the new policy and its powerful message will have an impact and become accepted in the future ahead.

Appendix 1

Proposed actions in order to embed the PGD's two perspectives within Sida

Management levels and human resource development

1. Sida's supervisors should supply increased strategic guidance (linked to a sharpened poverty focus)¹⁶
2. As part of its annual operational planning, Sida should demand from all departments, divisions and possibly also individuals, in their working plans to clearly indicate how they intend to work with a sharpened poverty focus, including the promotion of the two perspectives.
3. Sida's supervisors should address the issue of the two perspectives and the relevant results achieved in individual annual reviews. This also applies to the individual reviews that the Director General holds with the heads of the departments.
4. Information about two perspectives should be disseminated throughout the entire Sida. This should be supported by an annual discussion on the two perspectives in the management board of the agency, as well as through annual discussions, POM-Forum, Reg-forum and Advisory-forum as well as in the dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁷
5. Sida should take the two perspectives into account in its efforts to decide on Sida's core competence.
6. In its internal training programmes (overseas posting in-service training/management for supervisors, field personnel and NPO), Sida should put added emphasis on how both the perspectives should be handled in Sida's various roles, as well as how participation issues to be understood and handled.¹⁸
7. In order to promote human resource development in the field, the regional advisers for democracy and human rights issues should be retained, and a similar position in Latin America should be considered. These advisers should work in a way that integrates the PGD's

¹⁶ See *Sida Action Plan for Increased Poverty Focus*; Senior Management Level Actions

¹⁷ See also *Sida Action Plan for Increased Poverty Focus*; Senior Management Level Actions. This type of human resource development is clearly recommended in Jan Cedergren's report "PGD and development cooperation".

¹⁸ See *Sida Action Plan for increased Poverty Focus*, bullet point 7: Sida Approaches to Learning

two perspective. Embassies with enhanced delegation should have focal persons assigned to work with the perspectives (see experiences from Kenya, above).

8. Sida should investigate how to better organise and sharing and dissemination of experiences and lessons learnt from working with the two perspectives.

Sida's processes (cooperation strategy, project management cycle)

9. Sida should integrate social analysis, as a whole, in poverty analysis in order to create insights about the social relationships that act at various levels of society, and contribute to poverty and the lack of development.
10. A pilot project has been started to develop Sida's work regarding poor people's perspectives on development. This project should result in a guide containing practical methodological suggestions. At the same time the ongoing methodological project on the rights perspective will be taken further. These two methodological proposals should be continuously integrated.
11. Sida should procure a help desk function with the capability to assist Sida in both evaluating and performing social analyses.¹⁹ Sida should also develop its own expertise in PSIA and other methods (pro-poor budget analysis, budget monitoring) that highlight links between macro and micro levels regarding poverty reduction.
12. Sida should consider establishing the legal sector as a strategic priority, and initiate a special promotion in this area, similar to that relating to public financial management.
13. In order to enable relevant accounting in Sida's annual report regarding how development cooperation has promoted and been affected by the two perspectives, Sida's country plans and reports should specifically provide information about work with the perspectives. The instructions for country reports should provide greater detail in this area, and information should be regularly requested from the regional department heads.
14. Sida's project committees at all levels should use the two perspectives as a foundation of their assessments.
15. Sida should ensure that not only the results, but also the processes leading to them, are based on the following principles:
 - Non-discrimination
 - Participation
 - Transparency
 - Accountability
16. Sida should consistently strengthen the view of participation in various forms and at various levels as a human right and therefore a goal for development in its own right.
17. Sida should more clearly focus on the power dimension of poverty, both in poverty analysis at country and project/programme, levels by

¹⁹ See Sida action plan, bullet point 9: helpdesks.

continuing and improving the power analysis efforts (conducted by DESA at Sida) and by continuing cooperation with other donors, as part of OECD/ DAC subgroups (GovNet, POVNET, GenderNet etc).

Sida's roles (in dialogue as well as coordination and harmonisation within the international community)

18. Sida should – within the ongoing development work regarding Sida's role as a dialogue partner – consider special training in conducting dialogue on human rights and strategic poverty questions.
19. Together with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida should clarify the interaction and role distribution regarding dialogue on human rights.
20. Sida, in cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, should increasingly apply the recommendations made by the UN system's monitoring committees and special reporting bodies.
21. Sida should work to set up regular dialogue between Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs concerning the two perspectives.
22. Sida should review and examine how interaction with the civil society could best promote the two perspectives, with regard to the Swedish parties and parties in each partner country.
23. Sida should increasingly monitor and participate in the international debate on poverty and rights-based development cooperation, including participation in the different OECD/DAC working groups.
24. Sida should continue to allocate resources for participation in the work conducted by DAC GovNets Human Rights and Development Task Team, where Sida today is co-chairperson.²⁰
25. Sida should participate in the work to strengthen human rights and a rights perspective in the World Bank, by participating in the work conducted by the Nordic-Baltic group.
26. Sida HQ and the field should cooperate more closely on experiences of using the perspectives as a basis in donor harmonisation – a strategic approach where Sida HQ should emphasise experiences and any difficulties in the field for discussion at capital level and within international fora.
27. Sida should implement the Multi-review's proposals to send an additional person with broad development cooperation expertise to the delegations in New York and Brussels, and retain the existing position in Geneva with specialisation in human rights. Like the regional advisers, these people should work in an integrated way, with both a rights perspective and poor people's perspectives on development.

²⁰ The need for resources to be allocated for this type of method work in DAC is emphasised in Jan Cedergren's report "PGD and development cooperation".

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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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