

Sida's Communication Initiatives in Central America, Tanzania and West Balkan 1999–2002

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List of abbreviations

DCD	Development Cooperation Division
CID	Communication in Development
HO	Sida's head office, Stockholm
LCC	Local Communication Consultant
MSEK	Million Swedish Kronor
NPO	National Program Officer
NCO	National Communication Officer
SCO	Swedish Communication Officer
SEK	Swedish Kronor
SK	Strategisk Kommunikation (Strategic Communication)
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
Sida East	Sida Department of Central and Eastern Europe
SPO	Swedish Program Officer
ToR	Terms of reference

Definition

Swedish Communication Officer (SCO)	A Swedish communication professional working in Sida HQ as well as at the field offices
National Communication Officer (NCO)	A national communication professional permanently employed at the Sida field offices
Local Communication Consultant (LCC)	A national communication professional temporarily employed as a consultant
Communication Officer/Consultant	A Swedish or a national communication professional

Summary

The main purpose of this evaluation is to provide Sida with a basis for the future work with strategic communication in the partner countries. To learn more about how communications can be used as an effective supporting tool in a decentralized environment, the present evaluation of Sida's communication initiatives in Central America, Tanzania, and West Balkan 1999–2002 was carried out April–September 2003. The communication projects have been running in different environments and under different conditions and are representing three different experiences.

The basis for the evaluation has been country studies in Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Tanzania. In the case of Kosovo, it was decided to undertake research in Sweden and not in Kosovo as most of the activities have been directed towards Swedish stakeholders. Representatives from Sida HQ and Embassy staff, partners, key informants, and stakeholders were interviewed by the evaluation team.

The results of the country studies and the research undertaken during the evaluation are summarized in this main report. The different experiences were analyzed in relation to fulfillment of objectives and the effect of activities. Lessons learnt from each experience are outlined and the key findings are compared.

The analyses are based on the four levels described in Sida's Communication Policy, i.e.:

1. At agency level, i.e. internal as well as external communication to create good relations with important stakeholders to ensure good conditions for Sida's operations, i.e. communicate what Sida is, what it does, and what it achieves.
2. At department and embassy level, i.e. communication with specific stakeholders and partners in order to create relations which make their work easier and more efficient.
3. At contribution level, i.e. development of knowledge and communications that supports all contributions (e.g. Communication in Development (CID))
4. The information mission, i.e. the communication with the general public in Sweden in order to obtain continued support for Sida operations.

Major findings

- Swedish Communication Officers (SCOs) have been instrumental in starting the process of enhancing communication in all cases. This may be the result of the pilot nature, whereas once communications procedures are institutionalised in the new, decentralised Sida-structure, National Communication Officers (NCO) may obtain the same results.
- Communications at agency and department/embassy levels have been effective in all cases applicable, driven by the priorities given to the issue by the heads of representation. In the realisation of those priorities, some embassies (in Central America) have received valuable assistance from professional Local Communication Consultants, whose local media network and language skills have been useful.
- Communication at the contribution level, while still not fully developed, has been successfully pursued in terms of information materials about Sida cooperation programmes & projects and local networking with partner communication specialists. Local Communication Consultants have been instrumental in promoting this in all cases applicable.

- The information mission has been promoted significantly where SCOs have been active. Particularly regarding the SCOs based in Sweden, but also as a result of the work of the SCOs in Tanzania and Honduras. Local Communication Consultants, however, have proven not to possess the network or the language requirements to actively work with media institutions in Sweden, thus being confined to support visiting Swedish media people.
- Increased priority to the communication aspects in general has had a positive effect on the internal communication within the representations in all cases where the Communication Officers have been working effectively inside the representations. When working out of a home office, this is not the case to the same extent. It is also notable that the results are better when the SCOs or NCOs are working full time instead of part time.
- The increased priority to communication has in some cases contributed to a general increase of staff interest for the communication aspect of their work. In some cases, however, paired with anxiety for the possible extra workload and some uncertainty about how to meet those challenges. The latter seems to prevail in cases where the staff has not been involved or integrated in the planning and implementation of communication activities from the very beginning.
- In large embassies, where a real division of labour between the Sida-mission and the rest of the embassy is applicable, it is of importance for the success of the communication activities that a good understanding exists about the specific tasks of the communication staff.
- At the embassies visited, a need for follow-up, guidance and support from Sida HO in relation to planning and implementation of communication plans was identified.
- Focusing on regions (Sida East model) instead of countries has demonstrated certain advantages and synergy.
- The use of Local Communication Consultants or NCOs is a more cost effective and sustainable solution than the alternative models of organisation, and the NCOs have the advantage of possessing a local network. The best results have been obtained where those consultants have been able to work effectively at the embassies/representations, and it is found important that NCOs employed at embassies possess:
 - professional strategic communication skills
 - good command of English
 - international development cooperation experience
- A Sida HO based SCO covering one or more regions, acting also as a travelling Communication Advisor is a relatively cost-effective model in relation to the information mission. With a few extra resources it would have been possible to increase the communication capacity at embassy level and subsequently enhance the overall cost effectiveness.
- SCOs based at the embassies is an effective but cost wise an expensive solution.
- The overall communication initiatives have focused on activities related to the information mission and the agency/department/embassy levels, i.e. communication between the embassy and local stakeholders and partners, promoting policy dialogue and partner relations. During 2002 preparations related to the contribution level including communications in development (CID) have been in progress in Central America.
- Communication efforts undertaken in the pilot initiatives have resulted in:
 - Reinforced policy dialogue and awareness of Swedish development cooperation activities in the partner countries
 - Facilitation of partner cooperation and dialogue.

- Potentials for increased awareness and knowledge of Swedish development cooperation among stakeholders and the general public in Sweden.
- In general, it is difficult to assess the effect of the communication activities systematically, because a monitoring and evaluation system has not been developed, and indicators have not been defined.

Conclusions

When assessing the strengths and weaknesses in each of the pilot initiatives, it can be concluded, that Swedish Communication Officers based at the embassies have been effective, but cost-wise an expensive solution compared to other models. In the long term, it seems more cost effective, sustainable and in line with Sida's Field Visions to employ National Communication Officers to be in charge of communications at a decentralised level.

When combining the effects of the present communication experiences and considering the cost-effectiveness, it is found that well qualified NCOs based at the embassies, effectively cooperating with SCOs with regional knowledge/experience placed in Sida HO provides the best organizational framework for effective communications in the partner countries.

Major recommendations

In consideration of the above conclusion, it is recommended

- That regional support desks are created at Sida HO staffed by SCOs who combine knowledge of the region with communication skills.
- That a full time NCO (large embassies) and a part time NCO or one to two Program Officers (small embassies) are employed and appointed responsible for the development and coordination of communications at the embassies in close cooperation with above SCOs
- That one or more well qualified Local Communication Consultants are identified to assist, when necessary, the above responsible NCO or POs in the implementation of the communication tasks.
- That Sida HO arranges annual seminars for Sida Communication Officers in order to reinforce the networking and enhance the capacity building and exchange of experience between regions.

To realize Sida's communication policy in a decentralized environment, it is recommended:

- That the Sida management supports and prioritizes the implementation of the communication policy and allocates sufficient resources for implementation of the above recommendations.

1 Introduction

Since 1999, Sida/INFO has implemented specific communication initiatives in Central America, Tanzania and Kosovo/Balkan. The initiatives have been running in three different environments and under different conditions and as a basis for Sida's future work with strategic communication in the partner countries, Sida wanted an evaluation of the different initiatives to be undertaken.

Thus, an evaluation of Sida's communication initiatives in Central America, Tanzania and West Balkan 1999–2002 was carried out during the period April to September 2003.

The evaluation team comprised:

- Nina Wernberg (Team Leader), Communication Advisor, Danicom
- Gunnar Olesen, Senior Consultant, T&B Consult
- Per Østerlund, Journalist and Media Consultant, Danicom

Terms of Reference for the evaluation are appended in Annex 1.

There are certain delimitations in relation to the ToR. For example, it has not been possible within the scope of this study to examine the impact of the communication activities systematically, partly because not enough resources and time were available for this purpose, and partly because the activities have not been monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. Likewise it has not been possible to assess without any reasonable doubt to what degree the communication plans have contributed to the accomplishment of the country- and regional strategies.

Methodology

Prior to the Inception Report, the evaluation team met with Sida/INFO representatives in Stockholm to discuss the scope of the evaluation, and the team studied available materials and reports (a List of Materials is appended in Annex 2).

Interviews with representatives of the Strategic Communication (SK)-Group, Sida/INFO and Sida East (Department for Central and Eastern Europe), and the Swedish Communication Officers, who have been deployed in Tanzania and Central America took place in early May 2003.

Country studies were carried out in June 2003:

- Tanzania 9–17 June (Per Østerlund and Nina Wernberg)
- Central America including Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala 10–25 June (Gunnar Olesen).

Representatives from the embassies, partner organizations, key informants, Swedish community, and other stakeholders were interviewed – semi structured interviews and focus group discussions were used as techniques. The programmes for the country studies were prepared by the embassies in cooperation with the consultants.

Prior to this assignment, Sida decided that it was not necessary to travel to Kosovo as the main target audience for the communication initiatives were Swedish partners and stakeholders. Thus, representatives of the Swedish partner organizations were interviewed in Stockholm at the beginning of September 2003.

Country study reports were prepared for each country and they include the results of the research

undertaken in the respective countries. The reports are annexed to this main report (Appendix 4: (A) Central America, (B) Tanzania, and (C) Kosovo/West Balkan.

The preliminary conclusions of the country reports were discussed with representatives from the Sida/INFO in mid August.

The results of the country studies and the research undertaken during the evaluation are summarized in this report, comprising the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Background – a brief chapter indicating the background for Sida’s communication initiatives and a description of the overall organization and Sida’s communication policy.
3. A comparative analysis of the country studies indicating the purpose of the communication initiatives in the various countries, the fulfillment of objectives and lessons learnt.
4. Major findings and conclusions
5. Recommendations
6. Future Challenges including some observations that have been made but which falls outside the evaluated period.

The draft report was presented and discussed during a seminar for Sida Communication Officers and Consultants in Stockholm on the 3rd October 2003. This final report includes inputs from Sida/INFO management and from the seminar on October 3rd 2003.

The team would like to express its appreciation of the open and receptive attitude shown by Sida/INFO and staff of the Swedish representations visited and of their input and helpfulness in carrying out the program.

2 Background

2.1 Development of Strategic Communication in Sida

As mentioned in the introduction, from 1999 Sida/INFO has implemented a number of communication initiatives related to specific regions and events. These initiatives started prior to any formalized policy on strategic communication. Mid 2000 it was, however, decided that Sida/INFO should be responsible for supporting the Sida HQ departments and the embassies in their communication planning and to have a coordinating role for the whole development of the Sida communications initiatives.

Thus, a small group in Sida/INFO – the so-called AA-group (Departments and Embassies) was established and has been operating since August 2000. The name of this group was changed in 2002 to the SK (Strategic Communication)-group although the objectives and the areas of work remained the same. Today this group comprises four staff members, who share what is equivalent to three full time positions.

During its assistance, the SK-group has by end of 2002 managed to assist 12 departments and a number of embassies (Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya, Bolivia, Colombia, Serbia (Belgrade), Croatia (Zagreb) and India) in formulating communication plans. The SK-group is supported ad hoc by communication consultants - it is, however, the policy that a member

of the SK-group should participate in the communication planning seminars in departments and at the embassies.

Concurrently with the development of communications in Sida, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) increasingly focuses on the role of communications in UD and at embassy level, and it has recently instructed all embassies to prepare communication plans. Thus, Sida and UD are working hand in hand in upgrading the communication skills at the embassies, although Sida has been the driving force up till now.

2.2 Communication policies and guidelines

In cooperation with the Sida Management, the SK-group has developed a communication policy which was published in April 2002¹. The communication policy indicates an integrated approach to communications and describes 4 levels, which Sida has to work with in all its operations:

1. At agency level, i.e. internal as well as external communication to create good relations with important stakeholders to ensure good conditions for Sida's operations, i.e. communicate what Sida is, what it does, and what it achieves.
2. At department and embassy level, i.e. specific stakeholders and partners in order to create relations which make their work easier and more efficient.
3. At contribution level, i.e. development of knowledge and communications that supports all contributions (e.g. Communication in Development (CID))
4. The information mission, i.e. the communication with the general public in Sweden in order to obtain continued support for Sida operations.

This evaluation has primarily analyzed how these four levels are integrated at the selected embassies.

Only recently, some of the embassies have started working strategically with communication. However, the embassies in focus of this study (Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Tanzania) have some years of experience with strategic communications as they have received support from professional Swedish and National Communication Officers/Consultants since 1999/2000.

So far the communication efforts have focused on communications at agency and embassy levels, and on the information mission. A planned approach to communications at contribution level has only just started (late 2002 and at the beginning of 2003) and guidelines on how to handle communications at this level are in the process of being produced.

Sida is in the forefront of the international development community by the mere fact that it has a communication policy, and that this policy comprise both Sida HO and the embassies, and internal as well as external communications including communication at the contribution level. The integrated approach to communications in Sida is quite unique compared to those international development agencies with whom Sida normally compare.

The great challenge in the years to come is how to implement the communication policy in order for communications to become an integrated part of all Sida's operations both in Sida HO and in the

¹ Communications policy – Sida's work with communication. Sida, April 2002.

partner countries.

Sida is in the middle of reorganizing the agency, i.e. moving towards an increased decentralization of its operations, and moving from project support to sector wide approaches. Thus, it is important for Sida to learn more about how communication can be used as an effective supporting instrument in this new environment, and therefore this evaluation of selected communication initiatives was commissioned.

In the following, the evaluation team will analyze Sida's communication initiatives in Central America, Tanzania, and West Balkan, where Sida has piloted different models for communication initiatives.

3 Analysis of the pilot communication models

This section summarizes the findings of the country studies. For more details and information please refer to the individual country study reports appended in Appendix 4 – A, B, and C.

In 1999–2002, communication initiatives of a pilot nature were undertaken at the Swedish representations in Central America (jointly under the Mitch information effort in 1999–2000 and subsequently at the embassies in Guatemala and Nicaragua and the Sida-Mission in Honduras), the Embassy in Tanzania and in relation to Kosovo/West Balkan.

Due to the differences between the Swedish interventions and representations in countries and regions, these communication initiatives have been organised differently and consequently provided different experiences, which are thoroughly presented in the country reports and briefly resumed below.

3.1 Central America, 1999–2000

In the three Swedish representations in Central America, the special communications initiatives all started as an offspring of the extraordinary communications' initiative related to the hurricane Mitch, subsequently using leftover funds for strengthening communications at the representations on a permanent basis.

3.1.1 Objectives

The special information effort was, in 1999–2000, directed towards informing the Swedish public, thus contributing to a general awareness of the challenges of development cooperation, as well as towards the cooperation countries and their governments in Central America. Thus, the objectives were among others to “facilitate project implementation and international coordination and to make visible Sweden's role in the reconstruction”. The effort was also seen as a means to enhance the participation of civil society in the reconstruction.

By end of 2000, the main objective changed into initiating a long-term strengthening of the communication aspect of Swedish development cooperation in Central America in a second phase, and the major part of the personnel and financial resources were transferred from Sweden to Central America.

3.1.2 Fulfilment of the Objectives

The communication set-up in 1999–2000 with two SCOs, one based in Stockholm and one in

Honduras, had a very good effect in terms of accomplishing the desired increase of visibility of the Swedish Mitch-effort, both in Central America and in Sweden. This should, however, also be seen in the light of the extraordinary and media-attractive nature of the Mitch-effort.

Regarding the second phase, the SCOs successfully prepared the ground for communication thinking at the Swedish representations in Central America in an innovative way, thus influencing other Sida communication initiatives in the field. Based on a needs assessment, communication workshops were implemented at the three Swedish representations and communication plans were developed.

3.1.3 Cost-effectiveness

The entire cost of the information programme in Central America amounted to SEK 5.801.000, which corresponds to 0.4 per cent of the amount allocated for the entire Mitch-effort (SEK 1.4 billion). This must be regarded as a modest amount seen in relation to the outcome of the information effort. The salary and related costs of the SCOs is SEK 1.215.000, to which should be added some limited travel and per diem costs. Also this amount is modest compared with the standard cost applied in Sida budgeting for deploying consultants, which is roughly SEK 25.000 per week, or approximately 1 M SEK per year, the same amount as the budgeted standard cost for deploying a permanent staff member.

Thus, all considered, the Mitch information effort appears very cost-effective

3.1.4 Lessons learned

Extraordinary events create a scope for extraordinary information efforts. Given the extraordinary nature of the information effort, more active current guidance, based on monitoring of the effects, would have been required from Sida/INFO to produce even more substantial results than those produced.

Extraordinary efforts provide an opportunity for using the inherent impetus for institutionalising an enhancement of the communications aspect.

Continuation

In 2001, three National Communication Consultants were recruited and the role of the SCOs was gradually transformed into support and monitoring in connection with the permanent employment of national consultants at the representations. These were, however, employed under different conditions. Consequently, the Central American experience represents the below three different models, resulting in differently perceived results:

3.2 Guatemala

In Guatemala, an NCO, who is educated in communication skills, but whose English language skills and experience with international development cooperation is limited, was employed on a half-time basis by the Sida-Mission at the Embassy, to be working out of her home-office with frequent meetings at the Embassy. It was not made clear to her by the Embassy to what extent exactly she should be working for the Embassy as such and/or purely for the Sida-Mission.

3.2.1 Objectives of the Communication Plan

The overall objective for the communication plans/strategies for the Swedish representations in the

three Central American countries is: “To increase the quality of the work through strengthened relations with important partners for the representation and for Sida and to make Sweden and Swedish development cooperation visible.”

The immediate objective is: “To increase the awareness of the communication issues of the staff of the representation and that programme officers work systematically with communication within their fields.”

The target groups are defined, at the embassy level as the national and international partners of the representation and of Sida; opinion leaders including the press and the civil society. At the contribution level, it is defined as the beneficiaries of the Swedish supported development projects. In relation to the information mission, opinion leaders, including the press, in Sweden are mentioned. Finally, the staffs of the representations are mentioned as a specific target group.

The objectives should be fulfilled through the outreach to the target groups through multiple communication activities outlined in specific communication plans.

3.2.2 Fulfilment of objectives

The majority of the outputs in the communication plan have been produced. In the following a synthesis assessment of the effects on the different levels is provided.

The outcome of the Embassy’s communication policy at the embassy level, in relation to the partners and the public through the press, appear impressive, not least because of the priority attached to this task by the Ambassador, who also seems to have received valuable assistance in this regard through the networking with the local press by the communications consultant.

At the contribution level, the communication consultant has rendered valuable assistance through the production of information materials about Swedish cooperation and, not least, through the creation of networks with communication specialists in Sida partner organisations, thus contributing to a general strengthening of the communication aspect within the Sida-supported cooperation, in spite of the difficulties posed by not being able to work out of the Embassy.

Regarding internal information at the Embassy, the consultant has not been able to render significant contributions from her home-based position, and the division of the Embassy between the Sida-Mission and the rest of the Embassy has been a problem in this respect.

Like in the other Central American countries, it was the impression of the staff of the representation that the information potential in Sweden was not fully exploited. Also there was a wish for more advice from Sida-INFO regarding the communication issues and for a stronger institutional anchoring of the specific regional questions within Sida-INFO. Thus, it was mentioned as a positive sign that a Sida-INFO officer with experience from the region has been appointed.

3.2.3 Other effects

In Guatemala, like in the other Central American countries, the effective communication at the embassy-level in terms of raising pertinent, but sometimes controversial, issues in public appears to have been appreciated by the donor community and by national proponents of democracy and human rights. In reverse, some resentment has been created among other parts of the political spectre.

3.2.4 Cost-effectiveness

The Embassy in Guatemala had a budget for the communication activities in 2002 of SEK 450.000, out of which 200.000 was allocated for personnel support from Sida INFO and 130.000 for the remuneration of the half time employed local consultant. The total Sida allocation for Guatemala in 2002 was 85 MSEK, which means that the amount used for communications represents about 0,5 per cent of the total allocation for Guatemala in 2002. The level of communication costs for Guatemala corresponds to the level at the other Swedish representations in Central America, which, in all cases, must be characterised as a modest amount related to the actual and potential effect of the enhancement of the communication aspects on Swedish development cooperation in Central America.

To obtain a realistic picture of the total resource allocation for communication, the costs related to the time devoted to communication activities by the Embassy staff, should be added to this amount. However, this resource consumption depends on the priority given to the issue in the individual cases and it is not possible to provide a reliable estimate here.

3.2.5 Lessons learnt

To obtain the full benefit of a strengthened communication aspect at an embassy:

- The Sida-mission and the rest of the embassy must have a coordinated approach
- The communication officer must be able to work effectively out of the embassy.

3.3 Honduras

In Honduras, the national communication consultant, who is educated in communication skills, masters the English language well and has some experience with international development cooperation, was employed full-time by the Sida-Mission, and is working at the Mission as a de facto staff member.

3.3.1 Fulfillment of Objectives

The majority of the outputs in the communication plan have been produced. In the following a synthesis assessment of the effects on the different levels is provided.

Like in the other Central American countries, communication on the Mission level has been very effective, thanks not least to the priority attached to it by the Counsellor, and some of the program officers, who have received very valuable support for it from the communications consultant. A seminar about the media landscape in Honduras arranged for Embassy staff by the local consultant has been appreciated in this respect.

At the contributions level, the local consultant has achieved significant results in terms of production of information material and networking with partner organisations. This had been possible because of the close cooperation on a daily basis between the communication consultant and the rest of the mission staff.

Regarding internal communication at the mission, very good results have been obtained thanks to intensive work on this subject undertaken by the communications consultant, including a study circle on this subject in particular for the NPOs and other local staff.

3.3.2 Other effects

Note was taken, not least in Honduras, but also in Guatemala, of a considerable appreciation of the Swedish communication initiatives in terms of initiating networks among communicators in partner

organisations. Being invited for meetings at the Swedish representations to discuss and make plans for the strengthening of the communication aspects of the joint projects and programs was a source not only of inspiration but also a way of strengthening the status of the communication work and workers in the partner organisations.

3.3.3 Lessons learnt

National Communication Officers with a good command of English, prior experience from international development communication and solid knowledge of the media and partner organisations are conducive to good results of strengthened communication.

Coaching of the NCO by experienced Sida/INFO staff and possibilities for in-service training in relation to Sida and Sweden is conducive to good results.

3.4 Nicaragua

The local consultant in Nicaragua has a professional communication background, but limited knowledge of English and experience with international development cooperation. She was halftime employed and worked out of the Embassy.

3.4.1 Fulfilment of Objectives

At the embassy level, communication with the partners and the public through the press was equally effective as in Guatemala and Honduras. Also in Nicaragua, it was very driven by the dedication of the ambassador.

At the contribution level, the results were tangible in terms of production of information materials, whereas it was the impression of the staff that the support for the program officers regarding communication was not as effective as could be wished for.

Internal communication at the Embassy was working well, but it was the impression of the staff that the potential might be exploited further.

3.4.2 Lessons learnt

The positive attitude of the head of the representation to the strengthening of the communication aspect is important for the successful outcome.

So is the conduct of a participatory process among the embassy staff in relation to the elaboration of communication strategies and plans. Once the ground is fertile through this process, close collaboration between the communication officer and the staff is important to consolidate the communication aspects through concrete action.

3.5 Tanzania

A professional Swedish Communication Officer (SCO) was recruited for two years (April 2000–April 2002) to improve the knowledge of Swedish development cooperation among the general public and stakeholders in Sweden and Tanzania, and to strengthen the communication with the Swedish community in Tanzania. Structurally, the SCO was placed with direct reference to the Ambassador, who initiated the recruitment and who has been very supportive of the communication work, and has participated actively in the activities.

From the departure of the SCO in April 2002, the Local Assistant to the Ambassador, who does not have a professional communication background, has been in charge of the communication activities.

3.5.1 Fulfilment of objectives

The work of the SCO boosted the communications at Embassy level, i.e. between the Embassy and Tanzanian stakeholders and the Swedish community in Tanzania. In addition, the Swedish press coverage on Swedish development cooperation with Tanzania increased during the employment of the SCO.

This has resulted in:

- Reinforced policy dialogue and awareness of Swedish development cooperation activities among stakeholders in Tanzania.
- Facilitation of partner cooperation and dialogue. (Partners regard the Swedish Embassy as very open and accessible compared to other embassies).
- Potentials for increased awareness and knowledge of Swedish activities in Tanzania among Swedish partners and the general public in Sweden.

From 2001, the activities have, in principle, been guided by a communication strategy, which does not seem to have had much importance or effect in practice. Communication issues are not yet integrated parts of the various Sida operations, but is widely regarded as something, which is taken care of by the Ambassador.

Since mid 2002, when the National Assistant to the Ambassador took over the responsibility for communications and PR, the established activities including the press contacts have been maintained, resulting in continuous policy dialogue and open partner relations, whereas further development of strategic communication at the embassy has not been followed up.

The communication efforts at the embassy in Tanzania indicate a high degree of fulfilment of the initial objectives, i.e. to strengthen the communications between the Embassy and stakeholders in Tanzania, but when it comes to the use of communication as a strategic tool in the work and operations of the Embassy/Sida it can be concluded that this has not yet been accomplished and needs to be followed up with further capacity building of the embassy staff.

3.5.2 Cost benefit

A rough estimate indicates that the total contribution to Swedish development cooperation activities in Tanzania 1999–2002 is 1,835 million SEK. In the same period less than 2 millions have been used for communication, i.e. 0.11 per cent including deployment of the SCO for two years. Considering the results obtained so far through systematising the PR activities and contact to the press, it is the view of the evaluators that the cost benefit of the communication efforts is relatively high when it comes to communication at embassy level. However, the resources used for introduction of strategic communications still have to prove its effectiveness through further capacity building of the embassy staff so that communication planning becomes an integrated part of all operations of the Embassy.

3.5.3 Lessons learned

The achievements obtained so far are the results of a competent team work between the SCO and later the Assistant to the Ambassador and the Ambassador himself. While it has proved important that heads of missions support communication initiatives and participate actively, it is likewise important that all

embassy staffs realise that they have an individual role to play in ensuring that communication is integrated at all levels of their operations, and that they are confident in that role.

Thus, the major lesson learnt from the Tanzanian experience is that Sida as well as the Foreign Ministry (UD) staff should have been much more integrated in the communication efforts from the very beginning, and that further capacity building is needed in order for the staff to handle communication effectively.

Professional communication support is needed to further develop communication at a strategic level.

3.6 Kosovo/West Balkan

In relation to the comprehensive Swedish intervention in Kosovo/the West Balkans, a decision was made to undertake a corresponding communication initiative directed towards the local partners as well as towards the Swedish public in order to facilitate the coordination and collaboration between the various actors, who worked along side the Swedish interests in the region, and to maintain a high level of support for the Swedish engagements in the Western Balkan.

An experienced Swedish Communication Officer was consequently employed for one year, starting September 1999 and placed in Sida/INFO but working in close cooperation with Sida East, the unit for the West Balkans (EVB). Since September 2000, he has been employed by Sida East, and worked part time for EVB and part time for the rest of Sida East. In 1999 it was decided that the Communication Officer should be working out of Stockholm, as the most important target groups for communication initiatives were defined as the Swedish stakeholders. Thus, the communication efforts have focused on providing information to the Swedish stakeholders on the Swedish activities in Balkan, whereas the local Swedish representations have not been integrated in the communication work before the end of 2002, when communication strategies and plans of action were prepared at the embassies in Belgrade and Zagreb.

3.6.1 Fulfilment of objectives

The general support for development cooperation activities in Western Balkan has been maintained and the allocations are increasing over the next years. It is, however, very difficult to assess whether this is a result of a keen political decision or a result of increased awareness and knowledge generated through the Sida East communication activities- most likely, it is a combination. In general it is very difficult to measure the effect of the Sida East's communication activities as the strategies do not include indicators or monitoring and evaluation activities.

There is little doubt, however, that the various communication activities have strengthened the partner relations and cooperation in Sweden. Partners seem to be well informed of Swedish activities in the region, although the acquired information is not necessarily channelled through Sida East, and there is an increasing demand for more target oriented and dialogue based communication initiatives.

The Information Mission and Swedish stakeholders have been prioritised in this communication model and this has resulted in a low performance when it comes to communications at the embassy and contribution levels and subsequently low fulfilment of the objectives related to facilitate the cooperation between actors in the region.

3.6.2 Cost benefit

Approximately 1,259,000 SEK have been used per year since year 2000 – all inclusive for Sida East communication activities. It is estimated that about half of this amount is used for activities related to the Western Balkan. This indicates that about 50 percentage of the total allocation have been used for communications related to Balkan. Considering the achievements and the comprehensive amount of communication initiatives implemented, it is assessed that the cost benefit is relatively high as regards the information mission. With few extra resources it might have been possible to increase the communication capacity at embassy level and subsequently enhance the overall cost effectiveness.

3.6.3 Lessons learnt

The placement of the Communication Officer in a regional department in Sida has certain advantages and disadvantages as demonstrated by the Sida East case.

The advantages include: (a) a strengthened profile internally in Sida as well as externally among stakeholders and the media in Sweden (Agency level). (b) well developed relations with Swedish partners and key actors (Department level). (c) In depth knowledge of the development cooperation activities and actors in the region which facilitate the information mission. (d) the model seems to be rather cost effective.

The obvious disadvantage is that communication at the embassy and contribution levels are difficult to implement without some professional capacity at the embassies.

Thus, a combination of a regionally based NCO and a SCO placed in a regional/or sector department seems to represent a model, which would reinforce communication at all levels of the Sida's operations.

To be able to measure the effect of the communication activities and to satisfy the various needs of the specific stakeholders, regular needs assessments have to be carried out, and the communication activities reviewed regularly in order to be able to adjust the activities and target orient them to the changing needs.

3.7 Comparison of the organizational models

Table 1: Schematic comparison of the models.

The main findings regarding the outcomes of the organisational models 1999–2002 applied in the five countries, in relation to the different levels of communications and costs, may be summarised as follows:

	Joint CA 2 SCOs	Nicaragua 1/2 Loc.cons	Honduras Loc.cons	Guatemala 1/2 Loc.cons	Kosovo SCO in Sweden	Tanzania 1 SCO
Embassy level	very good	very good	Very good	very good	Not Applicable	very good
Internally	good	good	Very good	mixed	very good in HO	very good
Contribution level	good	mixed	Very good	good	NA	good
Inform. mission	very good	mixed	mixed	mixed	very good	very good
Costs	medium	cheap	cheap	cheap	medium	expensive

Table 2: Rough estimates of amounts used for communications compared to the total allocations for development cooperation activities in the respective countries.

Country/Period	Total amount allocated MSEK	Estimated amount used for communications MSEK	Percentage of total allocation
Mitch (1999–2001)	1,400	5.8	0.41
Guatemala (2002)	85.0	0.45	0.53
Honduras (2002)	100.0	0.45	0.45
Nicaragua (2002)	185.0	0.45	0.24
Tanzania (1999–2002)	1,835	2.00	0.11
Kosovo/West Balkan (2000-2002) ²	1,500	1.9	0.13

² It is estimated that the total allocation for West Balkan has been 500 MSEK per year. The total amount used for

It should be emphasized that the figures are rough estimates, however, indicative of the percentages used for communications compared to the total allocations. In all cases the percentage is modest (some agencies operate with a key figure of 2 percent for communications). The highest percentages are indicated for Central America while the percentages for Tanzania and West Balkan are very low. Due to the uncertainty of the figures and the small material, it is not possible to make any conclusions based on above table. In the long term these key figures might, however, show the development and prioritization of communications, and show some significance between the resources used for communications and the results. Sida might also choose to use key figures for budget purposes.

4 Major findings

In view of the above analyses and the observations in the country reports, the following major findings appear:

1. SCO have been instrumental in starting the process of enhancing communication in all cases. This may be the result of the pilot nature, whereas once communications procedures are institutionalised in the new, decentralised Sida-structure, NCOs may obtain the same results.
2. Communications at department/embassy level have been effective in all cases applicable, driven by the priorities given to the issue by the heads of representation. In the realisation of those priorities, they have received valuable assistance from the Local Communication Consultants in most cases, whose local media network and language skills have been useful.
3. Communications at the contribution level, while still not fully developed, have been successfully pursued in terms of information materials on Sida cooperation programmes & projects and local networking with partner communication specialists. Local consultants have been instrumental in promoting this in all cases applicable. The best results have been obtained where those consultants have been able to work effectively at the representation.
4. The information mission has been promoted significantly where SCOs have been active. Particularly regarding the SCOs based in Sweden, but also as a result of the work of the SCOs in Tanzania and Honduras. In reverse, the Local Communication Consultants do not possess the network or the language requirements to actively promote this, thus being confined to support visiting Swedish media people.
5. Increased priority to the communication aspects in general has a positive effect on the internal communication within the representation in all cases where the communication officers have been working effectively inside the representations. When working from a home office, this is not the case to the same extent. It is also notable that the results are better when the SCO or NCO is working full time instead of part time.
6. The increased priority has in some cases contributed to a general increase of staff interest for the communication aspect of their work, however, in some cases paired with anxiety for the possible extra workload and some uncertainty about how to attack those challenges. The latter seems to prevail in cases where the staff has not been involved or integrated in the planning and implementation of communication activities from the very beginning.
7. In large embassies, where a real division of labour between the Sida-missions and the rest of the embassies is applicable, it is of importance for the success of the communication activities that a good understanding exists about the specific tasks of the communication staff.
8. At the embassies visited, a need for follow-up, guidance and support from Sida HO in relation to planning and implementation of communication plans was identified.
9. In only one case has the local Swedish community been defined as a specific target group. This endeavour was successful thanks to the initiatives started up by the SCO. Responsibility for regular publications for the Swedish community has successfully been taken over by an editorial group of Swedes in Tanzania.

10. The use of Local Communication Consultants or NCOs is a more cost effective and sustainable solution than the alternative models of organisation, and the NCOs have the advantage of possessing a local network. The best results have been obtained where local consultants/NCOs have been able to work effectively at the embassies/representations, and when they possess:
 - professional strategic communication skills
 - good command of English
 - international development cooperation experience
11. A Sida HO based SCO covering one or more regions, acting also as a travelling Communication Advisor is a relatively cost-effective model in relation to the information mission. With a few extra resources it would have been possible to increase the communication capacity at embassy level and subsequently enhance the overall cost effectiveness.
12. SCOs based at the embassies have been effective but cost wise an expensive solution.
13. The overall communication initiatives have focused on activities related to the information mission and the agency/department/embassy levels, i.e. communication between the embassy and local stakeholders and partners, promoting policy dialogue and partner relations. During 2002 preparations related to the contribution level including communications in development (CID) have been in progress in Central America.
14. Communication efforts undertaken in the pilot initiatives have resulted in:
 - Reinforced policy dialogue and awareness of Swedish development cooperation activities in the partner countries
 - Facilitation of partner cooperation and dialogue.
 - Potentials for increased awareness and knowledge of Swedish development cooperation among stakeholders and the general public in Sweden.
15. In general, it is difficult to assess the effect of the communication activities systematically, because a monitoring and evaluation system has not been developed, and indicators have not been defined.

5 Conclusions

When assessing the strengths and weaknesses in each of the pilot initiatives, it appears pertinent to conclude that planned communication can be an effective tool in promoting the policy dialogue and strengthening the partner relations in the partner countries as well as in Sweden. Thus, the pilot communication initiatives have facilitated the interaction between the embassy and important actors in the partner countries and to some extent in Sweden.

Some of the key factors which are found important for the successful development and implementation of communications in the partner countries are:

- The active participation and support from Heads of Mission.
- Awareness of the role of communications and capacity to handle communications among all embassy staffs.
- Employment of Communication Officers at the embassies.
- Access to local media and communication networks.

- Access to guidance and support from SCO in the Sida HO.
- Allocation of sufficient resources to implement communication initiatives.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded, that SCOs based at the embassies have been effective in relation to all levels of the Sida Communication Policy. Cost-wise this is an expensive solution compared to other models, and once procedures are institutionalised, NCOs may obtain the same results. Thus, it seems more cost effective, sustainable, and in line with Sida's Field Vision to employ National Communication Officers to be in charge of communications at a decentralised level.

When combining the effects of the present communication experiences and considering the cost-effectiveness, it is found that well qualified NCOs based at the embassies, effectively cooperating with SCOs with regional knowledge/experience placed in the Sida HO provides the best organizational framework for effective communications in the partner countries.

Considering the findings and conclusions of this study, a schematic illustration of a proposed communication model at embassies is shown in Table 3 below.

The model indicates:

1. The communication objectives related to the 4 levels of Sida's communication policy
2. The major target groups for communications at the embassies
3. The staff categories responsible for communications at the various levels
4. The departments in Sida HQ responsible for the overall strategic communication priorities and for support and back up of the embassies.

Table 3: A proposed schematic model for communications at embassies:

Communication objectives	Target groups	Main Responsibility	Sida HQ support and back-up
<u>Agency Level</u> – Promote policy dialogue in partner countries – Information on Sweden and Swedish development cooperation	<u>In partner countries:</u> Media - Electronic and Print Politicians and decision makers Authorities Partners The public	Ambassador and Head of Development Cooperation Division (DCD) Communication Officer	UD and Sida GD SK group, Sida/INFO
<u>Department and Embassy level</u> – Create good partner relations – Create dialogue with specific stakeholders – Ensure good internal communications	Partners Specific stakeholders Embassy and Sida HQ staff	Ambassador/Head of DCD Programme Officers Communication Officer	Regional and Sector Departments in Sida SK-group, Sida/INFO
<u>Contribution level</u> – Increase knowledge, participation, and transparency – Enhance planned communications in all Swedish supported projects and programmes – Support communication channels and media	Authorities responsible for sector programmes Partner organisations	Programme Officers Communication Officers (Head of DCD)	Regional and Sector Departments in Sida SK-group, Sida/INFO
<u>Information Mission</u> – Increase knowledge, information and debate on Swedish Development Cooperation to obtain continued support to DC	<u>In Sweden/EU:</u> Media Politicians and Decision makers Local authorities Partners	Sida/INFO Press Service with input from Communication and Programme Officers at embassies.	SCO in regional departments

6 Recommendations

The following recommendations for the structuring and use of communications at the various levels of Sida's development co-operation are based on the above findings and conclusions.

6.1 Overall Structure and Capacity Building

The Strategic Communication group in Sida/INFO is responsible for supporting the Sida HO departments and the embassies in their communication planning and to have a coordinating role for the whole development of the Sida communication initiatives, including the development of policies and guidelines. The human resource capacity to undertake these comprehensive tasks is limited, especially in view of the identified need for support and follow-up activities in relation to the introduction of strategic communication and development of communication plans at the embassies.

Recommendation 1:

To increase the capacity to integrate communications at all levels of the Sida operations at the embassies, it is recommended:

- (a) That Sida staff is introduced to strategic communications before being deployed to the embassies.
- (b) That regional support desks are created, staffed by Swedish Communication Officers (SCO) who combine knowledge of the region with communication skills, (e.g. through appointment of Communication Officers at the Sida regional departments). This should ensure a needed firm anchoring of the decentralized structure with specific persons to be addressed. Several different organizational setups can be applied, but the important point is that communication officials at the embassies know exactly whom to deal with at HO.

At the embassies, it is recommended:

- (c) That a full time National Communication Officer (large embassies) and a part time NCO or one to two Program Officers (small embassies) are employed and appointed responsible for the development and coordination of communications at the embassies in close cooperation with above SCOs. Apart from communication strategy skills, the NCOs should have a good command of English and have experience from development cooperation work.
- (d) One or more local, well qualified, Communication Consultants may assist the above responsible NCO or Pos ad hoc in the implementation of the CID-activities and assist the Ambassador and the head of DCD regarding communications at embassy level.
- (e) The head of mission and the communication responsible staff will receive guidance and support upon request, from the SCO at Sida HO and the Sida/INFO- SK-group. Part of the guidance should consist in a manual illustrated with good practice examples, for which inspiration might be found in similar publications of other aid organizations.

Recommendation 2

To ensure continuous capacity building and development of communications, it is recommended that:

- Annual communications policy and practice seminars for the staff responsible for communications and the regional support desks should be arranged by Sida HO. The purpose is mutual support, inspiration and learning.

6.2 Implementation of Communication Activities

Recommendation 3

So far, a comprehensive amount of activities have been implemented by the embassies and in Sweden. The activities have been implemented in accordance with set objectives. However, indicators have not been established and development of monitoring and evaluation procedures has not been part of the communication planning. Thus, it is not possible systematically to evaluate the effect or to adjust the activities in accordance with the results and changing needs.

To be able to adjust information and communication activities in accordance with the changing needs and to be able to assess the effect, it is recommended, that indicators and simple monitoring and evaluation systems are developed as part of the planning of the individual activities (e.g. see the Sida/INFO planning forms for “Kostnadsanalys av kommunikationsinsatser” (Cost Analyses for Communication Initiatives)).

Recommendation 4

Part of the work of the SCOs has concerned activities pertaining to the information mission. In a new decentralized structure with an increased number of National Program/Communication Officers it will not be expedient to be responsible for these activities at embassy level. Therefore, it is recommended that the responsibility for information to the Swedish public and stakeholders rests with Sida/INFO and SCOs based in Sida HO, and that the role of the embassies be limited to facilitation of information and to provide Sida/INFO with insight and regular tips and news.

Recommendation 5

Realization of Sida's communication policy will require a professional handling of communications in Sida HO as well as at the embassies.

It is, therefore, recommended that Sida Management supports the above recommendations and allocate the necessary human and financial resources for their implementation.

7 Future challenges

While the present evaluation is confined to the activities in 1999–2002, the evaluation team has come across recent developments in relation to possible ways of organising communication activities and regarding questions on how to deal with communication as a tool to promote the accomplishment of cooperation objectives. The team is aware that Sida INFO is working with these questions, and it is regarded useful to address them here as they may feed into this process.

7.1 Models of Organizing Communications

The hitherto working model of organising the activities in Nicaragua was changed in 2003, motivated by a desire for anchoring the communication activities more firmly with the permanent embassy staff. The contract with the local communication consultant will not be extended, instead it is decided that one of the programme officials (SPO), and her assistant, both will be allocated 15% of their time from September 2003 to coordinate the communication activities of the Embassy, with foreseen assistance from experienced local consultants for ad hoc assignments.

The new “communication crew” of the embassy is confident about finding adequate local consultants for specific tasks, but it does not yet possess the desirable knowledge of the media landscape/communications possibilities in Nicaragua to decide on specific action. On this background it would appreciate more guidance from Sida-INFO on the specific, desirable content of communications in development, for example through the issuing a practical manual illustrated with examples of best practices. This attitude is supported by other embassy staffs, which are positively motivated for communication action, but somewhat doubtful as to what exactly it should contain.

In this way, a new model of organisation is introduced, where permanent Embassy staffs, SPOs or NPOs, take over the responsibility for the coordination of the communications activities. The present situation in Tanzania is similar, but the embassy staffs here do not appear to feel the same de facto responsibility for communication in development.

While experience do not yet exist to provide findings on the adequacy of this arrangement, there is reason to point out that the selection of this model indicates

- A high priority attached to the communication issues by the embassy, even though the time allocation (0,3 staff) is modest compared to for example a full time NCO
- A certain experienced difficulty in establishing the right cooperation models with local communication consultants on a daily basis
- A consequent need for more guidance for this model from Sida/INFO, given that the responsible embassy does not necessarily possess the required communication skills for assuming this responsibility

Finally, it should be mentioned that overall, this model is less cost-effective than the assignment of an NCO.

7.2 Sector Support

There is reason to emphasise that the increasing role of the sector wide approaches (SWAP) in Swedish development cooperation tend to soften the analytical difference between communication in development projects in the classical sense and communication initiatives at the embassy/country level. When applying a SWAP, communication-in-project does not make sense as such. What does make sense are the “sector-wide comments” which may be given in public as a part of the policy dialogue addressing the challenges of cooperation in a way which contains a communicative and transparent element enabling the public to know and participate in the debate, in line with the democratic ideals which Swedish cooperation stand for.

7.3 Questions relating to Communication in Development

During the interviews with the programme officers and other embassy staff about the new and increased role of the communication aspects, a positive attitude was found, but paired with quite some uncertainty about how to deal with the issues in practical terms. When analysing the reasons for this uncertainty, it appears that some necessary requirements for effective communication-in-development (CID) are not yet fully in place, like:

- 1) What are the objectives of CID in more specific terms?
- 2) How can the objectives be pursued in concrete terms in relation to the target audiences?
- 3) Who should be responsible for supervising and for implementing action at the Embassy level?

Re 1) Among the possible objectives for CID at a general level, discussions with Embassy staff point to increased **transparency** in projects and programs and to the related possibility for **“social audit”** on the part of the end-beneficiaries, as a contribution to overall democratic development in the recipient countries, as important elements.

In addition to the overall objectives, it will often be a project specific objective to ensure that all potential beneficiaries are aware of the existence of the project and within certain sectors it may be an objective in itself to **influence the behaviour of the target groups** in specific ways.

In practical terms it also appears that an important intermediary objective for CID is the establishment of **effective networks** between the professionals in the various organisations and units involved in the implementation of projects. This would comprise not only the concerned Embassy staff and their government partners and possible partners from other cooperating agencies, but also the involved professionals from specialised departments in Sida Headquarters.

Re 2) technically, the above objectives may be pursued through the inclusion of communication components in the programs and projects, with corresponding activities and budget lines. This is already the case within a number of new initiatives in cooperation countries in Central America.

However, in order to design the right activities for the support of the above objectives, certain professional communication skills and knowledge of how to reach the target audiences are required.

More specifically, the agents in question must possess knowledge about the national media landscape, including the media consumption and media access of the target audiences, and they should know how to use the appropriate communication techniques in relation to specific audiences.

Practically, this requires the presence of a certain amount of professional communication skills on the part of the responsible project or program implementing staff, or access to those skills, and a knowledge about the national media landscape, which may already exist, or, if not, should be brought about through audience research.

Re 3) In the preparative CID courses held at the Swedish Missions in Central America, the main target group has been the program officials of the embassies as the perceived prime change agents within the field of CID. However, some program officials find that there are limitations to their capacity to be able to go into details with the CID-activities.

- The program officials cover very large areas of responsibility and may find it difficult to find time to devote to new obligations.
- Projects and programs are implemented by the Government in the cooperation country, by NGOs or in certain cases by other international agency partners, the reason why direct influence on communication to the end target groups may be quite a complicated process.
- The increasing application of a SWAP-approach implies that the target audiences are not delimited to specific groups, but rather consist in the general public, thus requiring new ways of thinking in terms of how to convey the desired messages.

A consequence seems to be that rather than relying solely on the responsible program officials, a network approach is required when it comes to the implementation of the CID-activities, including the

responsible officials from the partner agencies. To some extent, the practical consequences of this, through active networking with other partners have already been pursued in Honduras and, especially, Guatemala.

7.4 Questions relating to the overall structure for management of communications in Sida

In view of the ambitious approach to communications as indicated in the Sida communication policy and the identified needs for coordination and continuous support for development of communications in the field, one of the future challenges for Sida is to review its overall organisation of strategic communication, i.e.:

1. What role shall the Strategic Communication group have in the future?
2. Is Sida/INFO the most appropriate organisational frame for development of strategic communication?
3. How shall communications be organised in view of the anticipated increased number of Communication Officers at central as well as decentralised levels

1 Description of Sida

Sida is the Swedish government agency for bilateral international development cooperation and most of Sweden's cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe. The Parliament and Government decide on the development cooperation budget, the countries which Sweden shall have programmes of development cooperation and the focus of cooperation.

Sida supports activities in almost 120 countries, including Central and Eastern Europe. Most of the resources are allocated to the twenty or so countries with which Sida has extensive, long-term programmes of cooperation. The framework of cooperation is specified in special country strategies and regulated in agreements between Sida and the government of each partner country.

Sida's contributions are based on the changes the partner countries wish to implement and are prepared to allocate funds to. Sida's task is to assess the type of contributions that can give results, and then to provide the know-how and capital required. Each contribution is carefully studied and evaluated. Sida's support to any project ceases as soon as the project is able to operate independently of Sida funding. Less successful projects should be concluded rapidly rather than revised. Sida operates through some 1,500 partners in cooperation, mostly Swedish. These are companies, popular movements, organisations, universities and government agencies that possess the expertise to make Swedish development cooperation successful.

In the long run Swedish development cooperation should lead to wider economic and social cooperation to the benefit of all parties concerned.

For more information, please see Sida's homepage: www.sida.se

2 Background

Sida's communication policy states that "Communication offers a means for Sida to achieve its overall objective – to contribute to a world without poverty. In order to make best use of its effects, we must work with communication at all levels in our operations."

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide Sida with a basis for their future work with strategic communication in the partner countries. Since 1999, projects in Central America, Tanzania and Kosovo have been running in three different environments and under different conditions (see short briefs below).

In two of these regions/countries (Nicaragua and Tanzania), Swedish embassies have a large Sida-representation. Following Sida's strategic priorities, the number of embassies with enlarged representation will increase in the coming years. Consequently, it is important for Sida to learn more about how communication can be used as an effective supporting instrument in this new environment.

"Kosovo"

A communication officer was employed in September 1999 and posted at Sida's Information

department to work with information on the post war reconstruction. Main channels has been the media and printed information materials. Several field trips were made. A year later the post was transferred to Sida's department for Central and Eastern Europe, and the task expanded to comprise the development cooperation with all Balkan states.

“Central America”

Starting point for this communication project was the rapid response Sweden made to support the reconstruction after the hurricane Mitch in October 1998. Two communication officers were employed, one stationed at the field office in Honduras and one at Sida-Stockholm. Media relations, production of information materials and network building were among the primary activities. The project shifted character in late 2000 to focus on developing strategic communication and to comprise all three Swedish embassies in the region. The communication officer in Stockholm was thus transferred to the embassy in Nicaragua. One local communication officer was employed the following year in Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras respectively. In early 2002 the project Mitch was concluded, and since the local officers has planned and further developed the communication work with support from Sida-Stockholm and Swedish consultants.

“Tanzania”

In February 2000 a Swedish communication officer was employed at the embassy in Tanzania, with a job description developed together with Sida's Information department. Main tasks included information about Sweden and Swedish-Tanzanian development cooperation. Relations with the media were promoted and cultural activities arranged. The officer has also cooperated with the officers in the two projects described above. The post ended in mid 2002, and since then the communication work is handled by other embassy staff.

3 Description of the assignment

Basis for the analysis to be carried out are the four levels described in Sida's communications policy:

- At agency level
- At department and embassy level
- At contribution level
- The information mission

The communication planning work and the implementation of the plans in the three projects shall be analysed and compared. The analysis shall also contain the experienced usefulness of communication as a method in development cooperation assistance.

The effects of a number of activities divided in different channels and target groups shall be examined. Advantages and disadvantages with a Swedish officer versus locally employed staff shall also be described. The role of the communication officers within the embassy organisation shall be looked at, some officers have been placed within the embassy, others have been working from their own offices.

The following criteria shall be considered for the evaluation:

Fulfilment. Has the planned results been achieved?

Impact. What are the intended and unintended experienced effects of the activities, including effects on the intended beneficiaries and others? What are the positive and negative effects in the short and the long term?

Efficiency. Are there more cost-effective methods of achieving the same results? Could the same outputs have been produced with a smaller amount of inputs/resources or could the same inputs/resources have produced a larger output?

4 Purpose and objective

The consultancy shall describe what effects the communication work has had for the fulfilment of the goals set by the respective embassy, i.e. to what degree the communication plans has contributed to the accomplishment of country- and regional strategies.

5 Method

The evaluation shall be carried out by

- Studying to what degree the communication planning work and the activities can be assumed to have contributed to the fulfilment of the goals set by the embassies.
- Studying of job descriptions, reports, information materials, communication strategies/plans, work plans and other documents of relevance
- Interviewing of heads at the embassies and a selection of desk officers.

6 Reporting

Final report shall be delivered in three copies and electronically to Sida not later than 19 September 2003 and also be presented in a workshop at Sida.

7 Specification of requirements

7.1 Requirements and Qualifications

The Tenderer must meet the requirements listed below.

7.1.1 Assignment performance quality

The Tenderer should describe in their own words their understanding of the final objective of the assignment.

	Sida
General	– Sida – ett verktyg för global utveckling – Sidas informationsavdelning – Biståndsviljan och svenskarnas inställning till utvecklingsfrågor, Sida 2001 – Sveriges utvecklingssamarbete, Sida 2001 – Gemensamt ansvar. Sveriges politik för utveckling. Regeringens proposition 2002/03. – Verksamhetsplaner, Informationsavdelningen, 2001, 2002, and 2003. – Strengthening of Sida's capacity in the field: The role of locally employed professionals. Sida Field Vision. 26.06.2003. – Vision for a strengthened field orientation. Action Programme. Sida Communications
Communications	– Communications policy, Sidas work with communication, Sida April 2002.

	Central America
General	– Kort om Centralamerika och Karibien – Turning Disasters into Opportunities – Swedish Contributions to Reconstruction & Transformation in Central America after Disaster Mitch – Review commissioned by Sida, Pierre Frühling, May 2002 – Reserapport från El Salvador, Guatemala och Honduras, 13.11–6.12, 2002 (Kristina Robberts)
Nicaragua	– Kort om Nicaragua, Sida – Development Cooperation with Nicaragua, May–October 2002 – Kommunikationsplan För Ambassaden I Nicaragua, 2001–02 – Communication Strategy, The Embassy of Sweden in Nicaragua, 2003 – Informe, Plan de Comunicacion-Accion, Enero-Diciembre 2002 (Eleonora Rivera Navas) – Decision: Consultant Services regarding work related to Communication and Public Relation (148/01) – Decision: Communication Plan for 2003 for the Swedish Embassy in Managua (20/03) – Decision: Consultancy for the Implementation of the Communication Plan 2003 for the Swedish Embassy in Managua (26/03) – Rapport, Kommunikationsprocesser inom project, December 2002 – Reserapport, 2003-03-24–28 (Anders Rönquist & Klas Palm) – Reserapport, 2002-11-4–16 (Anna Swedmark)
Guatemala	– Slutrapport, Kristina Robberts & Anna Swedmark. 2002 – Kort om Guatemala, Sida – Development Cooperation with Guatemala, April–September 2002 – Kommunikationsplan För ambassaden I Guatemala 2001–02 – Kommunikationsplan För ambassaden I Guatemala 2002 – Communications Plan for the Embassy in Guatemala 2003 – Communications Action Plan for the Embassy of Sweden in Guatemala January–June 2003

	– Decision: Support to: Communication Project at the Swedish Embassy in Guatemala, 2002 & – Tillägsbeslut, informationsprojekt Honduras (2003-01-21) – Consultancy regarding Public Relations at the Embassy of Sweden (13.9.01)
Honduras	– Kort om Honduras, Sida – Development Cooperation with Honduras, April–September 2002 – Activity Plan for Communication 2002 – Honduras, Aktivitetsplan 2002, uppdatering av kommunikationsstrategi – Activity Plan for Communication January–December 2003 – Planes De Accion Especificos, 2003 – PropuestaCodigo de la Paz (24.2.03)

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List of persons consulted

Annex 3

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For persons consulted in the respective countries and in relation to the individual country studies, please refer to the Country Study reports.		

COUNTRY STUDY REPORT

CENTRAL AMERICA

Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala

**(Evaluation of Communication Initiatives in Central America, Tanzania and West
Balkan)**

1999–2002

Central America

1 Introduktion

The evaluation team met with the two Swedish Communication Officers (SCOs) in charge of the activities during this period of time and had access to their reporting. The team further consulted the Review of May 2002 on the Swedish Mitch contribution including the communications aspects, and met with its author as well as with the embassy staff in Central America, who has been involved with the activities in 1999–2001.

2 Background

The hurricane Mitch struck the Sida cooperation countries in Central America, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua (and El Salvador), hard in October 1998. Consequently an extraordinary effort was mobilised by Sida for the rehabilitation of the sub-region. As a part of the effort, a special information effort was agreed upon, aiming at the public in Sweden and in Central America as well as the governments and other partner organisations in Central America. The effort was an important pilot project for Sida INFO as it was the most comprehensive effort of its kind until then.

3 Budget and organisation

Sida INFO was allocated 4 MSEK for this purpose for use in each of the years 1999–2001. Two SCOs were employed, in the first phase with an equal distribution of mutually supporting resources in Sweden and Central America, and in the second phase with the main emphasis on Central America:

The working schedule of the two SCOs was:

SCO I

- July 1999–December 2000, full time at the Swedish Mission in Honduras
- January 2001–July 2001, halftime Honduras, halftime Guatemala
- August 2001–December 2001, fulltime Sida-INFO with travels to Honduras (and
- Bolivia)

SCO II

- July 1999–October 2000, fulltime Sida-INFO
- November 2000–December 2001, the Swedish representations in Nicaragua, Guatemala and, to some extent, Honduras.

4 Strategy and target audiences

The special information effort was directed towards informing the Swedish public, thus contributing to a general awareness of the challenges of development cooperation, as well as towards the cooperation countries and their governments in Central America. Thus, the objectives were among others to “facilitate project implementation and international coordination and to make visible Sweden’s role in the reconstruction”. The effort was also seen as a means to enhance the participation of civil society in the reconstruction.

During 2000, as described below, the objective changed into initiating a long-term strengthening of the communication aspect of Swedish development cooperation in Central America

5 Activities

5.1 Phase I, 1999-2000

Sweden

The Swedish part of the information effort took place July 1999–November 2000, and included, in collaboration with several implementing agents:

- Touring Swedish schools with lectures and a film on the Mitch-effort, reaching out to 10.000 persons
- Production of a film and corresponding print material, which, in addition to the above use, was distributed to the centres for pedagogical materials
- Lectures at teacher training colleges as a teaser for the film
- Support for a UNDP-study tour to Central America for representatives for political youth organisations.
- Participation in a benevolent arrangement at a private TV-station (TV 4)
- A supplement in the commercial newspaper “Mersmak”
- A supplement for the mainstream newspaper “Svenska Dagbladet”
- An advertisement campaign in collaboration with private companies
- Grants for journalists writing on Mitch
- Promotion of articles in the local press connected with local Mitch arrangement or the presence of Swedish Mitch related staff in the local settings.
- A Mitch-site on the Sida homepage, with corresponding advertisement on its existence
- Promotion of networking between Swedish organisations and individual engaged in the Mitch-effort
- Production of overhead material for use in NGOs
- Fact sheets
- A brochure, also in English and Spanish
- Photo exhibition
- A festive event at the official termination of the Mitch effort

Central America

In Central America, the following activities took place 1999–2000

- Servicing the press with news on the different aspects of the effort
- Servicing visiting Swedish press people
- Production of flexible information material like overheads, power points, press releases and articles to be used, among others, by the staff of the Swedish representations.

- Keeping the home-pages of the representations up to date on the Mitch effort
- Arranging for traineeships of the representations for Swedish press students
- Production and maintenance of a photo archive
- A road-protection environmental project
- Promotion of networking between organisations and individuals engaged in the Mitch effort

5.2 Phase II, 2001

In 2001, the activities gradually developed a proportionately stronger focus on the permanent communication needs of the Swedish representations in Central America. As a consequence, Sida INFO and the SCOs decided to concentrate the effort on the Central American side where they conducted individual interviews with the staff on the needs and scope for a stronger communications aspect in their work and subsequently a workshop on communication and a seminar on press relations was conducted at all three representations. At the Swedish representations, there was, after some initial hesitation among the staff, a receptive attitude towards the idea of using the post-Mitch efforts to initiate communications a means not only to make Sweden visible, but also to use it to make the policy dialogue with the partners more effective and to enhance collaboration with civil society. The change towards a more positive attitude was promoted not least by the heads of the representations who tended to share the conviction of the importance of the communication aspect. In order to pursue these objectives, and to contribute to the continuation of the above activities, local communication consultants were recruited to each of the Swedish representations by the Sida INFO officers.

2002-Activities

In 2002, the Mitch-SCOs have, in their new capacity as ad hoc consultants, supported the following activities, mentioned in the below country reports:

- Communication strategy in Honduras included the sub-regional meeting of the local communication consultants (two weeks)
- The conduct of a course in Stockholm for the local communication consultants (three weeks)
- Assistance to the communication activities in Honduras, including staff talks and seminar (two weeks)
- Assistance to the communication activities in Honduras and in Guatemala/El Salvador, including staff talks and seminar (three weeks)

6 Effects

Based on interviews with the concerned Sida INFO officers and other stakeholders and on the Review of May 2002 on the Swedish Mitch contribution, including the communications aspects, it is the general impression of the evaluation team that the first phase of the information effort was very successful in terms of visibility of the Swedish intervention both in Central America and in Sweden. This in spite of some deficiencies identified in the Mid-Term Review, including:

- Start-up problems at the Swedish representations due to the hasty commencement of many activities

- An over-ambitious task description for the two information officers, making it difficult to maintain the desirable focus of the activities
- Insufficient guidance from Sida INFO to the information officers and the embassies.

These conclusions are supported by the self-evaluation of the two Sida INFO officers, where they stress that they in most respects had to rely in their own imaginativeness in the response to their comprehensive mandate and that a stronger support from Sida INFO, including for mobilising the top echelons of Sida and elsewhere in the Swedish society, might have been conducive for an even larger scale of the information effort leading to a larger consumption of the resources allocated.

During the second phase in Central America, the information effort moulded the ground for a more permanent change in the attitude to communications as an important tool in development cooperation in general, according to the Review and the observations of the evaluation team. The innovative action by the Mitch-SCOs in this respect has contributed to an important development within Sida's communication practice in general, which has been further pursued by the local consultants under the continued guidance of the "Mitch-SCOs".

7 Fulfilment of objectives

Given the quick and improvised nature of the Mitch information effort under Phase I and the corresponding broad mandate and lack of a detailed ex ante strategy, it is not possible to provide an exact measure of the extent to which the objectives were fulfilled. On the one hand, it is the assessment of all concerned parties, that the overall objectives of making the Mitch-effort visible in Sweden and Central America and of supporting the effort in Central America by strengthening communication with Governments and NGOs was accomplished.

On the other hand it can be noted that out of the total amount of 12 MSEK, 5,801,000 were actually used, in spite of the energetic and comprehensive information effort. It is the assessment of the concerned SCOs that more funds could have been sensibly for the purpose, if more support and guidance had been in place.

Regarding the second phase, the activities were of a preparatory nature. As such, they seem to have served well by initiating the communication pilot projects in Central America.

8 Monitoring and evaluation

As it follows from the above, the Mitch-information effort would no doubt have gained from more participatory monitoring and systematic evaluation of the effects of the ongoing initiatives, of which there was very little during the process itself. As a result, it is not possible to be very exact about the effects of the outputs of the first phase, while there seems to be no doubt that it was considerable based on the sheer amount and outreach of the initiatives.

The above must be regarded in the light of fact that the Sida INFO group for strategic communication was only established in 2001.

Nicaragua

1 Introduction

The Swedish Embassy in Nicaragua was visited by Mr Gunnar Olesen (in the following referred to as “the consultant”), 11–15 June, 2003. The programme comprised meetings with the ambassador; representatives for other Embassy staff, including those responsible for communication activities; representatives for Sida-supported projects and for Sida-partner organisations within the international development community; beneficiaries; another bilateral donor and key informants from the academic and the press communities. (Annex 2 refers)

Briefing and debriefing meetings were held with the local communication consultant as well as the program officer and the assistant responsible for the communication activities of the Embassy. The consultant was provided with relevant print, electronic and audio-visual material illustrating the various aspects of the communication activities undertaken.

2 Background

The Swedish Embassy in Managua has had a rather important position in Nicaragua since the fall of the Somoza-dictatorship, 1979. It is mainly preoccupied with Sida-related development cooperation, comprising ca. 20 staff in total, approximately half of them Swedish and half of them program officials. The program officials represent a mixture of Swedish and local professionals.

3 Description and analysis of the communication activities

3.1 The Strategy of the Embassy

Concrete strategies with adjoining communication plans were elaborated for 2001 and 2002. The content of these strategies and plans focused on communication activities on three levels:

1. Participation in public debate in the national press as a part of the policy dialogue on the priorities of development cooperation.
2. Public information about the content of Swedish development cooperation with Nicaragua in general.
3. Communication within projects and programs as a means to enhance the accomplishment of their objectives, thus far in terms of preparatory activities.

3.2 Target audiences

In broad terms, covering the communication activities in 2001–02, the following main target audiences may be identified:

At the first level, the primary target audiences are the authorities, the “political class”, the press and the international community in Nicaragua and secondarily, the newspaper-reading part of the public.

At the second level, the target groups are the Government and other donors as well as visitors to the Embassy and other persons that the Embassy gets in touch with through the individual projects.

At the third level, the first target group to be addressed has been defined as the Embassy staff to be trained in the rationale, design and implementation of policy, program and project specific communication plans, while the final target audience is the beneficiaries. Given, however, that Sida-projects are implemented by Government partners, NGOs and/or in cooperation with other development cooperation agents, like specialised international organisations, the professionals of these bodies may be regarded as an intermediary target group.

3.3 Activities and Distribution Systems

At the first level, the activities mainly consisted in the “spokesman-capacity” of the ambassador, who relatively often comments upon salient issues of importance to Nicaragua’s development cooperation with Sweden and with the international community in general. On certain occasions, the Swedish ambassador appears as the formal spokesman of the international community. Such comments mainly appear as interviews in leading newspapers and magazines or on TV.

Regarding public information on Swedish development cooperation with Nicaragua and its components, the following activities have been undertaken from mid-2001 to June 2003:

- Comprehensive print and TV/radio press coverage has accompanied the signings of cooperation agreements between Sweden and Nicaragua. A thick binder of press clippings documents that coverage is frequently visible in the Nicaraguan press.
- A comprehensive and well-designed Embassy-website has been created. On a monthly basis, it receives some 300 visitors. A special brochure promotes knowledge of the website.
- Quick-screens on the development cooperation in general have been elaborated for the benefit of visitors to the Embassy and for various exhibitions and social functions.
- Project sheets have been developed for a number of the ongoing cooperation projects.
- Two booklets have been elaborated on the cooperation program in general:
 - “Unos suecos que no se hicieron los suecos” (1.000 copies), also translated and printed in a Swedish newsletter.
 - “Cooperando se forja el futuro” (300 copies in Spanish, 200 in Swedish).
- A brochure on the construction of the Yalagüina-Las Manos road (500 copies)
- A photo archive has been created, based on project photos taken by program officials supplied with digital cameras by the Embassy and with a course on their use.
- A power point presentation on the cooperation has been elaborated and the Embassy staff supplied with a power point course.

The brochures are distributed to Government partner organisations and other members of the donor community, through the Embassy reception and at meetings. In similar ways, other publications in Spanish on Sida’s activities in Latin America, received from Sida-Headquarters, are distributed.

Regarding communication within projects, preparative workshops and other training took place to motivate and qualify the Embassy staff to design and implement communication plans. These preparations have until now only materialised in a limited number of specific, new activities being carried out in this field – most notably communication initiatives within project which support the

training of the police and of obstetric nurses – while an undisputed positive attitude towards the idea among the program officials was found.

Some of the ongoing activities already contain longstanding important communication components as an integrated part of the project. This is the case regarding the Sida-implemented project for supporting the autonomous regions on the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua (RAAN-Sida-RAAS) as well as in Sida-supported and UNICEF-implemented health projects. Such projects represent valuable state of the art communication-in-project experience, regarding promotion of transparency and “bottom-up social audit” on the part of the beneficiaries, and “social communication” towards target audiences in order to change their behaviour in specified areas.

3.4 Fulfilment of the Objectives of the Communication Plans

The above activities have been guided effectively by the communication plans and when measuring the outputs against the plans, the internal assessment at the Embassy of a goal fulfilment of 80% appears justified.

3.5 Budget

The budget provided by the Embassy for the communication activities in 2002 amount to SEK 230.000 out of which SEK 110.000 covers the fee of the local communication consultant.

More significantly, however, the costs born by Sida-Stockholm for the consultancies from Sweden, and the costs related to the time devoted to communication activities by the officials of the Embassy, should be added to this amount. The standard cost applied in Sida budgeting for consultants appears to be SEK 25.000 per week, or approximately 1 M SEK per year, the same amount as the budgeted standard cost for deploying a permanent staff member.

Thus, it may be concluded that the use of local consultants is a very cost-effective solution, compared to the alternatives, even though the above, low, figure should be increased with the costs of the consultancies undertaken in order to support and monitor the work of the local consultants.

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

The abovementioned communication activities have until now been subject to evaluation in a section of the Review of the “Swedish Contributions to Reconstruction & Transformation in Central America after Disaster Mitch”, May 2002 and in Mid-Term Review on the same subject, September 2000.

Monitoring of the existing communication plans has not yet been formalised. However, brief reporting on a yearly basis by the local communication consultant constitute an informal monitoring combined with the regular visits by the initiating Sida-INFO consultant and other visits by Sida-officials and consultants.

In all three countries, the reporting on the work of the local consultants was quite brief, as it was limited to a small section in the Embassy’s general yearly reporting. As mentioned below, there was ample opportunity to supplement this scarce information from the interviewees and documentation met during the mission.

3.7 Effects

According to the opinions of several partners and key informants, the most important effect on the surrounding community is found on the first level: the public participation of the ambassador in the

policy dialogue with the authorities of Nicaragua. By rather frequent issuing of well-argued and frank statements he has succeeded in acquiring a seemingly undisputed, however informal, role of spokesman for the international community in crucial and sensitive matters relating to the politics and governance of the country. In this capacity, he is perceived by the public as the ambassador of Sweden, not as a Sida-representative.

The assumption of this role inevitably create resent in some quarters of national political life, but apparently only rather low-key, and according to key-informants, resentment is matched by satisfaction among the democracy promoting parts of public life. The “political” role of the ambassador is underpinned by the decade-long developed conception of Swedish development cooperation with Nicaragua to be of sizeable quantity and high quality, unbroken by the change of political system, when the Sandinist regime lost the elections in 1990. The abovementioned public information activities related to Swedish cooperation in general has served to uphold and develop this image, according to the high press profile of signings of agreements and festive events with Swedish participation.

On the program and project level, the end-effects still, as mentioned, remain to be seen. But a fertile ground has been created in the form of a positive attitude among the Embassy staff.

It is a general impression from the Embassy interviews that communication feedback to Swedish public has had a rather low priority and some Swedish Embassy staffs find that the high Swedish profile in Nicaragua is not matched by a corresponding knowledge in their home country about the existence of this profile. In this respect, Swedish priorities appear different from those of other donor countries in Nicaragua. However, according to Sida-INFO, this should be seen as reflection of a general decline of interest in Sweden in Latin American affairs and, more generally, in development cooperation.

4 The organisational set-up

In 2001, the working model of organising the activities in Nicaragua for the rest of the evaluation period was established with the recruitment of a local communication consultant, employed as a “1/2-time permanent consultant” and provided with a workplace at the Embassy.

The local communication consultants at the Swedish representations in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala have met occasionally in order to share experience. The three consultants have participated in a much-appreciated two-week course in Stockholm in order to familiarise them with Sida-structures and policies.

The local communication officer seems to have rendered undisputed, good services, but limited experience with international development cooperation and limited knowledge of English language has been perceived as a problem. Thus, it was the perception of the ambassador that the development of communication-in-projects has not yet materialized sufficiently, while the profiling of Sweden is more than sufficient.

Overall, the communication endeavours have until now been strongly influenced by the outgoing personality of the present ambassador and his engagement in supervising the activities. While the present change in the organisational set-up represents a firmer base in the Embassy, it may still be subject to change according to the inclinations of a new ambassador, as it has been the case for other donor countries.

5 Communication flow between key actors

Communication between the Embassy and Sida-INFO are regarded as insufficient, even though the seminars arranged for by Sida INFO have been appreciated. Also the assignment of an officer in Sida INFO with regional program experience has been noted as a promising sign for stronger future relations.

The internal communication in the Embassy between the layers in the hierarchy and between Swedish and local staff seems impeccable, whereas a more substantial communication between the programming staff and the local communications consultant has been wished for.

Communication between the Embassy and its various partners in different levels generally seem well working, not least within the Consultative Group of donors. However, more priority to the development of institutionalised relations with communication people from the partner organisations might be required for the materialisation of communication-in-projects.

Honduras

1 Introduction

The Swedish Embassy in Honduras was visited 16–18 June, 2003. The programme comprised meetings with the Counsellor; representatives for other Mission staff, including the communication officer; representatives for Sida-supported; for the NGO-community; for Sida-partner organisations within the international development community; beneficiaries; other bilateral donors and key informants from the academic and the press communities. (Annex 2 refers)

Briefing and debriefing meetings were held with the Counsellor. The consultant was provided with relevant print, electronic and audio-visual material illustrating the various aspects of the communication activities undertaken.

2 Background

The Swedish (Sida-) Mission in Tegucigalpa enjoys a visible position in the recent history of Honduras, since its start related to the comprehensive Swedish post-Mitch endeavour in Honduras, from which not least a number of Swedish constructed bridges serve as a visual symbol of effective aid. It comprises ca. 16 staff in total, approximately half of them Swedish and approximately half of them program officials. The program officials represent a mixture of Swedish and local professionals.

3 Description and analysis of the communication activities

3.1 The strategy of the mission

A concrete strategy with an adjoining communication plan was elaborated for 2002. The content of the strategy focused on communication activities at four levels:

1. Participation in public debate in the national press a part of the policy dialogue on the priorities of development cooperation.
2. Public information about the content of Swedish development cooperation with Honduras in general.
3. Communications within projects and programs as a means to enhance the accomplishment of their objectives, in terms of preparatory activities.
4. Internal communication within the Mission

3.2 Target Audience

In broad terms, the following main target audiences may be identified:

For the first level, the primary target audiences are the authorities, the “political class”, the press as well as the international community in Honduras and secondly, the newspaper-reading part of the public.

At the second level, the target groups are the Government and other donor partners as well as the visitors to the Mission and other persons that the Mission gets in touch with through the individual projects.

At the third level, the first target group to be addressed has been defined as part of the Mission staff, who has been trained at the Embassy in Guatemala, in the rationale, design and implementation of policy, program and project specific communication plans, while the final target audience is the beneficiaries. Given, however, that Sida-projects are implemented by Government partners, NGOs, or in cooperation with other development cooperation agents, like specialised international organisations, the professionals of these bodies have been an intermediary target group.

At the fourth level, the target group has been the Mission staff, with special focus on the local staff.

3.3 Activities and Distribution Systems

At the first level, the activities first and foremost consist in the “spokesman-capacity” of the Counsellor, supplemented by the ambassador, stationed in Guatemala, and by a couple of programme officers, relatively often commenting upon salient issues of importance to the participation of Honduras in development cooperation with Sweden and the international community at large. On certain occasions, the Swedish Counsellor appears as the formal spokesman of the international community. Such comments mainly appear in the form of interviews, most often in leading newspapers. The activities towards the press are supported by the elaboration of a Press Directory by the communication consultant.

Regarding public information on Swedish development cooperation with Honduras and its components, the following activities have been undertaken from October 2002 to June 2003:

- Comprehensive print and TV/radio press coverage has accompanied the signings of cooperation agreements between Sweden and Honduras. A thick binder of press clippings documents that coverage is frequently visible in the Honduran press.
- A Mission-website was designed, supported by fact-sheets, and inaugurated further to the visit of the consultant
- Two quick-screens on the development cooperation in general are being elaborated for the benefit of visitors to the Embassy and to various exhibitions and social functions.
- Five posters and five greeting cards are elaborated
- Six project sheets have been developed for ongoing cooperation projects and programs.
- A booklet is being elaborated on the cooperation program in general.
- Ten power point presentations on the cooperation in general are elaborated.
- The Mission has sponsored the elaboration of a comprehensive directorate of NGOs in Honduras.

An overall theme for the above information activities in the Honduran post-Mitch context has been “societal transformation instead of emergency aid”.

Regarding communication within projects, a number of preparative activities have taken place in order to motivate and qualify the Mission staff to design and implement communication plans within their areas of responsibility. Thus, a Sida-consultant has worked together with the communication officer on this purpose, by conducting a seminar on “communication in development”, as well as an appreciated seminar for the Embassy staff on “Mass media intervention and the Honduran Press”. Upon request, two program officials have received a course in Power Point Basics. These preparations have, as yet, only resulted in a limited number of specific, new activities being carried out in this field, in spite of an undisputed positive attitude towards the idea among the program officials.

Some of the ongoing activities already contain longstanding important communication components as an integrated part of the project. This is the case regarding the Sida-supported micro-credit for housing project, FUNDEVI, for which a special Sida-consultancy has taken place, and regarding the access to health project, ACCESO.

At the fourth level, internal communication at the Embassy has been promoted by the conduct of an eight-session workshop on internal communication for the local staff and an ethical code for daily work life at the Embassy has been discussed with all staff.

3.4 Fulfilment of the Objectives of the Communication Plan

The above activities have been guided effectively by the communication plan and when measuring the outputs against the plans, the internal assessment at the Embassy of an almost 100% goal fulfilment appears justified.

3.5 Budget

The information available shows that for the year 2002, there was a local consumption of SEK 120.094 for the fees to the local consultant and the corresponding specific communication activities. In order to get a realistic picture of the costs, an estimate should be made of the time consumption of the permanent staff on communication activities and of the costs of the monitoring and supporting consultancies from Sida-INFO.

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

The above mentioned communication activities have until now been evaluated in a section in the Review of the “Swedish Contributions to Reconstruction & Transformation in Central America after Disaster Mitch”, May 2002.

Monitoring of the existing communication plans has not yet been formalised. However, brief reporting on a yearly basis by the local information officer constitute an informal monitoring combined with the regular visits by the instigating Sida-INFO consultant, Kristina Robberts.

3.7 Effects

According to the opinions of several different partners and key informants, the most important effect on the surrounding community is found at the first level: the public participation of the Counsellor & colleagues and the Ambassador in the policy dialogue with the authorities of Honduras. By rather frequent issuing of well-argued and frank statements on salient issues of public life, they have succeeded in acquiring a seemingly undisputed, however informal, role of spokesmen for the international community in crucial and sensitive matters relating to the politics and governance of the country.

This role was highly appreciated by other members of the international aid community in Honduras, and of the local NGO-community, interviewed by the consultant. Those representatives underlined that the Swedish Mission had enriched the dialogue within the donor community and within the NGO-community. In this capacity, they are perceived as representatives of Sweden, more than Sida-representatives.

The assumption of this role inevitably create resentment in some quarters of national political life, but apparently only rather low-key, and according to key-informants resentment is matched by satisfaction among the democracy promoting parts of public life. (To illustrate prevailing conditions for the

democratic press in Honduras, it can be mentioned that the director of the newspaper “El Diario” was subject to a violent attack few days after the meeting with the consultant!).

The “political” role of the ambassador is underpinned by a conception of Swedish development cooperation with Honduras to be of sizeable quantity and high quality, particularly relating to the Mitch-alleviation efforts. The abovementioned public information activities related to Swedish cooperation in general has served to uphold and develop this image according to the high press profile of signings of agreements and festive events with Swedish participation.

At the program and project level, the end-effects still, as mentioned, remain to be seen. But a fertile ground has been created in the form of a positive attitude among the Embassy staff, even though mixed with some hesitance related to the possible consumption of scarce time resources.

4 ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

A model of organising the activities in Honduras was established with the recruitment of a local communication officer, employed as a full time consultant and provided with a workplace at the Embassy.

The Local Communication Consultant, educated in communication science, seems to have rendered undisputed, good services in relation to the communications efforts on the different abovementioned levels, helped by earlier experience with international development cooperation in Honduras and good command of English language. According to other Embassy staff, she has communicated well with them within their areas of responsibility and she has been effectively networking among colleagues from partner organisations.

Overall, the communication endeavours have until now been strongly influenced by the outgoing personality of the present Counsellor and his engagement in supervising the activities. Accordingly, the present organisational set-up may be subject to change according to the inclinations of a new counsellor.

5 COMMUNICATION FLOW BETWEEN KEY ACTORS

Communication between the Mission and Sida-INFO are regarded as insufficient, even though the seminars arranged for by Sida INFO, in Guatemala, and the work in Honduras by the Sida-employed consultants have been appreciated.

The internal communication in the Mission between the layers in the hierarchy and between Swedish and local staff appears very good.

Communication between the Embassy and its various partners at different levels generally seems to be well working, not least within the Consultative Group of donors. Institutionalised relations between communication people from the partners are well working, thus creating an important precondition for the materialisation of communication-in-projects.

Guatemala

1 Introduktion

The Swedish Embassy in Guatemala was visited by Mr Gunnar Olesen, (in the following referred to as “the consultant”) 19–24 June, 2003. The programme comprised meetings with the ambassador; the counsellor & head of the Sida-Mission, representatives for other Sida-staff, the local communication consultant; representatives for Sida-supported projects and for Sida-partner organisations within the international development community; beneficiaries; another bilateral donor and key informants from the academic and the press communities. (Annex 2 refers)

Briefing and debriefing meetings were held with the counsellor and the ambassador, respectively. The consultant was provided with relevant print, electronic and audio-visual material illustrating the various aspects of the communication activities undertaken.

2 Background

The Swedish Embassy in Guatemala City is mainly preoccupied with Sida-related development cooperation. It comprises ca. 25 staff in total, most of them working for Sida, approximately half of them Swedish and approximately half of them program officials. The program officials are a mixture of Swedish and local professionals.

3 Description and analysis of the communication activities

3.1 The Strategy of the Embassy

In Guatemala, the activities supporting the 1997 Peace Accord have been a pivotal element in Swedish development cooperation. This is reflected in the communication activities of the Sida mission in Guatemala.

A strategy with an adjoining communication plan was elaborated from November 2001 throughout 2002. The content focuses on communication activities on three levels:

1. Participation in public debate in the national press a part of the policy dialogue on the priorities of development cooperation.
2. Public information about the content of Swedish development cooperation with Guatemala in general.
3. Communication within projects and programs as a means to enhance the accomplishment of their objectives.

3.2 Target audiences

For the first level, the primary target audiences are the authorities, the “political class” and the press of as well as the international community in Guatemala, and secondarily, the newspaper-reading part of the public.

On the second level, the target groups are the Government and other donor partners as well as the visitors to the Embassy and other persons that the Embassy gets in touch with through the individual projects.

On the third level, the first target group to be addressed has been defined as the Embassy staff to be trained in the rationale, design and implementation of policy, program and project specific communication plans, while the ultimate target audience is the beneficiaries. Given, however, that Sida-projects are implemented by Government partners, NGOs, or in cooperation with other development cooperation agents, like specialised international organisations, the professionals of these bodies have been an intermediary target group.

3.3 Activities and Distribution Systems

At the first level, the activities first and foremost consist in the “spokesman-capacity” of the Ambassador, relatively often commenting upon salient national issues of importance to Guatemala’s participation in development cooperation with Sweden and with the international community in general. On certain occasions, the Swedish ambassador appears as the formal spokesman of the international community. Such comments mainly appear in the form of interviews, most often in leading newspapers or on TV.

Regarding public information on Swedish development cooperation with Guatemala and its components, the following activities have been undertaken:

- Comprehensive print and TV/radio press coverage has accompanied the signings of cooperation agreements between Sweden and Guatemala. A thick binder of press clippings documents that coverage is frequently visible in the Guatemalan press.
- An Embassy-website has been created.
- (Quick-screens on the development cooperation in general have been elaborated for the benefit of visitors to the Embassy and to various exhibitions and social functions.
- Project sheets have been developed for a number of the ongoing cooperation projects.
- Booklets have been elaborated on the cooperation program in general.)

Regarding communication within projects, preparative activities have taken place in order to motivate and qualify the Embassy staff to design and implement communication plans within their areas of responsibility. Thus, consultants employed by Sida-INFO have held a seminar on this purpose. These preparations have not yet resulted in specific, new activities being carried out in this field, in spite of a positive attitude towards the idea among the program officials. Another set of preparations has taken place through the creation of a network among the communication officials of a number of Sida-partner organisations, on the initiative of the Sida-communication consultant.

Some of the ongoing activities already contain longstanding important communication components as an integrated part of the project. This is the case regarding the Sida-supported and PAHO-implemented health project.

3.4 Fulfilment of the objectives of the communication plan

The above activities have been guided effectively by the communication plan and when measuring the outputs against the plans, it appears that the large majority of the objectives have been fulfilled.

3.5 Budget

The available information shows a budget for the communication activities in 2002 of SEK 450.000, out of which 200.000 was allocated for personnel support from Sida INFO and 130.000 for the remuneration of the half time employed local consultant.

3.6 Monitoring and evaluation systems

The above mentioned communication activities have until now been subject to evaluation in a section in a Review of the “Swedish Contributions to Reconstruction & Transformation in Central America after Disaster Mitch”, May 2002 and in the Mid-Term Review on the same subject, September 2000. Monitoring of the existing communication plans has not yet been formalised.

However, brief reporting on a yearly basis by the local information officer constitute an informal monitoring combined with the regular visits by the instigating Sida-INFO consultant, and other visits by Sida-officials and consultants.

3.7 Effects

According to the opinions of several different partners and key informants, the most important effect on the surrounding community is to be found on the first level: the public participation of the ambassador in the policy dialogue with the authorities of Guatemala, where the outgoing personality of the ambassador has played an important role. A side-effect of some importance, stemming from the creation of a network between communicators partner organisations, is their unanimous statement of the network having helped them in their daily work by providing more prestige to the communication activities in general.

4 The organisational set-up

In 2001, the working model for the rest of the evaluation period of organising the activities in Guatemala was established with the recruitment of a local communication officer, employed as a “1/2-time permanent consultant”, having her workplace outside the Embassy at a home-based office. The local consultant has also covered the Swedish activities in El Salvador, through frequent travels to this country.

The Local Communication Consultant seems to have rendered good services, but limited experience with international development cooperation and limited knowledge of English language has been perceived as a problem in the Embassy. However, it would under any circumstances have been difficult for the communication consultant to work effectively with communication-in-development given the lack of permanent presence at the Embassy. Likewise is it difficult for her to represent the Embassy in a proper way towards the local press and authorities without being able to use the Embassy addresses. In addition, it has proven difficult for the consultant to find the right division of her work between the duties related to Sida and those related to the Embassy as such. The root of this problem seems to be that Sida-regulations inhibit her permanent working out of the Embassy, which again makes it difficult to establish a smooth division of duties between her masters.

It is the perception of the Sida-Counsellor that the development of communication-in-projects has not yet materialised as it should. On this background he would appreciate more specific guidance from Sida-INFO on the specific, desirable content of communications in development. This attitude seems supported by other Embassy staffs, who are positively motivated for communication action, but somewhat doubtful as to what exactly it should contain.

5 Communication flow between key actors

Communication between the Embassy and Sida-INFO are regarded as insufficient, even though the seminars arranged for by Sida INFO have been appreciated. The Sida-Counsellor emphasised the desirability of a participatory elaboration of a sustainable communication strategy for the Sida Missions, in which the Missions take part actively.

The internal communication in the Embassy between the layers in the hierarchy and between Swedish and local staff seems generally good, even though somewhat marked by different understandings of the communication requirements between Sida and the rest of the Embassy. Particularly in relation to what is communication-in-development and what it should be.

Given the above shortcomings of a practical nature, professional communication has been insufficient between the communication consultant and the programme officers.

Communication between the Embassy and its various partners in different levels generally seem well working, not least within the group of donors and authorities of Guatemala. This includes the development of institutionalised relations between communication people from the partners.

Joint conclusions – Central America

At the Embassy/country level, public communication on salient aid policy issues within the international aid community and with the authorities and the general public has been very effective and seemingly established a position of the Swedish Missions as a sort of “legitimate political pressure group”, referred to by some interviewees as “the European spokesman of the donors”. This is very much a result of the outgoing personalities of the Mission leaders, supported by local communication consultants in the establishment of well working relations with the local press.

Likewise, general information about the nature and content of Swedish development cooperation with the recipient countries appears pertinent and well-covered in relation to the different possible target audiences, thanks to the initiatives realised by the local communication consultants in collaboration with Swedish consultants engaged by Sida-INFO.

In reverse, it is a general feeling among Embassy staff that communication feedback to the public in Sweden about the activities in Central America is not developed to its full potential.

The increased priority attached to the communications aspects, the communication strategies, and plans of action, has had a positive spin-off on internal communications at the embassies in general, where the staffs have a greater awareness of the importance of this aspect. Most explicitly, this seems to be the case in Honduras, and to some extent in Nicaragua, whereas the Embassy in Guatemala deals with a certain communications barrier between the Sida-mission and the rest of the Embassy.

While preparations for policy, program and project specific communication, to enhance the accomplishment of the objectives, have been thoroughly pursued in a positive spirit, concrete results have yet materialised only to a limited extent, except for the abovementioned policy dialogue and specific project with in-built communication components. While there is by and large a positive attitude to the overall idea, some uncertainty still exists among the concerned staff about the guidelines to be followed and about the practical measures to be taken.

The effects of the activities were perceived as the most satisfactory in Honduras, maybe not surprising, as the local consultant was able to work full time and with effective access to all Embassy staff. However, it also played a role, that while all three local, communication educated, consultants were quite junior, the consultant in Honduras still had some previous experience from other international development cooperation in Honduras and was in full command of English. The Head of Mission was, accordingly, confident in the further development of CID based on the present set-up, where the embassies in Guatemala and Nicaragua envisage changes in the set-up (see the “Future”-section).

The resources used on the communication activities have been quite limited in terms of budgets, partly as a result of the economic solution of using local consultants to a wide extent, and, given the overall importance attached to communications by the heads of Mission, the resource question was not perceived as a problem.

This is the case also regarding the use of time by project officials for communication activities, where the objectives were considered important enough by the concerned parties to justify the time consumption, even though some program officials expressed concern about being able to cope with this additional duty on top of a busy schedule.

A widespread desire for more guidance from and closer relations to Sida-INFO in relation to the CID activities was met at all the Missions. In terms of guidance, it was mentioned that a CID-manual on objectives and methodology, illustrated with best practice examples, would be very useful. In terms of relations, a lack of firm anchoring in Sida-INFO was experienced, notwithstanding the appreciated role of the consultants employed by Sida-INFO, and the desire for a participatory development of the overall communications strategy was mentioned.

In this respect, it was noted with satisfaction that Sida-INFO has recently created a position filled with an official with previous programming experience from Central America. During the discussions with Embassy staff, the desirability of a possible Sida-INFO Regional Advisor position was aired and met with mixed reactions. Some were of the opinion that this might be the right way of assuring adequate technical support for CID and of feedback to Sida-HQ and to the Swedish public, while others were of the opinion that regional advisors tend to concentrate on the country in which they are situation, and that other solutions therefore might be preferable.

Persons met

Nicaragua

Swedish Embassy

Mr Klas Markensten, ambassador

Ms Maria Tegborg, Program Official, responsible for communication activities

Ms Coralía Chow, Assistant to Ms Tegborg

Ms Cecilia Scharp, Program Official

Mr Mario Brockmann, Program Official

Ms Eleonora Rivera, Information Officer

Representatives for Sida-supported projects:

Ms Scarlett, Information Officer, RAAN-Sida-RAAS (Support to the autonomous regions at the Caribbean coast)

Mr Carlos Palacios Linarte, Director of the Academy, and Ms Ana Maria Medina, Project Coordinator, support for the Police Academy

Ms Sandra Reyes, Coordinator, POLISAL (midwifery support project)

Beneficiaries

Students of the Police Academy

Key Informants

Mr Carlos Fernando Chamorro, Editor, Director CINCO (Independent Media Research Institute)

Mr Alfonso Malespin, Professor in Communication, Universidad Centroamericana

Partner Organisations

UNDP: Messr Adolfo Castrillo, program officer, and Walter Lacayo, information officer

UNICEF: Mmes Aida Oliver, program officer and Olga Moraga, information officer

Other Donors:

Mr Anders Serup Rasmussen, Ambassador of Denmark to Nicaragua

Honduras

Swedish Embassy

Mr Jan Robberts, Councillor

Mr Claes Norrlöf, Program Official

Mr Alfredo Stein, Program Official

Ms Rosa Aguilar, Information Officer

Representatives for Sida-supported projects:

Dr Pereira, Coordinator, ACCESO Health Project

Messr Otto Flores Janssen, Coordinator and Werner Schroeder, architect: FUNDEVI, Housing & micro-credit project.

Beneficiaries

From the FUNDEVI, Housing & micro-credit project: Mr José Castello & Ms Martha Athenas

Key Informants

Mr Victor Meza, Director CEDOH, Centro de documentacion de Honduras

Mr Carlos M. Flores, Editor, El Heraldo (leading newspaper in Honduras)

Partner Organisations

Dr Carlos Samoya, Representative of PAHO (Pan-American Health Organisation) to Honduras

Focus group meeting with:

- Mr. Miguel Manzi and Ms Ingvill Jansen, Program Officials, IDB (Inter-American Development Bank)
- Dr Wilfried Liehr, Program Official, GTZ
- Mr Glen Pearce-Oroz, program official, USAID

NGO-partners

Focus group meeting with:

- Mr Francisco Salamanca, Director, INTERFOROS
- Ms Maya Espinoza, Programme Officer, AMHON, (Honduran Association of Municipalities)
- Ms Eugenio Gonzales, Program Official, FONAC, (Fona Nacional de Convergencia)
- Mr Marco Padilla, Director, FOPRIDEH (Honduran association of private development organisations)
- Mr Henry Rodriguez Corea, Consejo Hondurena del sector social de la economia

Other Donors:

Ms Kay Coombs, Ambassador of the UK to Honduras

Ms Ana Lucia Coronel, Representative of the IMF to Honduras

Guatemala**Swedish Embassy**

Ms Maria Leissner, ambassador

Mr Hans G. Magnusson, Councillor, Head of the Sida-department

Ms Juana Maria Camposeco, Program Official

Mr Pierre Frühling, Councillor, regional programs

Mr Henrik Riby, Program Official

Ms Odilia Avila, Information Officer

Representatives for Sida-supported projects:

Ms Juana Cardinac, Information Officer, the Defensoria de la Mujer Indigena Health Program with the PAHO:

- Ms Juanita Rodriguez, Coordinator
- Ms Silvia Posada, Information Officer
- Mr Alfonso Pereira, Medical Doctor

Key Informants

Mr Jose Ruben Zamora, Editor & Director, El Periodico, leading newspaper

Mr Gustavo Berganza, Director, DOSES (independent socio-cultural research Institute).

Partners Organisations

Focus group meeting with:

- Mr Estafo Lemma, Information officer, MINAGUA (The UN Mission to Guatemala)
- Mmes Monica Velaquez and Jobita Bolanos, Information Officers, UTJ-Protierra, (Sida-supported cadastral project)
- Ms Isabel Aguilar, Information officer Fundacion Pro Paz
- Mr Arturo Melville, Director, Fideicomiso para el desarrollo

Other Donors:

Mr Klavs Wulff, Councillor, Head of PRODECA/the Danish Mission to Guatemala

COUNTRY STUDY REPORT

TANZANIA

**(Evaluation of Communication Initiatives in Central America, Tanzania and West
Balkan)**

1999–2002

1 Introduction

As part of the evaluation of Sida's communication initiatives on different continents, a research mission was fielded to Tanzania in the period June 10–16 2003 in order to review routines and strategies and to interview selected embassy staff, local partners and media organisations. A list of persons interviewed is attached as Annex 1.

In addition to the interviews, the research team has reviewed existing information material at the embassy in Dar Es Salaam including the local website.

2 Background

The embassy in Tanzania was selected for inclusion in the evaluation for two main reasons: First of all it is one of the bigger embassies in the Swedish Foreign Service with 15 Swedish employees and secondly, a Communication Officer has been deployed at the embassy for a period of two years 2000–2002 in order to reinforce communication initiatives between the embassy and target groups in Tanzania.

The focus on communications was mainly due to the initiative of the present Ambassador at his accession to the job in 1998. At the time, the public image of Sweden in Tanzania was at an all-time low because of some differences in opinion between the Swedish and the Tanzanian governments.

Thus, at the initiative of the Sida/INFO and the Swedish Embassy in Tanzania, an analysis of the perception of the Swedish Embassy and knowledge of Swedish Development Cooperation in the Swedish community in Tanzania and among other target groups in Tanzania was undertaken in 1999. Among other things, it was concluded that *“a well functioning communication with the Swedish as well as with the Tanzanian target groups – may result in more effective development cooperation in Tanzania”*.¹

Based on the conclusions of this analysis, it was decided to deploy a Swedish Communication Officer for a period of two years to be responsible for all communication work at the Embassy, e.g. coordinate the communications between the embassy and stakeholders in Tanzania, and to be responsible for establishing contacts with media in Sweden and Tanzania, staff training, introduction courses for newly arrived personnel, editing a Swedish Newsletter for all Swedes in Tanzania, development of the Embassy's homepage, and all other cultural activities.

3 Description and analysis of communication activities

3.1 Strategy of the embassy

The communication strategy of the embassy in Tanzania has focused on strengthening the communication between the embassy and target groups in Tanzania, i.e. partners (decision makers, authorities, organisations, international donor community, etc.) and the Swedish community in Tanzania. The objectives of this strategy have been to promote Sweden and the concept of Swedish development cooperation focussing on four areas: *Information about the bilateral cooperation, general information about Sweden, media contacts in Tanzania and Swedish cultural events*.²

¹ Nytt arbetssätt uppskattat – men kan bli ännu bättre – En utvärdering av kommunikationsarbetet vid den svenska biståndsambassaden i Tanzania, 1999 (KAN Kommunikationsanalys AB, Sida INFO).

3.2 Communication objectives

The initial key objectives were to enhance the knowledge of Swedish development cooperation in Tanzania among the general public and important stakeholders in Sweden as well as in Tanzania, and to strengthen communications with the Swedish community in Tanzania. Thus, comprising activities directed towards stakeholders in both Tanzania and in Sweden.

According to the Communication plan of January 2002, the goals are more precisely stated as follows:

- Stronger partnership with Tanzania
- More efficient development cooperation
- Strengthened image of Sweden in Tanzania and Tanzania in Sweden

3.3 Target audience

To achieve the above objectives the embassy has identified following target audiences:

- Embassy staff, Sida staff, HQ and other embassies,
- Private sector in Tanzania and Sweden,
- National and regional politicians, district council staff and district councillors,
- Swedish community
- General public
- Media in Sweden and Tanzania
- Civil Society Organisations (Tanzanian and Swedish in Tanzania).
- International partners.

3.4 Activities

Communication plans

Following the overall Sida communication policy, the Embassy in Dar Es Salaam has prepared a communication plan including an activity plan which was developed and implemented during the deployment of the Swedish Communication Officer. But since then the status of this plan is a bit uncertain. It does not seem to be an integrated part of the daily work of the embassy staff. None of the key staff seems to know how the present plan has been prepared, by whom, and how it should be followed-up. Although it is stated in the plan that the Ambassador is responsible for its implementation, and a small group of staff members have been assigned the job to follow-up on the communication strategy, it does not seem to be sufficiently prioritised.

This does not mean that the embassy has been inactive communication wise – on the contrary, Sweden is extremely well represented in the Tanzanian media. At the time of the research mission, the Ambassador was portrayed and interviewed on a daily basis in all the major media institutions. This was partly because the five-year term as Ambassador was coming to an end, but press clippings document that during the past two-three years, Sweden has been very well portrayed in the local media.

Embassy level

The deployment of a Swedish Communication Officer (SCO) at the Embassy improved the communication between the embassy and the Swedish and Tanzanian target groups. A network of press contacts in Tanzania and Sweden was created, publications for Swedish and Tanzanian target

² Semi-annual Report Tanzania, 1 April–30 september 2002 and October 2002–March 2003.

groups on Sida and its development cooperation activities were designed and distributed. Conferences and cultural activities were arranged. The combination of a competent Communication Officer and an outgoing Ambassador has contributed to putting Sweden and the contents of Swedish Development Cooperation on the public agenda in Tanzania. Thus, the overall communication strategic objectives of the Embassy seem to have been achieved in the sense that the communication between the Embassy and Tanzanian authorities and partners has been reinforced.

The good relationship with the local press, established by the Swedish Communication Officer, and followed up by the Ambassador, who acknowledges the importance of good press relations. He has managed to be an active player in the public debate without being seen as an interfering foreigner. Or at least this is the general impression, although critics have also voiced concern that there has been too much “Ambassador” and too little promotion of partners. The press focus has been very much on the Ambassador personally, and his travels around the country and various hand-over ceremonies have received extensive media coverage. The critics feel that the personal focus has diverted attention from the partnership dimension of the Swedish development assistance in Tanzania and from the actual content of the development programmes.

Anyway, the unique relationship with the local media institutions has been an enabling factor for the policy dialogue on important development issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, environmental protections, democracy etc. And even the critics acknowledge that the strong exposure of the Ambassador has been a tremendous advantage for the embassy and for Swedish individuals and businesses in Tanzania. The popularity makes it easier for other Swedish individuals and organisations to operate in the country.

During the past couple of years, the direct contact to Tanzanian media has been the most important communication activity but not the only one. The embassy has its own web-site (www.swedemb-dar.com) with information about consular affairs, development activities, commercial possibilities etc. Press releases and other relevant documents are also available on the web-site.

Furthermore, fact-sheets on the projects and programmes are available at the embassy, and relevant fact-sheets are included in the briefing dossier, which is prepared for all official visitors to the embassy. Apart from the fact sheets, the dossier contains information about the history of the Swedish cooperation with Tanzania, practical information about the embassy and other relevant institutions, travel advice etc.

Four times a year the embassy publishes the four-page magazine “På Gång”, targeting the Swedish community in Tanzania. The main objective is to inform Swedish citizens about the major activities of SIDA in Tanzania, but it is also an objective of the publication to have a social function in the Swedish community. Although this was not the intention from the start, “På Gång” also has a substantial audience in Sweden and in other countries among Swedes, who used to work in Tanzania. The magazine is written by a Swedish freelance journalist living in Dar Es Salaam. He consults an editorial group consisting representatives of the embassy, the NGO community and Swedish businesses.

Contribution level

Communications are not yet systematically integrated in the programme planning or implementation of the Sida supported activities, and the role of the embassy at this level is not quite clear. When asking partners on how they perceived the role of the embassy, some found that it would be a good idea if the embassy could provide some expertise on how to handle communications among the various actors in

the programmes, while others thought that it was not at all the role of Sida as a donor organisation to provide communication expertise in relation to planning and implementation of projects/programs – they would rather handle the issues in accordance with their own choice.

The change from project support to a sector wide approach constitutes following challenges:

- What role should Sida have vis-à-vis communications at contribution level
- How can Sida support communications at all levels of the sector support, notably between the decision makers/public authorities and the beneficiaries (civil society)

Sida/INFO is well aware of these challenges and the need for guidelines and capacity building with regards to Communication in Development. Sida/INFO is in the process of developing the concept and corresponding guidelines.

Information mission

During the tenure of the Swedish Communication Officer, personal contacts to Swedish media ensured a relatively steady flow of information from Tanzania to Sweden, but presently very little is written in Swedish newspapers and magazines about Tanzania and the about Swedish activities in the country. While the number of articles in Tanzanian media has been stable or even increasing, the team was informed by the Ambassador that publicity in Sweden has dropped to around one third after the departure of the full time SCO.

3.5 Costs effectiveness

A rough estimate indicates that a total amount of about 1.8 million SEK have been used for communications during the period 1999–2002 including the deployment of the SCO. In the same period it is estimated that the total contribution to Swedish development cooperation activities in Tanzania is 1,835 million SEK. This means that about 0,10 per cent of the total allocation for Tanzania has been used for communications. The activities have been financed partly by Sida/INFO and partly by the embassy budget (approximately 50% each). Considering the results obtained so far through systematising the communication activities and contacts to the press, it is the view of the evaluators that the cost benefit of the communication efforts is relatively high when it comes to communication at embassy level. However, the resources used for introduction of strategic communications still have to prove its effectiveness through further capacity building of the embassy staff so that communication planning becomes an integrated part of all operations of the Embassy.

The present model where the Assistant to the Ambassador is functioning as a Communication Officer is, of course, a very inexpensive solution, but time will have to show its efficiency.

3.6 Monitoring and evaluation

So far the individual activities have not been systematically evaluated.

3.7 Effect

The assessment of the effect is based on the results of the interviews with partners and key informants, and accordingly, the communication initiatives have resulted in:

- Reinforced policy dialogue and awareness of Swedish development cooperation activities among stakeholders in Tanzania.

- Facilitation of partner cooperation and dialogue. (Partners regard the Swedish Embassy as very open and accessible compared to other embassies).
- Potentials for increased awareness and knowledge of Swedish activities in Tanzania among Swedish partners and the general public in Sweden.

It is beyond doubt that Sweden and Swedish development cooperation is very visible in the Tanzanian society, not only among Tanzanian partners but also in the international development community. The positive print as well as the electronic media coverage is the main reason for this, and it has made it possible to carry on a policy dialogue with Tanzanian decision makers and partners.

The fact that the Ambassador is very outgoing and interested in communications has facilitated the work with communications and the media at the embassy, but it has also resulted in the fact that other embassy staffs consider communications as something which is taken care of by the Ambassador, and are not regarded as an integrated part of the daily work.

4 Analyses of the organisational set-up

As mentioned above, a Swedish Communication Officer (Associate Expert) was employed from April 2000 to April 2002 with the key objective of strengthening the communications between the embassy and the Tanzanian society and the Swedish community in Tanzania.

Presently, the communication activities are handled by the personal Assistant of the Ambassador. She is responsible for the Ambassador's correspondence with Ministries, other diplomatic missions, international organisations and the private sector, and for all logistics for the Ambassador including all social events. On top of these secretarial duties, the job description states that the Information Officer should perform the following duties under the supervision of the Ambassador:

- Be responsible for all information work at the Embassy in co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sida and the Swedish Institute
- Be responsible for media contacts in Tanzania
- Be responsible for arrangements of and participation in exhibitions, fairs, film festivals and other cultural events
- Edit and prepare releases and locally produced special events pamphlets/brochures, coordinating distribution of publications
- To prepare and filing of Public Affairs Section information records, including background papers, press releases and clippings from the local media
- Respond to request for information materials from both within and outside mission, including searching for appropriate information.
- Update of the Embassy Web page

The Information Officer is not trained in communications, but has participated in Sida INFO arranged courses on Sida's communication policy – thus, she has more or less been learning by doing. Very limited time is allocated to the communication tasks. Often, more time consuming activities such as updating the embassy web page has to be done on overtime. Under these circumstances, it is difficult for the Information Officer to develop new initiatives, and it is quite an achievement that she has been able to maintain already established communication routines, and the good relations to the local press.

The fact that the Information Officer is Tanzanian does not speak Swedish, and has no network in the Swedish society means that there are some limitations to her performance when it comes to promotion of Swedish culture in Tanzania and fulfilment of the information mission, i.e. approaching the Swedish public.

Generally, external communications seem to have a quite low priority for the embassy staff and it is not systematically integrated in their operations. As a result of the general decentralisation in Sida, staffs feel that the responsibility and workload have increased substantially, and just getting the most important things done is a constant struggle. In this setting, communication is not placed on the top of the agendas of the Programme Officers. In addition the Programme Officers are uncertain of how to handle communications. Communications is widely perceived as something, which the Ambassador takes care of.

This, of course, is not institutionally sustainable, as a new Ambassador cannot be expected to have the same interest in communications as the present one. It also takes time to create the intimate relationship to the local press, which the current Ambassador enjoys.

Thus, the present institutional set-up has some limitations when it comes to the fulfilment of the overall Sida communication policy. Communications at the contribution level are not yet systematically included in planning and implementation of development cooperation activities.

5 Description and analysis of communication flow between key actors

5.1 Embassy-Tanzanian stakeholders (Partners/Swedish community)

Due to the well developed press network and the active Ambassador, the communication between the embassy and Tanzanian partners (decision makers, authorities, organisations, international donor community, Tanzanian public, etc.) is unanimously described as extremely good by the Sida partners, who were interviewed by the evaluation team. The embassy is described as an “open” and “accessible” embassy compared to other embassies in Tanzania.

Regular donor coordinating meetings are held with likeminded donors within the various sectors. The official reputation of the Swedish Embassy and its status within the Tanzanian society and press community is noted by the other embassies. The Norwegian Embassy e.g., has used the expertise of the Swedish Communication Officer to assist them in establishing a press network and teach them how to approach the press.

The communication between the Embassy and the Swedish community in Tanzania is described as sufficient in the sense that the respondents found themselves reasonably informed of the Swedish development activities, especially the Newsletter “På Gång” seemed to be popular, also with those who have left Tanzania and wanted to keep in touch with the development in Tanzania.

5.2. Internal communication at Embassy level

The internal communication at the Embassy is described by all the interviewed staff as good. All staffs seem to be well informed of ongoing activities and events through a number of regular meetings, i.e. general staff meetings, management meetings, development cooperation meetings, “Hard” and “Soft”

group meetings, administrative division meetings, etc. The internal meeting schedule is so comprehensive that some Program Officers even feel that they are “over-informed” and spend too much time on internal meetings.

5.3. Communication between the Embassy and Sida Stockholm

While the direct communication with the partners in Tanzania seems to be very good, the communication between the Embassy and Sida Headquarters is apparently a weak point. The decentralisation policy of SIDA means that the responsibility for the development activities has been delegated to the embassy, which has a mandate to decide on projects and programmes up to an amount of SEK 50 million without consulting headquarters. This decentralisation policy ensures an ability to respond quickly and efficiently to local needs and to administrate development funds in an un-bureaucratic way.

Decentralisation does, however, also carry an inherent risk of loss of institutional memory and coherence. The Program Officers at the embassy in Dar Es Salaam all said that they have very little contact with not only the Sida INFO but also the desk officers in Stockholm, and several of them express concern that they are quite isolated in their work. Several employees ask for more exchange of professional experience with other Programme Officers, who work in the same fields in other countries or continents.

The administrative staff, however, expressed satisfaction with the communication to Sida Stockholm, and pointed to the fact that a newly established “helpdesk” in the Sida finance section was extremely useful and it facilitated the daily work in the sense that they could get professional advice and back-stopping from Sida Stockholm at any time they needed it. Several Program Officers and assistants expressed a wish to have a similar help-desk with regards to communication and information.

6 Conclusion

The work of the SCO boosted the communications at Embassy level, i.e. between the Embassy and Tanzanian stakeholders and the Swedish community in Tanzania. In addition, the Swedish press coverage on Swedish development cooperation with Tanzania increased during the employment of the SCO.

The embassy has been extremely successful in achieving its communication objectives, and has created a platform for participation in the policy dialogue on the development of the country. The SCO succeeded in establishing remarkably good relations with the local press and the Ambassador and the present part-time local information officer have skilfully maintained this situation. The achievements are primarily due to a fruitful team work between the Ambassador and the SCO and later the local Information Officer. This situation, however, has resulted in the fact that the rest of the embassy staffs have not properly been integrated in the communication planning and implementation.

From 2001, the activities have been guided by a communication strategy, but from mid 2002 when the SCO left Tanzania, it does not seem to have much importance or effect in practice. Communication issues are not yet integrated parts of the various Sida operations, but are widely regarded as something, which is taken care of by the Ambassador.

It is the view of the evaluation team that apart from above mentioned successful communication with target groups in Tanzania, systematic communication initiatives are not prioritised among the Programme Officers mainly because of limited time and lack of professional communication capacity. In principle, information and communication is considered important by the staff, but there is a certain uncertainty of how to handle communications, and not much will happen without a dedicated professional to lead the process.

In the case of the Swedish embassy in Tanzania, the tasks, however, are so diverse that it is quite unrealistic to imagine that one individual would be able to handle all the different aspects of communication. A journalist with good network contacts in Sweden is not necessarily also an expert in communication at contribution level or elaboration of pamphlets and brochures.

Thus, placing a full-time Communication Officer at the embassy might not be an overall solution. It is assessed to be important to create access to different types of communication expertise. The Program Officers must know where to find the persons, who can assist them. With modern ICT's, physical locations are not particularly important - but personal contacts and networks are. When individuals have met in person they are able to work closely together no matter how big the physical distance between them might be.

In order to create these vital personal networks, it is recommended that particular staff at Sida INFO be assigned to have a special obligation to work with specific embassies. It would also be an option to have regional Communication Officers in Sida HO, who could service more than one embassy. Whichever model is preferable under the specific conditions, the most important issue is to ensure that professional communicators know the embassy staff and the projects and programmes well enough to be proactive without being seen as outsiders interfering in the work.

In summary, the communication efforts at the embassy in Tanzania indicate a high degree of fulfilment of the initial objectives, i.e. to strengthen the communications between the Embassy and stakeholders in Tanzania and Sweden, but when it comes to the use of communication as a strategic tool in the work and operations of the Embassy it can be concluded that this has not yet been accomplished and needs to be followed up by further support and capacity building and creation of a communication professional network.

Persons met

Swedish Embassy

Mr Sten Rylander, Ambassador
Ms. Doris Lema, Assistant to the Ambassador, National Communication Officer
Mr. Lazaro Shange, Logistic Officer
Ms. Ewa Hagwall, Private Sector Development Advisor
Ms. Gudrun Leirvaarg, Culture and Media Advisor
Ms. Jane Kibassa, National Programme Officer
Mr. Ralph Kårhammer, Regional Infrastructure Adviser
Ms. Marie Bergström, Natural Resources Advisor
Mr. Nils Jensen, ICT Project Manager

Tanzanian partners:

Mr. Rakesh R. Rajani, Executive Director, Haki Elimu
Ms. Anne S. Iddrissu, TV Producer, Africa Media Group
Mr. Gregory G. Teu, Principal Auditor, National Audit Office
Mr. Antony Ngaiza, President, Tanzania Media Council
Ms. Pili Mtambalike, Executive Director, Tanzania Media Council
Ms. Julieth Mtuy, Mentor Journalist, Tanzanian Media Council
Mr. J.N.O.K. Mziray, Senior Human Resources Officer, Tanzania Revenue Authority
Ms. Joyce Kafanabo, Coordinator Gender Mainstreaming Program, Civil Service Department, Gender Section.

Key informants

Mr. Hamza Kasongo, Programme Consultant, DTV/Channel 10
Mr. Franco Tramontano, Managing Director, Africa Media Group
Mr. Geoff Calder, Project Manager, Global Catalyst Foundation
Mr. Adam Akyoo, TV Producer, ITV
Mr. Theophilus Mlaki, Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology

International Partner Organisations

UNAIDS/UNDP: Dr. Hilde Basstanie, Country Programme Advisor

Other Donors:

Ms. Tone Tinnes, Ambassador of Norway

Swedish Community

Mr. Torbjörn Öckerman, Team Leader, ORGUT/Land Management Programme
Mr. and Ms. Klingberg, Missionaries, Swedish Pentecostal
Mr. Fredrik Gladh, Teacher and Freelance Journalist
Mr. Georg Boquist, Managing Director, Computer Associates

COUNTRY STUDY REPORT

KOSOVO/BALKAN

**(Evaluation of Communication Initiatives in Central America, Tanzania and West
Balkan)**

1999–2002

1 Introduction

This report includes the results of research and interviews undertaken from May 2003 to September 2003 with key informants and stakeholders in Sweden.

At the time of the bid, Sida Info decided that research in Kosovo was not necessary as the key target audience for the information activities was the Swedish public. Therefore, this country study includes the results of interviews with staff from Sida East as well as staff from other Sida departments, and UD. Some representatives from the target audience were interviewed in Stockholm in early September 2003.

Because of the regional strategy of Sida East, it has been difficult to single out the information activities related to Kosovo alone. Therefore, in this report, the information initiatives for Kosovo are regarded as part of the strategy for Western Balkan.

A list of persons interviewed is attached in Annex 1.

2 Background

The conflict between Serbia and Kosovo resulted in destructions and displacement of people in the whole of Western Balkan. Following the conflict, Kosovo had an urgent need for reconstruction and rehabilitation of among other things houses, infrastructure, and reinforcement of human rights and democracy. A strategy for Swedish development aid to Kosovo (1999–2002) was accepted by the Swedish government the 23 June 1999 (Regeringsbeslut UD 1999/905/EC). Thus, During 1999, Sweden embarked on a major humanitarian aid and rehabilitation scheme in West Balkan.

As part of this strategy, Sida anticipates that the information needs in relation to the development aid would continue to be considerable, *“partly in relation to governments and the general public in the affected countries, and partly in relation to the general public in Sweden. A well functioning flow of information facilitates the implementation and international coordination of the development cooperation and make Sweden’s role in the reconstruction process clear. The strategy for the information initiatives is an early intervention that would form part of the planning work. The costs for this should be paid by the funds for Central Europe”*³

In accordance with this strategy, and based on the positive experience of the special information effort combined with the comprehensive Swedish assistance to alleviate the effects of the hurricane Mitch in Central America, it was decided to employ a Swedish Communication Officer (SCO) for one year starting September 1999.

3 Analysis of communication activities

3.1 Planned communication strategy and objectives

The overall development cooperation objectives for the assistance to Kosovo were to promote:

- democratic development through support for the establishment of democratic institutions and the development of a multiethnic civil society
- lasting peace in the region, based on regional cooperation

³ Strategi för biståndet till Kosovo (FRJ), Albanien och Makedonien, Sida, 02.05.2000

- a secure system for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons
- the development of a socially and ecologically sustainable market economy capable of reducing poverty and generating growth.

To support this development, the above mentioned information project was designed with the following specific two fold **objectives**:

1. to distribute information in Sweden about the Swedish interests in the region for the purpose of maintaining a high level of support for the Swedish engagements in the Western Balkan,
2. to facilitate the coordination and collaboration between the various actors who work along side the Swedish interests in the region. In order to render the development assistance effective, all organizations with whom Sida is cooperating must be aware of Sida's activities and draw in the same direction. Even the target audiences in Western Balkan must understand Sida's role in the area.

The **outputs** of the information project were initially planned to include the following:

- the target audience is aware of the extent and contents of the Swedish development cooperation
- the target audience is aware of Sida's, the Swedish organisations' and enterprises' roll in the rehabilitation of Kosovo.
- the cooperation among the various actors in the region is increased.

The strategy to achieve the outputs were

- to create a dynamic and updated website on Western Balkan (Swedish and English)
- to coordinate the creation of a website in cooperation with "Export Council (Exportrådet)" (guide book for Swedish Companies)
- Production of an information packet for use of Sida's representations in the region and Stockholm.
- Press releases
- Production of brochures on development assistance to Western Balkan
- Articles in Sida's magazines
- Cooperation with other organisations and actors on information initiatives
- Information to media professionals and journalists
- Information meetings and seminars
- Newspaper Adds
- Exhibitions.

The communication strategy and planned activities have been revised approximately every 6 months since 1994⁴.

⁴ See Annex 2 of the main report (List of materials)

3.2 Implementation of the strategy

During and just after the war, the media coverage was high, but the interest in the long term rehabilitation of Balkan quickly died out, e.g. only 1–2 journalists attended Sida arranged press meetings on Kosovo, and specific target oriented activities were planned.

At the time of the employment of the SCO, Sida had no information or communication strategy to guide implementation of activities. The SCO started out by researching possibilities and formulate above mentioned strategy.

After his first travel to Kosovo a total of 15–20 press releases were distributed over a one year period. This effort had limited effect. In addition some awareness creating activities and campaigns were planned and implemented, such as Kosovo-Nu (April 2000), which was a one month campaign taking place in the Sida Information Centre. The activities included 9 seminars with about 20 participants in each seminar, information meetings for journalists, press releases, use of website: (questions and answers), etc.

3.3 Target audience

The Swedish soldiers going to Kosovo and the Swedish partners working on projects in Kosovo were initially regarded as important target groups, but it proved to be difficult to reach these groups. However, the SCO together with other staff from Sida East managed to participate in the preparation of the Swedish battalions – an activity which is ongoing.

In order to improve communications with the identified target audience, all Swedish cooperating partners in development cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe (approximately 2300) were identified and approached directly through direct mail of information materials, the most important being “Östlövet” reporting on Sida East activities. Two years later, Sida East noted an improvement in the communication with these groups, especially the private sector. According to the communication plan for 2002–2003, Sida East still finds it difficult to reach decision makers (UD, Representatives of the Parliament, EU-politicians, civil servants, etc.). Thus, decision makers are stated as priority target groups in the plan 2002–2003.

3.4 Activities

The information on Kosovo have become part of the general information on Western Balkan which again is part of all Sida East’s area of operation (Central and Eastern Europe). Thus, the main contents of the information distributed are information on the Swedish activities in Central and Eastern Europe, including Balkan, and the main channels of communication and activities from 2000–2002 have comprised:

- Östlövet (a quarterly magazine on Swedish activities in Central- and Eastern Europe including Balkan).
- Website (www.sida.se/ost)
- Special magazines (Professional magazine, Sida’s magazines and publications: Om Världen, Globala Affärer, Disa, etc., National and local newspapers).
- Brochures
- Seminars
- Information meetings for journalists

- Facilitation of travels for journalists.
- Partner forums

In addition to above communication activities, the SCO is also training Sida East and field staff in photography, power point presentations, written and oral communication, etc.

The primary target groups for the Sida East communication activities have been:

- the cooperating partners, including Sida staff and all external Swedish partners working on the development of Central and Eastern Europe.
- decision makers and the general public in Sweden.

The initially planned communication efforts in Balkan have never really materialised, mainly because of limited capacity of the local representations. The evaluation team has not visited Balkan, and it has not been possible to assess to what extent the information objectives have been achieved, i.e. to what extent partners are aware of Sida's role in the region and to what extent the coordination and collaboration between the various actors have been facilitated.

In a Memo from Kristina Robberts and Mats Sundgren *Förslag til kommunikationssatsning på Balkan (Proposals for communication initiatives in Balkan)*, dated 23.04.02, it was suggested to implement a process resulting in formulation of communication strategies and plans of action for the embassies in Belgrade and Zagreb in accordance with the model prepared by Sida/INFO.

Thus, since late 2002, the SCO in collaboration with two communication experts have assisted 5 out of the 6 embassies in Balkan in developing communication strategies and plans, and staffs responsible for communications have been appointed. Two embassies have been assisted in 2002 (Belgrade and Zagreb). The embassy in Belgrade has so far been the most progressive, because the Ambassador seems to promote communications.

3.5 Costs

On an average, the costs for maintaining a SCO in Sweden covering all Sida East's activities with frequent travels to the region and related information activities amounts to about 1,250,000 per year distributed as follows⁵:

Activities	Amount in SEK
Salary and running costs to Sida	690,000
Travel expenses	70,000
Meetings, etc.	30,000
Communication products and activities	460,000
Total per year 2000–2002	1,250,000

⁵ Information received from Sida East, Eva Karlsson/Mats Sundgren

I.e. an amount of approximately 3,750,000 SEK has been used over the three year period 2000–2002. It is estimated that the amount used from 1999–2000 would be half the amount used per year from 2000–2002. It should be noted that this amount covers all Sida East's information activities including Balkan. According to the SCO about half of the money used for Sida East's has been use for communication activities in West Balkan, i.e. 625,000 SEK/year.

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Apart from a Final Report on the Kosovo Nu activity, no evaluations have been undertaken of the activities implemented so far. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are not part of the planning process in Sida East, and therefore, it is difficult, systematically, to assess the effect of the individual activities.

3.7 Effect

The assessment of the effect is primarily based on interviews with representatives from key target audience, i.e. the Swedish partners (Sida departments, organisations, and companies working in Balkan or Eastern Europe), and Sida staff. Unfortunately, it was not possible to interview representatives for decisions makers (politicians). The respondents were interviewed on the following key issues:

- Awareness and knowledge of Sida's development cooperation activities in the partner countries in Western Balkan and Eastern Europe
- Which kind of information they have received from Sida East and which activities they have participated in.
- How they used the Sida East information materials
- What their needs were

It has not been possible to single out specific efforts related to the reconstruction of Kosovo as communication initiatives from the beginning have had a regional focus. Neither has it been possible within the scope of this evaluation to assess the effect of information directed towards the general public. However, according to the Media Analyses undertaken for Sida by Observer, the coverage on Eastern/Central Europe has decreased over the period 1999–2002 from reaching about 50 million over the first half of 1999 to less than 5 million from July to December 2002. In the first half of 2001, the publicity for Kosovo dropped to one tenth of what it was in 2000. This is an illustration of how fast the interest for Kosovo died out in the media.

The interviews with different partners show that partners are well informed of the Swedish development cooperation activities in the region. Their main source of information is direct contact with the Programme Officers in Sida East and thematic or regional meetings/seminars organized by Sida East. Some mentioned Östlövet as a source of inspiration and general information on activities, but the publication is considered too general as far as implementing partners are concerned. The web site is used for search of basic information, but not for obtaining information on recent developments.

The overriding communication needs of the partners seem to be

- information on other actors and activities within the geographic and thematic fields,
- information on projects in the pipeline,

- a dialogue with Sida on programme development (partner meetings/seminars) and updated information on the development in the partner countries (some mentioned that a monthly e-mail newsletter from the embassies on ongoing activities and developments would be very useful).

In brief, the partners seem to be very target oriented, they want to participate in developments and decisions (“we are the development cooperation implementers, Sida is the bank - we are entitled to have influence and be currently informed and consulted concerning ongoing developments so that we can participate in and influence the decisions”).

Sida East has been very successful in its communication with other Sida departments. Under the slogan Sida in East and East in Sida used in internal publications (intranet, Disa, etc.) it has succeeded in turning the perception of Sida East as an isolated unit within Sida to become an integrated unit.

4 The organisational set-up

A professional Swedish Communication Officer (SCO) was employed and assigned by Sida INFO for one year from September 1999 to September 2000 in order to:

- in cooperation with other Swedish partners and through use of various channels of communication, to explain and put focus on Sweden’s and Sida’s role in the long term development assistance,
- coordinate information initiatives with the Swedish partners
- implement independent information initiatives in and around Kosovo
- in concert with Sida’s other information initiatives, to use the rehabilitation of Kosovo as an example when applicable.
- in Kosovo, to contribute to a coordinated flow of information between the various actors in order to facilitate the implementation of the development assistance.

The SCO was placed in the Information Department, but worked in close cooperation with the Unit for Western Balkan (EVB) in Sida East. From September 2000, the SCO was employed by Sida East and worked part time for the whole of Sida East and part time for the EVB project. Organisationally, he has been attached to Sida East since September 2000. This meant that the SCO became part of the Sida East staff, and closer to and directly involved in implementation of activities.

The strategy in Sida East was to focus on the region (Western Balkan) rather than just Kosovo. Thus, from the very beginning there have been no specific communication initiatives focusing on Kosovo alone. Kosovo has been part of the strategy for Western Balkan as a whole.

The change in the organisational set up is described by the SCO and other Sida East staff as very positive, and it is regarded very important that the SCO is placed close to the implementation of activities in the sense that it facilitates the information flow between the SCO and the Program Officers.

During the first year, the SCO visited Kosovo 3 times. The first time was October 1999. At an early stage, it was decided that it would not be very beneficial to deploy the SCO in Kosovo. First of all because the capacity at the Swedish representation in Kosovo was very limited due to a tremendous work load, and because the communication infrastructure was chaotic. Thus, it was assessed that it would not have been possible to engage in major information initiatives in Kosovo at that time. Later, however, it would have been possible to work in Kosovo, and it would also have been possible to work

from one of the other countries in the region, but Sida East did not prioritise the deployment of a SCO to the region.

Secondly, according to the description of the *“Informationsprojekt om återuppbyggnad av västra Balkan, särskilt Kosovo (Information project on the reconstruction of West Balkan, Kosovo in particular)”* the most important target audiences for the information initiatives were mainly in Sweden, i.e. decision makers (UD/EC, parliamentary committees, local politicians, etc.), Swedish companies, Swedish authorities and local communities, the educational sector, Swedish media professionals, Sida staff, etc.

Thus, the communications initiatives have focused on Swedish target groups and very few activities have been implemented in West Balkan.

5 Description and analysis of communication flow between key actors

The communication flow between the SCO and the Sida HO project staff has for the whole period been very good, not least because of the physical placement of the SCO in the regional department (Sida East) – close to the project staff. The network created in Sida/INFO during his one year employment seems to be extremely useful in the daily work.

Regular communication between Sida East and the Swedish partners is maintained by direct contact to the partners through the website and mailing of updated information on the Swedish activities in Central and Eastern Europe.

The communication between Sida East and other Sida departments has improved very much since the employment of the SCO. Initially, Sida East was not regarded as an integrated part of Sida, but was perceived as a much “closed” division.

According to the Sida East SCO, the communication flow between Sida East and embassies in Balkan is intensified in connection with development of the communication plans from late 2002.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Fulfilment of objectives

One of the objectives for the Sida East communication initiatives was to maintain the support to Sida’s development cooperation activities in Kosovo, and this has been achieved and the allocations are increasing. It is, however, very difficult to assess whether this is a result of a keen political decision or a result of increased awareness and knowledge generated through the Sida East communication activities—most likely, it is a combination.

There is little doubt, however, that the various communication activities have strengthened the partner relations and cooperation in Sweden. Partners seem to be well informed of Swedish activities in the region, although the acquired information is not necessarily channelled through Sida East, and there is an increasing demand for more target oriented and dialogue based communication initiatives.

The Information Mission has been prioritised in this communication model and this has resulted in a low performance when it comes to communications at the embassy and contribution levels and

subsequently low fulfilment of the objectives related to facilitation of the cooperation between actors in the region.

It should, however, be noted that development of communication plans and appointment of communication staff at the embassies are in progress. Thus, by end of 2002, 2 embassies have been assisted.

6.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the organisational set up and the communication flow

The fact that the SCO has been placed in the Sida East department and have been undertaking frequent travels to the region means that he is well informed of what is happening and in a very good position, independently, to inform the Swedish audiences of the Sida development cooperation activities and situation in West Balkan. Thus, the communication between Sida East and its Swedish partners have been regular and efficient. It is, however, doubtful, how efficient the information of the general Swedish public and decision makers has been.

The obvious weakness of this organisational model is that the communication activities related to stakeholders and partners in Balkan have not been prioritised and very few activities have been implemented (e.g. one of the first Sida representatives in Balkan has not seen any information materials for Balkan partners). How the lack of planned communication activities in the Balkan countries has affected the achievements of the communication objectives compared to the other countries reviewed in this evaluation, has not been investigated in this study.

List of persons met

Sida

Mats Sundgren	Information Officer, Sida East
Britta Olofson	Program Officer, Division for Western Balkan, Sida East
Per Fröberg	Program Officer, Division for Urban Development
Ingrid Svensson	Editor of Sida “Study”publications, SAREC

Partners

Inga Svensson	Head of Procurement Division, Hifab International, AB
Pontus Förberg	Consultant, SIPU (Swedish Institute for Public Administration)
Staffan Uddeholt	Coordinator International Projects, RFSU
Maria Ögren Hellvig	Program Officer, RFSU
Dario Marlowic	Coordinator European Projects, Caritas

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