

IT strategy 2004



Foreword

As all other parts of society, has become increasingly dependent on information technology (IT) and digital communication. Sida needs to have the technical potential to participate in the global exchange of information, which necessitates expensive investments in IT. Therefore it is important that the investments made are based on well-judged priorities and good coordination.

This strategy lays down the focus of Sida's internal IT operations and forms the basis of priorities and initiatives in this field. The strategy will remain valid for the next three to five years. However, the investments may be affected by ongoing discussions on the responsibility for IT operations at embassies, and on Sida possibly moving into new premises.

IT is a technology that is intended to simplify our work to achieve Sida's goals. One important priority is therefore that the existing IT platform is stabilised and that new instruments are developed which facilitate cooperation between Sida's staff and our partners in cooperation.

I hope that this strategy will contribute to making IT an even more effective instrument and form of support for Sida's staff.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Maria Norrfalk'. The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name 'Maria' and last name 'Norrfalk' clearly distinguishable.

Maria Norrfalk

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1. Introduction

The document you are now holding in your hand is Sida's IT strategy of 2004. It will remain in force for three to five years. The overriding purpose of the strategy is to provide guidelines for the development of IT operations at Sida. The point of departure of the IT strategy has been the strategic initiatives that have been taken in development cooperation. The conclusions of the strategy are based on a feasibility study made in the spring of 2003. The goal is that the IT strategy should harmonise with these initiatives in which various aspects such as the Government's bill on development, the Field Vision and internal requirements and the needs of the staff are all important factors.

The strategy does not take up issues that concern IT in development cooperation. A decision on a possible new division of responsibilities between Sida and the administrative department at the Government Offices in respect of IT matters to embassies can affect IT operations in ways that have not been taken into consideration in this report. A possible move by Sida Stockholm to new premises can result in changes in priorities and changes to the time schedule but will not have the effect the strategic standpoints adopted will be changed in their entirety.

The strategic standpoints that have been made relate primarily to overall infrastructure guidelines for Sida in its entirety, i.e. Sida in Stockholm, Härnösand and embassies at which Sida personnel are stationed.

The strategy contains four important areas: organisational measures, technical measures, development of applications, and human resource development activities.

The main organisational measures are to clarify roles (coordination role, the quality assurance and supplier role possessed by the Management Information Services Division, the IT council's role etc) and to market the IT directives that already exist. It is also a case of establishing forms for management and control, extending and improving the operating/administrative role at embassies. Some changes to the routines for the procurement and purchase of IT products and services are proposed and a proposal is also made that the Management Information Services Division must improve and document its routines and directives.

One of the measures given highest priority is to establish secure and stable communication in the IT platform, which is essential for the successful functioning operation of our systems. It is particularly important

that alternative communication channels are established for embassies with extended delegation. Other technical conditions are that operations, administration and support must function optimally and that aspects of security are taken into consideration in the technical environment.

Other strategic areas that must be given priority are IT systems that facilitate the allocation of personnel resources for all Sida's activities, including its IT activities. Further needs are to create instruments for sharing information internally, providing a clear picture of Sida's activities externally, and systems that facilitate global cooperation.

A fourth aspect is to improve the IT maturity of Sida staff. In order to do this training programmes on IT must be held. This will make it possible for us to make efficient and optimal use of the systems we have today and that we will develop in the future.

You will be informed of different visions in each chapter of the strategy. The overall vision is as follows:

IT vision

With the aid of IT it shall be possible for Sida to work effectively and efficiently to achieve its operational goals regardless of geographical location.

The final chapter contains a summary of the strategic priorities that are a result of the entire IT strategy project. These shall be regarded as an action plan which should be fully implemented during the period covered by the IT strategy.

2. Sida, ITs operations and their links to information technology

Sida's strategic position in respect of its IT activities is mostly dependent on the ways in which Sida's activities develop in the future. However, it is also dependent on other internal and external factors. This section describes the links between IT and Sida in general. The vision of how IT development shall take place in interaction with Sida's activities is given below.

Vision

IT in interaction with Sida's activities

Sida's IT environment shall make it possible to achieve transparency and exchanges of information in development cooperation and to promote national and international cooperation.

2.1 Strategic initiatives in development cooperation

A number of international efforts have been made in recent years to achieve harmonisation and donor coordination in programmes of development cooperation. The various initiatives have led to greater understanding of the value of transparency and accessibility to information on development cooperation globally between different stakeholders. A number of IT systems have been developed by other international agencies to make the exchange of information possible and to create possible forums for developing common approaches and cooperation in the form of project rooms, extranet tools, websites etc.

As part of the ongoing international discussions, the *Budget Bill* for 2003 proposes that Sida's programmes of development cooperation shall be made more effective and efficient through, among other things, extended national cooperation in Sweden with government agencies, municipalities, NGOs, trade and industry etc, as well as internationally with other countries, international bodies, the EU etc.

The extended requirements for national and international cooperation as well as global strategic ambitions in development cooperation will create greater needs in respect of providing information on Sida's activities externally and global exchanges of information. In this context, IT

can facilitate the process and make it effective, and new IT tools can create new ways of working with different processes in activities.

In the Budget Bill it is laid down that one important way of enabling developing countries to develop economically and socially and to promote democratisation is to take advantage of the potential offered by IT. Therefore IT is a component in almost all of Sida's activities today. In the dialogue with the partner countries it is consequently additionally important that Sida is proficient in and makes use of IT in a way that promotes this dialogue. Staff at Sida must therefore possess basic IT maturity.

Sweden also has a prominent role as an IT nation. The ways in which Sida uses IT as a working instrument in cooperation with other donors and partner countries, and the ways in which Sida designs and develops its own IT environment, are therefore of great importance.

To sum up:

1. Improve efficiency by extending cooperation nationally and internationally
2. New IT tools provide new ways of working
3. Sida's staff must possess the IT skills that are necessary for cooperation with the partner countries
4. Sida contributes to Sweden's image as a leading IT nation through its use of IT

2.2 Strategic initiatives at Sida

One of the areas of focus in Sida's Strategic Priorities is the ongoing work of realising the *field vision*, which implies a shift of Sida's operations to the field. This has the effect that embassies must be regarded, to a greater extent than hitherto, as an integral part of Sida's organisation. Sida Stockholm's role as adviser and coordinator on the focus and forms of development cooperation will be strengthened while the operational work will be performed in the field. Therefore an intensive and regular dialogue between Stockholm and Sida's field operations is important and that information is available when needed. This makes it essential to have stable and effective communications between Sida Stockholm and the embassies in order to simplify the exchange of information.

3.IT organisation and forms of control

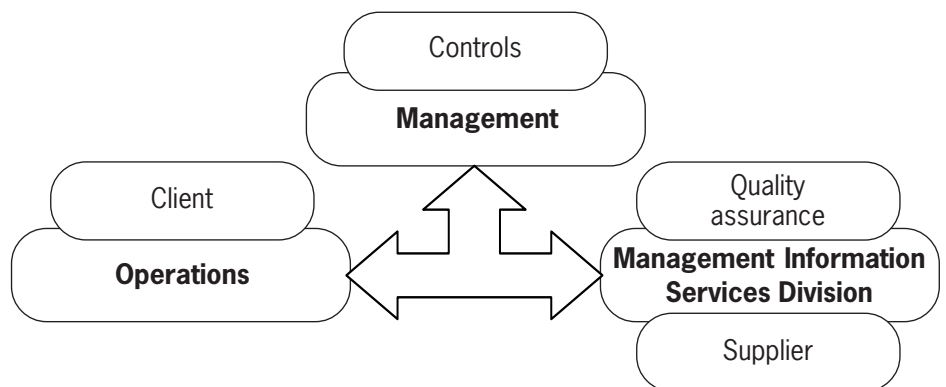
This chapter describes the focus of the IT organisation and forms of control. The IT organisation and controls have been designed with the ambition of achieving the vision below.

Vision

IT organisation and forms of control

The IT organisation and the forms of control shall ensure that IT makes efficient working methods possible and create a secure, coordinated and cost-efficient IT environment.

The point of departure of controls of Sida's IT operations is that they shall be exercised in a process of interaction between the following three factors: management, operations and the Management Information Services Division.



In the interaction between these factors, Sida's management exercises controls and lays down the focus of IT activities on the basis of Sida's overall goals and strategic priorities. Sida's operations, i.e. Sida's departments and embassies, are the clients and request IT on the basis of their needs in each area of operations and function. The Management Information Services Division is the supplier of the IT services that have been commissioned and also has a strategic role in assessments and quality assurance. The Management Information Services Division coordinates

the development of IT in order to make it cost-efficient. Forms for interaction between the above-mentioned factors are the IT council and the IT Council's advisory process in which the three factors are represented.

Management

The IT Council is a committee under the Council for Operational Development (ROV) in which management is represented. Management has the task of discussing and making priorities for IT development in the IT Council on the basis of Sida's overall strategic guidelines and operational needs.

Management also has the task of placing orders for infrastructural IT projects and development projects.

The IT Council functions as a forum for discussion between the three parties. The parties have equal representation on the Council. The aim of the IT Council is to create realistic plans and priorities for IT activities. It achieves this by having a good balance between operations, management and technology. Greater responsibility for the annual planning of IT activities should be given to the IT Council in the future.

The chairman is Head of the Finance and Corporate Development Department (EVU). The deputy head of division for operational development at the Management Information Services Division prepares and presents business at the IT Council meetings and reports directly to the Head of EVU on issues relating to the IT action plan.

Operations

Sida's operations are responsible for expressing needs of IT to improve the efficiency of work in each area and for the systems they owns.

The departments express these needs in the plan of operations.

Development is planned in consultations with the Management Information Services Division on the recommendation of the IT Council and the approval of Head of EVU.

Management Information Services Division

The Management Information Services Division has two roles: one in respect of quality assurance and one as a supplier of IT. These should be clearly defined and the mandate in respect of quality assurance should be strengthened.

Quality assurance role

The quality assurance role of the Management Information Services Division involves ensuring that IT development takes place on the basis of management's strategic priorities. At the same time a balance should be achieved between the needs of Sida's operations and the maintenance of a secure and cost-efficient operation of the IT environment. In this role the Management Information Services Division should own the instruments and have the necessary mandate to ensure that this actually takes place.

The role includes responsibility for:

- Having a strategic and preparatory role
- Planning and implementing infrastructural IT projects

- Initiating infrastructural IT projects and other developments of the IT platform
- Coordinating IT projects and IT development and participating in the IT Council
- Providing methods support to IT projects in all stages from the ideas stage, systems development, start-up and phasing out
- Assuring the quality of IT systems
- Making procurements of IT services
- Monitoring IT developments externally and IT development with partners in cooperation globally

Role of supplier

The role of supplier means supplying IT to operations in a service-minded, customer-oriented and cost-efficient way.

The role includes:

- Supply of IT services to meet orders placed by operations and management
- Installation, operation and administration and maintenance of the technical platform
- Providing support for the staff in their use of the IT environment
- Procurements of IT products

4. Strategic areas for IT

The increasing degree of global cooperation and Sida's work on the Field Vision necessitates the use and development of IT to promote the exchange of information internally and externally. Further requirements are to create insight into Sida's activities. The main strategy to meet these requirements is an increase in mobility and information sharing, transparency of operations, and a high degree of IT maturity among Sida's staff.

Vision

Strategically important areas for IT

Sida shall be open to using the opportunities that IT can offer to make operations effective and to achieve the goals of operations.

4.1 Security and accessibility of systems critical for operations

To ensure that each IT system is given the appropriate level of security and accessibility, it is important that the correct specifications are made initially in IT projects and in procurements of systems. This is particularly important for systems that are critical for operations.

In the development of new systems, requirements in respect of security and accessibility are of considerable importance for the technical solution that is most suitable. The level of ambition determined for security and accessibility is also of importance for the cost of the system.

One critical factor for making Sida's IT systems accessible is that communications between Sida Stockholm and the embassies are stable. Back-up facilities in cases of breakdowns in communications should therefore be established where justified.

Today there are no instruments that determine systematically the level of security and accessibility that is necessary for a certain system. Further work on finalising the production of an IT security policy and an IT security model for Sida is therefore of utmost importance.

4.2 Mobility

Sida's staff must have access to systems with relevant information and appropriate tools for the duties they perform. The changes in working methods faced by Sida will lead to an increase in travel which, in turn, will necessitate access to information on operations from different places, i.e. a need of access to systems from homes, hotels, airports, visits to embassies etc. In order to meet needs created by this increase in mobility, measures should be taken. An increase in mobility makes demands on routines and preventive measures in respect of security. It also makes new demands in respect of the ways in which the staff handle equipment and information.

As a consequence of this, the staff need access to mobile equipment. The selection of equipment should be carefully balanced between needs and costs. A study needs to be made on the types of equipment that are suitable and the information that the staff need to have access to.

4.3 Information sharing (internally/externally)

The implementation of the Field Vision can create further requirements for new IT systems. The flow of information will increase internally at Sida which will lead to the need of tools that facilitate information sharing.

An important basic requirement for information sharing is stable and rapid communication between Sida's offices in various parts of the world.

To facilitate information sharing internally, further IT development will be necessary. The current development of a document handling system is a tool of this type. Another tool can be the introduction of more powerful project rooms.

There is also a need for information sharing with external cooperating partners. In order to create simple forms of cooperation externally, in both Sweden and globally, project rooms or an extranet can be used.

Another aspect is that all information must be seen as one entity. By regarding Sida's supply of information as one entity, a better flow can be achieved, as well as cost efficiency in the handling of information. The point of departure for information supply must be the specific information that is needed in specific work processes and for specific target groups to enable IT development in these areas to meet the needs of the users. Other aspects are to have a common search instrument for a number of sources of information in order to facilitate access to information.

4.4 Transparency in Sida's operations

Transparency in this context means insight into Sida's operations, i.e. that the general public and Sida's partners in cooperation inside and outside Sweden are given more insight into Sida's work. Transparency also means defining decision-making channels for operations and creating openness towards society.

In this context Sida's IT environment should be further developed so that relevant information can be made accessible externally. Today information in a number of internal databases is presented on PartnerPoint on Sida's website. One objective is that more internal information should be made accessible externally in order to achieve greater transparency

The possibilities available to Sida to acquire information on development cooperation from external parties must also be taken into consideration.

As all government agencies in Sweden, Sida has also been required by the Government to increase transparency, i.e. it shall be a so-called 24/7 agency. This means that the services that can be provided electronically in a cost-efficient way shall be done so. It also means that the general public shall be able to seek contact with Sida through personal visits, by post, by telephone or via the Internet. It should only be necessary for a member of the public to have contact with one member of staff at Sida for each individual item of business, and should thus not need to find out how responsibilities and tasks are organised at the agency.

It is the aspiration of the Government that Sweden should have a coherent electronic administration, and this requires far-reaching cooperation between the government agencies. Hitherto it has been the responsibility of individual agencies to decide how this shall be done in practice. A study should be made to investigate what information should be available and how it should be made available for the general public with the aim of simplifying work processes.

4.5 Simplified working day

This means the measures that can be taken to facilitate the working day of the staff. Some basic IT tools are available today but are not used to their full extent by the staff. Sida must therefore make more specific requirements that its staff make optimal use of the support. For this to be successful, a change in attitude towards IT is necessary. One example of ways in which it is possible to simplify the working day is to book meetings via Notes Calendar and handhelds. Some of the functions in the existing IT tools are available in our IT environment but have not been made available to the users. Examples of this are project rooms and message functions in Notes. Existing functions should be given priority over purchases of new products. Efforts should be made to ensure that all members of staff have access to these IT tools and improve their skills in these areas.

A new document handling system is being produced. When the system is fully implemented it will constitute one of Sida's most important instruments for a simplified working day. The main purpose of the system is to function as a form of support in the daily working processes of programme officers.

Time-demanding administrative processes are, for example, handing invoices and administering formal decisions. A study should be made of the possibility of introducing electronic authorisations/signatures at Sida.

To facilitate the working day, instruments for handling languages should be introduced and access to manuals and instructions for systems in Sida's IT environment should be simplified.

Sida's IT environment is growing increasingly complex and there are an ever increasing number of IT systems. Additional IT development does not always mean advantages, it can also lead to stress. Apart from the ever-increasing flow of e-mail to every member of staff, the working day consists largely of registering compulsory information in different

systems. Sometimes new IT systems have had the effect that working duties that were formally central responsibilities have been delegated to each member of staff.

It is proposed that a study is made to investigate the consequences that the increasingly complex IT environment has on the working day of members of staff and the ways in which it is experienced from a user perspective.

4.6 Human resource management

Human resource management means ensuring that the staff have the appropriate skills to perform their duties. Human resource management is done, for example, by training and finding the right person for a duty or a post.

The number of staff in the field will increase as a result of the Field Vision. This applies both to staff seconded to the field from Sida in Stockholm and local employees. To meet their training needs and to simplify their training, educational tools such as e-learning will acquire great importance.

The necessity of finding the right skills at the right point in time will probably increase at Sida. To facilitate recruitment in the future central IT systems for resource management should be developed.

5. Cost-efficiency in IT operations

This section describes how cost-efficiency can be achieved in the IT environment's infrastructure and the IT architecture by establishing frameworks for IT development, for the selection of systems, and for the operation, administration and phasing-out of systems.

Vision

Cost-efficiency in IT operations

The IT environment shall be secure, user-friendly, flexible and cost-efficient.

5.1 IT platform

The way in which the IT platform is designed is a result of the demand and need for IT that can arise in Sida's operations. The responsibility for ensuring that the technical platform meets requirements rests with the Management Information Services Division.

5.1.1 Infrastruktur

In this context infrastructure means the design of the complete IT platform. The infrastructure that is built up in the IT environment shall be selected on the basis of the following factors:

- Long-term cost efficiency
- Security (see IT security policy)
- Flexibility
- User-friendliness

These factors can be in conflict with each other and their order of priority must be assessed in each individual case.

To achieve flexibility in the infrastructure, independent systems should be weighed against integrated systems. It should be possible to create new systems and to phase out systems without this having too great an effect on other systems.

Hitherto, IT and telephony have been treated as separate areas. However, the borderline between them is becoming increasingly blurred.

There are similar internal ongoing projects on telephony and IT and the same areas are being studied. Today, telephony and the telephone exchange are central components and a prerequisite for Sida's data communications. A study should therefore be made of the savings that could be made by integrating IT and telephony organisationally.

In addition to this, further tests should be made of telephony via satellite and the Internet.

5.1.2 Applications strategy

In this context, applications strategy means the criteria used to make selections of applications.

The objective is that the selection of applications shall be made on the basis of the following factors:

- that software standards are laid down regularly in Sida's IT policy and are observed,
- that well tried and tested standard products are used,
- that uniform interfaces are used in Sida's IT environment,
- that user-friendliness is ensured in new systems,
- that interaction and exchanges of information are sought between Sida's different systems,
- that the number of applications is kept down in relation to cost-efficiency.

One important aspect in the selection of applications is that the systems are user-friendly. To ensure that this is the case, a function should be established at the Management Information Services Division.

Database strategy

To minimise the costs of IT operation and administration and reduce the need to maintain expertise in an excessive number of program areas, it is important to restrict the number of applications in the IT environment. One objective is therefore that the software standards for the database managers that may be used at Sida is laid down in Sida's IT Policy.

The number of internal databases with the same functionality should be minimised in order to avoid a situation in which there are several systems with similar purposes in Sida's IT environment. In the existing environment there are several databases with the same or similar purposes. A survey should be made of existing databases and their areas of use with the aim of investigating the possibility of interaction or the development of central databases. There is also a need to produce an infological map, i.e. what information is available in which systems and which systems shall constitute the source of each item of information.

Web strategy

With the ambition that information shall be treated as a whole, it is important that the systems can interact easily in order to gain synergy effects. This can be achieved, for example, by using the same systems or tools for the publication of information. With the aid of this approach it can also be possible to reduce the costs of operation and administration at central and decentralised levels.

The objective is therefore to use in Sida's web environment:

- *one* publication tool for the publication of information in web format
- *one* web platform

There are a number of web platforms in Sida's IT environment. A study should be made to investigate the consequences and costs of transferring the external website to the same web environment as Sida's internal website, iNSIDE. The study should also include the consequences and costs of changing to a common publication tool.

5.1.3 Hardware strategy

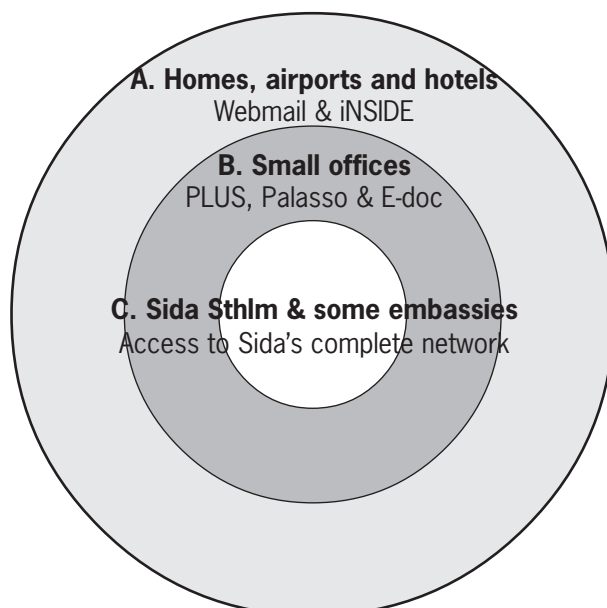
In this context the hardware strategy refers to the selection of hardware, i.e. IT equipment. The equipment shall be:

- Homogeneous and uniform
- Adapted to the requirements for capacity and accessibility that apply to each system and collectively to all systems
- Updated regularly and whenever necessary when new systems are introduced
- Procured to a greater extent in respect of hardware where mass purchases are possible and most advantageous.

5.1.4 Communications and networks

The objective is that Sida's IT environment shall provide data communications that make the exchange of information possible in the organisation, adapted to the quantity of information, its content, as well as needs of continuity and requirements in respect of accessibility. It is important that communication channels are adapted to the types of information being handled, needs for security, and needs for simultaneous quantities of information. The selection of communication channels and the technical solution will thus be made, among other things, on the basis of Sida's IT Security Policy.

Alternative channels of communication between Sida Stockholm and the embassies should be established whenever justified in order to reduce the risk of breakdowns in communications.



The model describes the main principle for the type of information that should be available from each workplace.

- A. All Sida staff shall have access to web mail and iNSIDE via the Internet.
- B. The members of staff that work at small offices shall also have access to PLUS and Palasso.
- C. All members of staff that work at Sida Stockholm and at embassies with extended delegation shall have access to Sida's complete network from their offices.

The ongoing study should be concretised in order to survey how the main principles described above can be implemented.

5.1.5 Operation and administration

Operation and administration should be organised in such a way that cost-efficiency and IT security are achieved. Sida should therefore have the ambition to:

- Coordinate the operation and administration of several systems
- Create efficiency in installations and in the distribution of programs
- Document routines for IT operation and administration
- Combine central and decentralised IT operation and administration in order to obtain high levels of IT security and a cost-efficient IT environment
- Be independent of key persons
- Have central distribution and upgrading of software for the entire Sida IT environment
- Have IT equipment for operations in *one* physical place in each office
- Carry out the operation and administration of each system where appropriate skills are available.

The objective is to have rapid and efficient administration of systems integration and distribution of applications. Systems integration should therefore be done in the following way:

- Applications should always be tested prior to installation
- Tests in separate testing environments should always be performed for all types of upgrades of the technical platform
- Central mass distribution of applications should be done whenever it is technically possible.

5.2 IT development

Cost-efficiency can be achieved by laying down frameworks for the various stages in the IT development process.

5.2.1 Directives for IT activities

The objective is that the directives listed below should exist for IT activities in order to create a common approach and a clear division of roles, responsibilities, routines and rules.

Directive	Purpose and content	Target group
IT rule	Included in Sida's regulations where the obligatory requirements for the IT field are formulated.	Sida staff
IT policy	Description of the IT environment and its services, and how the services may be used.	Sida staff
IT security policy	Guidelines for IT security depending on target group.	Sida staff
IT strategy	Describes the overall vision, goals and focus of IT activities for 3–5 years ahead, i.e. where we are going based on Sida's operations.	Sida staff but mainly Sida's management and the Management Information Services Division
IT action plan	The projects that are planned to be implemented during the year.	Mainly Sida's management and the Management Information Services Division
Instruction/routines/models	Describes how steps in different working duties are to be performed.	For functions concerned

5.2.2 Sida's requirements in respect of IT projects

To create cost-efficient IT projects it is essential that they are implemented in accordance with current rules and directives to ensure that each step in the process is taken on the basis of a given pattern which minimises the risk for superfluous steps in the work and has the effect the systems are as appropriate as possible for their purposes.

Systems development process

In the implementation of projects with an IT component it is important that systems development takes place in accordance with stipulated steps and methods and that milestones exist. Today there is no method for systems development. It is also the case that security aspects are not taken into consideration at an initial stage. In order to reduce the risk of missing important, decisive steps in the process, compulsory steps need to be laid down for the systems development process. Sida's IT security model should be included in this process. This would have the effect that all systems must be certified by the Head of EVU before they can be put into operation. In order to give special consideration to and to coordinate security aspects in the IT environment, a function for this should be established at the IT Division.

Methods for the acquisition of systems

One precondition for acquiring the right IT equipment, IT systems and administrative organisation is that the right specifications are made and that Sida has the expertise for placing orders. The way in which the

tender documents, contract documents, and specifications of supplies/ services required are formulated is of decisive importance for the development, operation and administration of the system. These documents stipulate criteria in respect of security as well as the functional and technical criteria for the system. An assessment of the technical solution that is most advantageous and cost-efficient must be made on the basis of a long-term holistic perspective.

One of the task of the Management Information Services Division is to give methods support to IT projects in the above-mentioned process with the aim of assuring the quality of Sida's IT environment. It is important therefore that there is cooperation with the Management Information Services Division in, for example, the production of documents for procurements and in the assessment of tenders. In order to further improve quality and possibilities for coordination, a function for the procurement of all IT services/equipment should be established at the Management Information Services Division. Working instruments should also be produced to simplify the administration of the procurement procedure for IT products and services.

5.2.3 Planning and follow-up of IT costs

It is important to be able to compile IT costs and to compare these over the years. Sida should provide instruments that make it possible to trace and follow up IT costs.

The objective is to produce a definition of what IT costs consist of, to specify accounting routines, and to determine the appropriation that should be used. The point of departure is that Sida should use the definition of IT costs produced by the Swedish Agency for Administrative Development. On the basis of this definition an in-depth study should be made by Finance Division to stipulate and specify the IT costs that should be followed up and ways in which they should be reported. The objective is that it should be easy to trace and follow-up different IT costs.

It should also be easy for existing systems to follow up costs referring to personnel, consulting costs for development, IT operation, IT administration, and IT training.

In order to make cost evaluations of IT projects, a cost calculation broken down by type of resource (consulting costs for development, investments, personnel, training and estimated gains in efficiency) should be presented in connection with the operational planning process and discussed by the IT Council. A comparison between the original calculation and actual costs and gains in efficiency achieved should be made in the final stages of the project.

5.3 IT Resources

In recent years Sida's IT environment has grown from a relatively simple to an increasingly complex and resource-demanding IT environment. The complexity in the environment now makes it essential to have specialist skills in a number of different areas. The allocation of resources to the Management Information Services Division, which is responsible for the technical platform, has not grown at the same rate as the development of the IT environment.

Ensuring that appropriate IT resources are available can be done by making use of internal staff or through procurements of external resources. However, it is important that appropriate skills and a cost-efficient IT environment are obtained, regardless of the type of resources used.

To enable the internal resources to correspond to the demands made by operations it is important that specifications of IT services and orders placed for them are clear-cut, that the right planning is done so that sufficient resources exist, and that they are available.

Sida's objective is that *internal personnel* shall be used in areas where it is necessary since the rules require it or where it is the best solution for the achievement of cost-efficiency or IT security.

Sida's objective is that *external resources* should be procured in cases where it is most cost-efficient and for the following purposes:

- Systems development/application development
- Personnel back-up at times of peak workloads, for project reinforcement and reinforcement through specialist skills
- Implementation of recurrent training programmes in basic applications
- Human resource development activities in the IT field.

5.3.1 IT support

IT support should correspond to the needs at Sida by extending the availability of support and technicians. A change should therefore be made by extending the times at which IT support is available, providing more support telephones, and having continuous manning in the support office during office hours. IT support should be available for at least four hours during the office hours of each embassy concerned (with the exception of those embassies that work on Sundays).

The support system should be used consistently and the system should be further developed in order to increase knowledge and to pass on experience more rapidly. In the long term the possibility of making the system available for others at Sida should be investigated.

5.3.2 Operation and administration of the technical platform

Resources that need to be allocated for the operation and administration of IT systems must be defined at an early stage in IT projects to permit their inclusion in the overall planning of IT activities and in the priorities for these activities. In cases where resources are insufficient, external consulting assistance can be engaged. One scenario could be to produce framework agreements to create cooperation with firms of consultants that can function as resource pools.

5.3.3 Systems operators at embassies

There are system operators at all embassies that look after the operation and administration of the local networks. Today the skills of these operators do not correspond to what is necessary for their role as system operators. Moreover, far too little time is allocated for the performance of system operators' duties. The objective is therefore that all systems operators at all embassies have the requisite skills. The working time for

the system operator role should be extended at large embassies with extended delegation to half a man-year. For other embassies with extended delegation the time for the system operator role should be extended to one-third of a man-year.

The recruitment process for systems operators should be reviewed in order to ensure that sufficient skills and suitable persons are recruited. After recruitment and training the systems operators should be certified. Another important aspect is that every embassy should have a person with secondary responsibility for systems operation who possesses sufficient expertise to guarantee the operation and administration of systems in the absence of the systems operator. The systems operators and the person with secondary responsibilities should be given continuous further training.

5.3.4 Technical support at embassies

To supplement the work of the systems operators with more advanced technical skills, a number of field technicians should be recruited by the Management Information Services Division for a trial period. The main task of these technicians would be to make support and maintenance visits to embassies. They would thus travel a great deal. The planning and priority of the countries that should be visited would be determined in consultations between the Field Unit and the IT Division. An evaluation should be made after the end of the trial period.

Other alternatives to reinforce the embassies with advanced technical skills are to recruit regional technicians that would be responsible for the IT environment at several embassies in the same region. The responsibility for making recruitments to posts of this type would rest with the embassies. In those cases where some embassies take the initiative to recruit regional technicians, solutions of this type should be given support. However, criteria in respect of qualifications and experience should be laid down by the Management Information Services Division and the selection of officers should be made in cooperation with the Division. Recruits must spend time doing practical training at the Division before taking up their posts.

5.3.5 IT contact persons

Today there is at least one person in each department who functions as the contact person with the Management Information Services Division. The skills and roles of these persons vary in scope between the departments. A study should be made that reviews the role of the contact persons and determines what their role should be in the future.

6.IT skills

This section describes the responsibilities that should prevail for IT training, requirements and levels in respect of IT skills for Sida staff, and the ways in which IT training should be organised.

Vision IT skills and IT training

Sida staff shall have the IT maturity necessary to perform their work

Sida shall adapt programmes for the improvement of skills in the IT field to functions and activities, and shall specify responsibilities.

6.1 Responsibilities

At Sida the responsibility for IT skills rests with four different functions:

1. *Heads of departments and divisions* are responsible for ensuring that every member of staff has adequate IT skills to perform his/her professional role and for making priorities and ensuring that the staff benefit from the IT training programmes.
2. *The Management Information Services Division* is responsible for offering general and basic courses in IT related to Sida's IT environment, in close collaboration with PEO/EOL. Training programmes of this type are:
 - Organisation and implementation of IT training programmes for new installations/upgrading of the basic programmes, i.e. the programs that the IT Division is responsible for.
 - Organisation and implementation of training programmes for systems operators
 - Organisation and implementation of IT introductory training programmes, which should be extended.
3. All *system owners* are responsible for providing training in their systems.
4. *PEO* is responsible for several areas:
 - PEO/PER is responsible for ensuring that persons who are recruited have documented basic knowledge of IT

- PEO/EOL is responsible for the overall planning and administration of all IT training.
- PEO/EOL is responsible for the planning and administration of regular IT training programmes in basic systems.

6.2 IT maturity at Sida

To enable Sida staff to make good use of the IT facilities provided, all members of must possess sufficiently high levels of IT skills. A higher degree of IT maturity is also necessary for the programme officers working with IT in development cooperation. The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all members of staff have adequate IT skills to perform their duties lies with the officers' immediate superiors.

An important component in the process of improving IT maturity is to change the way of working at Sida, from traditional manual administration to using IT tools that actually exist and which are there to facilitate Sida's work. In order to achieve greater IT maturity, a training programme must be organised. The training programme should cover Sida's entire IT environment and be offered at three levels: for new recruits, less experienced users, and experienced users.

However, new recruits must possess basic IT maturity on recruitment. Documented knowledge should be required in the recruitment process.

The training programmes must also be followed up and activities should be organised to maintain IT maturity and to increase it even further. This can be done in the form of IT tests. The results of these tests can be used to further adapt training programmes.

6.3 IT training

To enable members of staff at Sida to perform their professional role in an optimal way and to use the IT facilities we have, Sida should continuously offer its employees three forms of IT training.

- *Basic courses:* Office, Notes Calendar and Mail, Internet etc.
- *Sida-specific systems:* iNSIDE, Sida's website, SidaSearch, templates, Flexitime system, "Call Management" system (i.e. system for recording absence from one's workplace), directives on IT activities etc.
- *Tailor-made courses adapted to specific situations* for both basic and Sida-specific systems. These courses should be produced jointly by EOL, the Management Information Services Division and Sida's departments.

The training programmes need to be adapted and designed to meet the needs of the target group in question and should be made dependent of the posts held by participants. There are the following target groups at Sida:

- Newly employed staff
- Personnel at Sida Stockholm
- Sida staff working at embassies
- Local employees at embassies

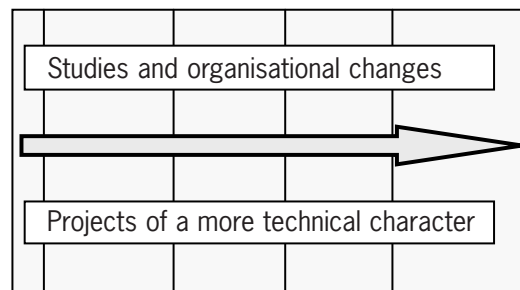
All target groups should be offered the basic courses and courses in Sida-specific systems. Tailor-made courses adapted to specific situations can vary according to the posts of the participants and other needs at the departments and embassies.

A training project should be started to develop and implement the above-mentioned objectives proposed in this chapter.

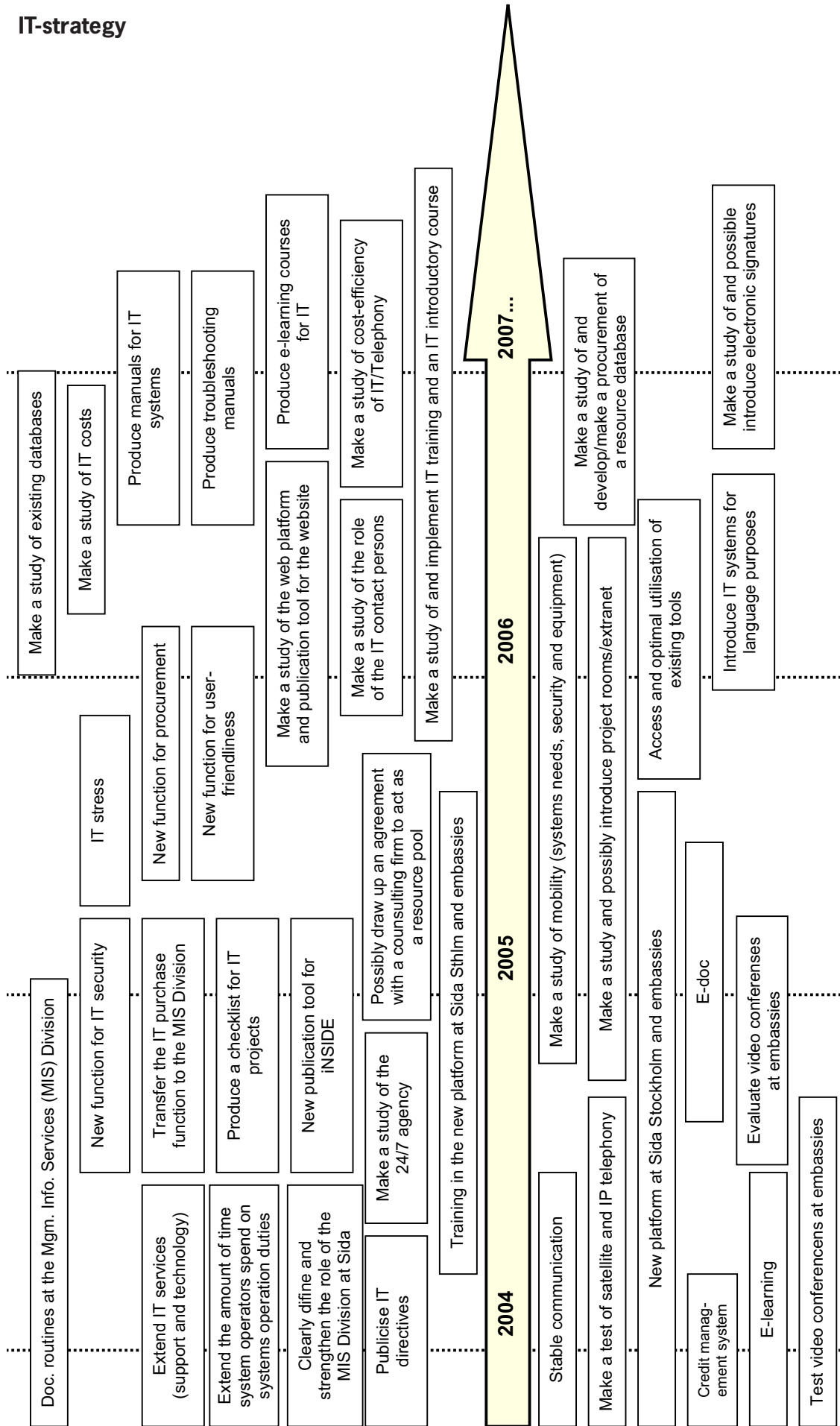
7. Strategic priorities for IT – a summary

This chapter summarises the most important strategic priorities that Sida shall implement in the next three to five years.

The proposed activities in the IT strategy require resources of different sizes in the form of personnel and investments. However, most of the activities are studies that can result in projects being started which subsequently have the development of IT systems as a consequence, but this is not necessarily the case. It is therefore difficult to assess the cost of implementing the proposed measures in the IT strategy. The budget and the priorities of IT projects must therefore be made on an annual basis in connection with the operational planning process, which results in an IT action plan. The IT action plan also determines the pace at which proposed measures can be implemented.



The model on the next page presents an overall picture of the measures proposed in the IT strategy. The studies and organisational changes that should be made can be seen above the arrow. Under the arrow there are projects of a more technical character. These projects are mainly concerned with improving our technical platform and with the development of new IT systems.



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



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