

Swedish Support to Decentralisation Reform in Rwanda

Merrick Jones

**Department for Democracy
and Social Development**

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Sida Evaluation 04/33

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Table of Contents

1.	Executive Summary	3
2.	Abbreviations	5
3.	Introduction	6
4.	Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Social Affairs (MINALOC)	8
5.	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA)	9
6.	District Development	13
7.	Coordination Issues	17
8.	Crosscutting Issues: HIV/AIDS and Gender	18
9.	Conclusions and Recommendations	19
Annexes		
A.	Persons Met	23
B.	Documents Consulted	25
1.	Terms of Reference	27

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Sida's support to Rwanda's decentralisation programme has taken the form of a Project which provides cooperation activities in three distinct but related elements: (a) with the Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Social Affairs (MINALOC), (b) with the Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA), and (c) with Districts in two provinces, Butare and Gikongoro. As might be expected, progress and outcomes have varied between the elements.
- 1.2 It is appropriate to note here that the Project has been in operation for only just over two years, a negligible period for institutional change processes. In ideal circumstances, a formal evaluation might be expected somewhat later. It is a little premature to form firm judgements about the progress of the Project. It is, of course, valuable to have this early opportunity to suggest modifications which may enhance the Project's outcomes.
- 1.3 Overall, our judgement is that the Project is: imaginative in concept; highly relevant to GOR's poverty reduction strategy; providing significant support to the current phase of the decentralisation programme; providing value for money; delivering concrete, visible outcomes in the districts; and providing a pilot for replication and adaptation in other provinces.
- 1.4 In MINALOC, the cooperation has produced some valuable outcomes, particularly in capacity development for the Decentralisation Management Unit (DMU), the provision of strategic advice on enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the ministry, and studies of sectoral decentralisation issues in several line ministries.
- 1.5 The major recommendations here are: (a) that arrangements should be made to achieve one of the original objectives of the Project, to ensure that strategic advice to the Minister of State for Good Governance and Decentralisation is available on a sustained and regular basis; and (b) that there should be a focus on helping MINALOC to develop the Decentralisation Focal Points in line ministries (which have a key function in sectoral decentralisation), in addition to continued support to the new Unit of Good Governance and Decentralisation (previously the DMU).
- 1.6 During the Project period RALGA has made rapid and significant progress in establishing its legal identity and its management structures and systems. The Project has reinforced this process through direct budget support, capacity building activities, and assistance with the production of key management instruments such as a strategic plan.
- 1.7 It is clear that RALGA has considerable potential to play a major role in the development of local government in Rwanda, particularly at present with the decentralisation process. In the context of this Project, the Association can be particularly instrumental in initiating and coordinating efforts to replicate and adapt into other provinces the Task Team approach (which is the basis of the Project's cooperation activities in the Districts of Gikongoro and Butare provinces).
- 1.8 The major challenge facing the Association is to ensure its long-term sustainability, specifically the need to attain an assured and sufficient level of income. Its intention is that subscriptions from its members (local authorities) will eventually meet most of its financial requirements. Wisely, the Association is actively considering additional entrepreneurial opportunities to enhance its income. The Project is assisting in this process.

- 1.9 The main recommendation is that Sida should continue for several years to provide budget support to RALGA, on a progressively reducing basis, as the Association becomes more self-sustaining financially. Any further support provided should focus on assisting RALGA to investigate and initiate income-generating opportunities. It is important that the Association should resist the temptation to be overambitious in this effort at this early stage of its existence.
- 1.10 The achievements of the District Development component of the Project, in just two years of operations, can only be described as impressive. The work of the Task Teams – operating in every District of the two provinces – has produced a wide variety of concrete achievements, including: schools, bridge repairs, income generating opportunities; improved clean water supply, planning tools, enhanced quality of agricultural produce and livestock, capacity building at district, Sector and Cell levels, and practical proposals for the alleviation of HIV/AIDS.
- 1.12 These genuine contributions to poverty reduction, and to the development of the Districts in accordance with GOR's decentralisation programme, have been achieved with comparatively small amounts of funding.
- 1.13 The major factor in this outstanding progress is the action learning philosophy by which the Task Teams function. This ensures that team members and others involved learn from their experience in Project activities. It facilitates bottom-up initiatives in the districts, mobilises community involvement, maximises scarce resources, and energises the formal governance structures with which it is integrated. The approach allows teams to evolve and encourages flexibility in response to local circumstances, making it readily replicable.
- 1.14 The main recommendation here is therefore unequivocal. The Project should continue to fund the Teams and to encourage RALGA and other stakeholders to consider how the Task Team approach might be adapted and used in other provinces.
- 1.15 Some concern has been expressed that the task teams might be perceived as a sort of 'parallel structure', outside the formal, statutorily constituted decentralised structure. This perception should be informed by the fact that the existing task teams were appointed by the district councils concerned. We recommend that this practice should continue, and furthermore that teams should henceforth be formally called District Council Task Teams.
- 1.16 Additionally, to emphasise ownership of the task teams by the district councils, it is recommended that the teams should submit their projects for approval by the District Council, via the Community Development Committee (CDC), report regularly on their progress to the District Council via the CDC, and copy their reports to the Provincial government, for information.
- 1.17 These measures should remove the perception of teams as being outside the formal structure, so that they can be recognised for what they are: sources of technical competence, capacity building and action, owned by the District Councils.
- 1.18 In relation to all three elements of the Project, and particularly at the District level, it is important that all activities should emphasise the central good governance values of transparency and accountability. This is particularly important in the work of the district Task Teams.
- 1.19 The issue of coordination of possible Swedish support with other initiatives in the field of decentralisation is problematic, for reasons discussed in Section 7.

2. Abbreviations

CAEDEC	Cabinet d'Architecture, Engineering, Decoration Expertise et Controle Technique
CDC	Community Development Committee
CDF	Common Development Fund
DC	District Council
DDP	District Development Plan
DIP	Decentralisation Implementation Programme
DMU	Decentralisation Management Unit
GOR	Government of Rwanda
IPA	Institute of Public Administration
KIST	Kigali Institute of Science, Technology and Management
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Social Affairs
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NTB	National Tender Board
NUR	National University of Rwanda
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RALGA	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities
RIAM	Rwanda Institute of Administration and Management
SALA-IDA	Swedish Association of Local Authorities – International Development Agency
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VNG	Association of Netherlands Municipalities

3. Introduction

- 3.1 It is possible to discern two phases in Rwanda's decentralisation process which are relevant for this report. The first, 2001 to 2003, can be seen as the period when decentralisation was *institutionalised*. During this phase the legal and organisational basis was laid. At the central level, the Decentralisation Management Unit (DMU) was established in the Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Social Affairs (MINALOC), and the Common Development Fund (CDF) was set up. A national policy and an implementation strategy for decentralisation was published.
- 3.2 Also at the central level, the Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) was established.
- 3.3 Below the central level, non-elected Provincial governments were constituted, legally autonomous elected District Councils and Community Development Committees (CDC's) were established, and below that a network of Sectors and Cells was set up.
- 3.4 We can identify the years 2004 to 2008 as the second phase, when the various elements of the structure must be made to work. This involves *capacity-building* at the institutional, organisational, and individual level, and *delegation* of real decision-making authority, accompanied by realistic levels of decentralised human and financial *resources*. MINALOC's template for this phase is the *Rwanda Five-Year Decentralisation Implementation Programme, 2004–2008* (2003).
- 3.5 This, briefly, is the contextual background of Sida's support to Rwanda's decentralisation programme, the subject of this evaluation.
- 3.6 It is not unusual to lose sight of the *purposes* of decentralisation and to regard it as an end in itself (a position often assumed by bureaucrats). The relationship of this Project to poverty reduction – Sida's overarching goal – is reflected in the following *logic*:
- In the Rwanda *PRSP* a key priority is *good governance*, as the essential foundation for accountability, transparency, participation, and sustainability.
 - One vehicle for good governance is *decentralisation*, since implementation and integration of PRS activities take place at the grassroots level (whereas at the central level the decentralisation process is sectoral).
 - At the grassroots level – the Cells, Sectors, and Districts – *capacity-building* is urgently required.
 - This is a major focus of the Project (through the district *Task Teams*).
 - The two other components – support to MINALOC and support to RALGA – may be seen as reinforcing the above logic.
- 3.7 It is appropriate here to quote from the Project document's description of its three components:
- i. "Support to MINALOC/DMU in terms of strategic advice on how to implement the decentralisation policies and strategies and...plans of operation that are being devised."
 - ii. "Support to the development of an Association of Local Authorities...already started...geared towards the creation process, financial support to get the administrative apparatus in place and exposure to regional and international sister organisations."

- iii. “Local government development for all districts within the provinces of Butare and Gikongoro...skills development and empowerment of the districts, sectors and cells to take on new roles and responsibilities and access resources for development...”
- 3.8 This evaluation and the judgements articulated in it are to be understood against this complex Project background. Specifically, the processes involved in the three components – decentralisation, poverty reduction, strategic advice, capacity-building, sustainability, empowerment, civil society, coordination, action learning – are abstract concepts open to a wide variety of interpretations and understanding.
- 3.9 As experience consistently demonstrates, institutional change is a supremely problematic, long-term process. Decentralisation, with all its claimed potential benefits, is perhaps the most challenging type of institutional change. This is because it inevitably involves changes in the hierarchical location of the two most fundamental elements of any organisation: *power* and *control*.
- 3.10 Decentralisation of authority is ‘safe’ for the stakeholders while it remains a concept confined to the pages of reports and recommendations. Opposition – overt and covert – inevitably appears when decision-making authority is about to be transferred down the hierarchy, i.e. delegated. It intensifies when financial resources are to follow decision-making authority, and even further when human resources – individuals – are to be physically relocated away from the centre. This is why few decentralisation efforts actually reach that stage. It is not difficult to discern evidence of this progression in the Rwanda decentralisation process, particularly in the reactions of some central line ministries.
- 3.11 Even when decentralisation efforts enjoy strong consistent political support, the process is always long-term, unique, and highly complex. There is never an end point where the decentralisation process is ‘completed’. All systems, including organisations, are a balance of dynamic tensions, and the status quo is always provisional.
- 3.12 A fundamental and unique element of this Project is *action learning*, the process by which groups – in this context the district Task Teams – learn how to learn and act from their lived experience. Action learning is potentially the most powerful form of learning and taking action available to groups. It is also complex and at first difficult to understand. This is reflected in the comments elicited consistently in this evaluation from district Task Team members: that initially they found the notion strange, but later came to value it and own it. It takes time, energy and patience to obtain sustainable benefits from action learning. The Task Teams have been operating for just two years.
- 3.13 For these reasons, and others, it is too early to arrive at definitive judgements about the success (or otherwise) of this Project. Its three components – in MINALOC, RALGA, and in the districts of Butare and Gikongoro provinces – face different but associated challenges; but all are part of a complex, long-term process.
- 3.14 For the same reasons, it is felt that this evaluation is somewhat premature. The analysis and recommendations in this report should therefore be seen as tentative, in the sense that it is unrealistic to expect the Project to have reached its full potential at this early stage. It is, of course, useful to have this early opportunity to make desirable modifications to aspects of the Project.
- 3.15 A number of specific recommendations are made in this report, in accordance with the Terms of Reference. However, for some elements of the Project, especially the district Task Teams, the strongest recommendation is: give them time to reach their full potential and to produce results.

4. MINALOC

- 4.1 The intention of the support provided to MINALOC under the Project is to assist the Ministry – primarily the Decentralisation Management Unit (DMU) – by providing continuous and regular strategic advice and associated capacity building in its task of supporting and coordinating the implementation of GOR’s decentralisation strategy. Overall, the aim is to help MINALOC to improve its effectiveness and efficiency in driving the decentralisation process.
- 4.2 At the inception of the Project, because MINALOC was receiving support from the Netherlands/UNDP, USAID, and Switzerland, discussions were held to clarify the contribution of the SALA-IDA adviser to the Ministry. These include: advice on support to decentralisation Focal Points in four line ministries; setting up a donor coordination committee; assessing and building capacities within MINALOC and in Gikongoro and Butare provinces; support to participatory strategic planning; and support to line ministries in the decentralisation process.
- 4.3 A variety of support activities have taken place during the Project period. These have included proposals for models for the coordination of the donor support to the decentralisation process and for coordination between ministries in the process. During 2003 changes were made to MINALOC’s structure and personnel (a process which is still ongoing), based on a survey and analysis undertaken by independent consultants. An element of this organisational change process has been studies undertaken under this Project by a SIPU consultant, focusing on the Ministry’s organisation and efficiency, and delegation issues.
- 4.4 A major aspect of MINALOC’s leading role in decentralisation includes influencing, persuading, supporting, coordinating, and monitoring the process in central ministries. Support to the development of sector decentralisation policies in the Ministries of Health, Education, and Agriculture has been provided under the Project, at MINALOC’s request. This was undertaken via the work of two consultants who worked with appropriate ministry staff to produce reports on the way forward.
- 4.5 As would be expected, much attention has been directed within the Project to capacity building and human resource development, generally in the form of workshops. These have included: the organisation of MINALOC, human resource management, training methodology, democratic decision making, municipal budgeting, research methodology, project cycle management, and the logical framework approach.
- 4.6 A number of study tours for key staff have been undertaken. In addition, individuals involved in the Northern Cape (South Africa) Sida-funded project (also undertaken by SALA-IDA) have visited MINALOC. The intention has been to exchange experiences of decentralisation, and to describe the Northern Cape project to the prefects and executive secretaries of Butare and Gikongoro, and to task team leaders. The establishment of the relationship between the Northern Cape project and the current one in Gikongoro and Butare provinces has provided an extra dimension to this Project and enriched its experience.
- 4.7 It is clear from the above brief summary that the Project has provided valuable support to MINALOC in a variety of ways. However, it is acknowledged by the various stakeholders – to different degrees – that the support to MINALOC provided under the Project has been its least satisfactory element. It is probably true to say that this does not amount to any outright dissatisfaction, but rather to a feeling that things might be done better. There seems to be a view that,

valuable as the individual activities have been, there has been some lack of continuity in the provision of strategic advice and a need for more focus.

- 4.8 To quote the Minister of State for Good Governance and Decentralisation, the decentralisation process needs a ‘champion’, and that is MINALOC. As we have emphasised, decentralisation processes are long and complex. Hence it is our view that the Project should continue to have an element of support to MINALOC, especially to the new Unit of Good Governance and Decentralisation (to replace the DMU). In view of the above comments, it will be essential that new arrangements should be made to ensure that the adviser to the Minister of State is available on a more sustained basis. It will also be useful if parameters can be established for the scope of strategic advice which the Minister of State feels would be useful.
- 4.9 It is appropriate here to note that the provision of support to central ministries is always challenging, in the sense that they are big, complex organisations. This is even more so in the case of a ministry charged with driving decentralisation processes, with all the tensions and contradictions inevitably involved. In MINALOC a complicating factor is the involvement of a range of donor support programmes. Hence, it is important that the focus of the Project in this element should be specified as clearly as possible.
- 4.10 During the course of this evaluation, the Rwanda media were carrying reports of the imminent removal from office of over forty mayors (around 30%) for alleged offences such as embezzlement and corruption, highlighting for us issues of transparency and accountability. These are central values in GOR’s good governance and decentralisation programme.
- 4.11 Obviously, these issues have ramifications well beyond the scope of this Project, but they do form part of its context. Hence future capacity building activities with MINALOC and ministry decentralisation Focal Points should emphasise these issues. This will require coordination with the USAID project supporting the development of relevant accounting, monitoring and auditing skills, at central and district level.
- 4.11 Perhaps the most intractable element of the process is to get decentralisation rigorously underway in line ministries: the area in which so many decentralisation efforts have failed. Therefore, the support provided under this Project should focus on MINALOC’s work with the decentralisation Focal Points in line ministries, through the new Unit for Good Governance and Decentralisation.

5. RALGA

- 5.1 RALGA, established shortly before the actual commencement of the SALA-IDA project and registered by GOR in March 2003, is to be formally inaugurated during May 2004. The Association has made rapid and substantial progress in establishing its legal identity, setting up its organisational and management structures, and starting its operations from office premises in Kigali. In common with other national associations of its kind, RALGA has defined its mission in terms of three *core task areas*: Representation, Lobbying and Advocacy, and Capacity Building.
- 5.2 To be successful in these task areas, RALGA must first firmly establish its *legitimacy* in the eyes of its members – the local authorities – and then, through its services, make itself *indispensable*. Significant progress has been made in the first of these. Notably, all of Rwanda’s local authorities

have become subscription-paying members of the Association, but at this early stage data are not available to enable any judgement to be made about the district council perspective on RALGA'S legitimacy.

- 5.3 RALGA's Annual Report for 2003 details a wide variety of activities undertaken during the Project period, which have developed the Association's capacity, and publicised its mandate and its role in the decentralisation process. The Association has formed a number of partnerships and works collaboratively with districts, provinces, MINALOC (DMU), and other stakeholders.
- 5.4 The Rwanda Five-Year Decentralisation Implementation Programme (MINALOC 2003) explicitly recognises the role of RALGA as a partner in the decentralisation process, including: representing and lobbying for local authorities, advocacy for democracy and local governance, mobilisation of resources for local authorities, advising local authorities on development perspectives and harmonisation of programmes, facilitation of best practice between members, and capacity building and training of local government personnel.
- 5.5 The primary process for achieving this degree of progress is *networking* with all the Association's stakeholders, at local, provincial and central levels, to ensure that existing resources are identified and fully exploited and that duplication is avoided.
- 5.6 The SALA-IDA project has contributed to RALGA's progress in a number of crucial ways, mainly through budget support, and the contributions by staff of VNG-International (a sub-contracted consultant in the Project); for example in the provision of a range of training activities; and assisting in the production of a Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008, a Communications Strategy, and an Administrative Policies and Procedure Manual. In addition, members of the Executive Committee and staff have benefited from study tours to a number of countries.
- 5.7 A major achievement, in terms of crucial cross-cutting issues in the decentralisation process, has been the programme on Mainstreaming Gender into Local Governance (supported by the Canadian Government). This has involved nearly 400 individuals from six provinces in training workshops and the production of a gender mainstreaming handbook for use in districts. RALGA's intention is to continue this effort and to replicate it in relation to another crucial cross-cutting issue, HIV/AIDS.
- 5.8 It is noted, however, that only one of the five members of RALGA's Executive Committee is a woman, and none of the seven Commissioners is a woman (the only woman Commissioner having recently been replaced by a man). No doubt the Association will wish to correct this startling imbalance.
- 5.9 The Project Implementation Mission Report (20/1/02) compiled by SALA-IDA, SIPU International and VNG International specifies the success factors to be sought and pitfalls to be avoided in establishing RALGA. It appears that the Association has generally achieved the success factors and avoided the pitfalls during this initial period of establishing itself. The challenge now is to pursue its three core tasks in a sustainable way. This has required RALGA to identify priorities among the many activities it wants to undertake.
- 5.10 RALGA's Strategic Plan identifies a number of threats, including "the donors may terminate the financial support early...", and "districts may generate too little income from taxes..." This is indeed a major strategic consideration: at least 85% of the RALGA budget is from external sources; current annual income from members' subscriptions is about RWF15.5 million, against a projected budget requirement in 2004 of RWF134 million.

- 5.11 The RALGA management is fully aware of this situation. Its position is that in the long run the Association will be funded primarily by its members' subscriptions, as local authorities increase their incomes from local sources and are able to pay higher subscriptions to RALGA. In addition, the Association plans to exploit what it sees as potential entrepreneurial activities which might support its core tasks, including: the provision of training, a radio station, lending (microfinance), consultancy services, guesthouse, boarding (food production), and private sector development (SME support).
- 5.12 It is clearly crucial for RALGA's sustainable functioning that the Association should explore all possibilities for generating income for its activities. According to the Strategic Plan 2005–2008, an assessment of such potential opportunities by a local and/or international expert is proposed and in the pipeline. This will prove essential decision-making information for the management of RALGA.
- 5.13 RALGA has identified training as a priority for action in this respect. Indeed, the Association has commissioned (from CAEDEC) a feasibility report on the construction of an extraordinarily ambitious training centre, which it feels would provide 'autonomy, independence and sovereignty'. This would incorporate an 800-seat conference hall, classrooms, a library, offices, a 150-seat restaurant, and facilities for football, basket-ball, volley-ball, and tennis. The estimated cost is FRW965,998,800 (US\$1,609,998). A plot at Kicukiro has been identified for the proposed centre.
- 5.14 It is relevant to note that when developing its Vision, Mission and Mandate statements and defining its role in the decentralisation process, RALGA described its capacity-building role as "to *solicit* for the local authorities equipment, finance and *training* to help them to effectively accomplish their duties". This mandate is consistent with the Association's commitment to ensure, by networking, that available resources for training are fully utilised and not duplicated.
- 5.15 Resources, actual and potential, for training district level personnel exist in a number of locations. For example, central ministries involved in the decentralisation process have training budgets. Institutional training capacity also exists, for example, in the Rwanda Institute of Administration and Management (RIAM) at Gitarama and in the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) at the National University of Rwanda (NUR), Butare. It is understood that IPA is currently developing training programmes for local government, with Netherlands government assistance. In Kigali, public institutions such as KIST have modern training facilities which are available for use by other organisations at reasonable rates.
- 5.16 RALGA's networking activities are locating other potential resources for training; the Association's Annual Report for 2003 details a variety of such successful collaborative training activities. These include the trainers and the training materials produced by the district Task Teams, created under this project. These training materials passed over to RALGA are creating a significant resource for RALGA's future training activities.
- 5.17 It is therefore relevant to ask whether it is appropriate or efficient for the Association to move from *soliciting* training resources to the direct *provision* of training. This is especially so when the proposal to construct a training centre in Kigali effectively constitutes a move to *centralise* training. Such a move could prove to be an extremely costly duplication of existing resources. Furthermore, the proposal would *institutionalise* training, which, in the context of the SALA-IDA Project, would run counter to the successful – and efficient – action learning methodology of the district Task Teams.

- 5.18 Against this background, it would clearly be advisable for the RALGA management to wait for the completion of the assessment mentioned at 5.12 above before committing itself to the construction of a training centre. It would, for example, be useful to have some concrete financial projections of income from the proposed centre, as compared to the massive costs involved in constructing, equipping, staffing, and operating such a centre.
- 5.19 RALGA is aware of the importance of publicising its activities and of providing regular and timely information about its activities. The Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008 includes plans for the production of a RALGA newsletter and the provision of radio programmes. These are important initiatives, which would enable easy communication between stakeholders, especially in relation to pilot projects in the districts, and to establishing best practice guidelines. In this context, it is relevant to note the USAID/ARD have recently constructed a website for RALGA, an essential tool for publicising the Association's activities.
- 5.20 A major challenge facing RALGA is to establish and maintain its distinctive character and its independence from government. This will require constant vigilance. MINALOC has expressed its wish to support the Association in these efforts, in ways which do not dilute its autonomy. It is important that this issue should be explored by RALGA and MINALOC.
- 5.21 Two key areas where RALGA will need to develop its activities are suggested. First, researching, assessing and publicising best practice in local authorities, establishing performance indicators, and continually reinforcing the fundamental values of transparency and accountability in the operations of councils. This will include, importantly, spreading lessons from experience with the task team approach from the two pilot provinces to other provinces. Secondly, contributing to national policy formulation, based on such research, as a partner in good governance.
- 5.22 We have emphasised several times that there is no single template for replicating the task team (action learning) methodology in other provinces. As Section 7 (below) illustrates, a wide variety of donor-funded activities are under way in support of decentralisation processes in various provinces. Inevitably, they adopt an equally wide variety of approaches and methodologies.
- 5.23 A strength of the task team approach is its flexibility and ability to adapt to unique circumstances. RALGA's essential role here will be to communicate the task team experience to all stakeholders, including donors and NGO's supporting decentralisation in the provinces; and to investigate, with them, what benefits might be gained from integrating the task team approach with existing activities in other provinces.
- 5.24 Naturally, the main stakeholders in this context are the district councils throughout the country. It will be up to them to decide, with RALGA's advice and support, if and how they might adapt the task team approach to their own circumstances and priorities. It might be, for example, that a district council receiving direct support in the form of capacity building – say training of staff in accounting skills – would appoint a task team to 'cascade' the training down to sector and cell levels.
- 5.25 Finally, it may be appropriate to offer a word of caution about how RALGA may be perceived from the outside, especially in the local authorities. There seems to be some evidence that RALGA is viewed by some as a – predominantly men's – mayors' club, meeting in Kigali and somewhat remote from the day-to-day concerns of district councils.
- 5.26 It is appropriate to ask why only mayors represent their local authorities in RALGA. District councils have five vice-mayors charged with various responsibilities, and there seems to be no obvious reason why they cannot from time to time represent their local authority. This would

provide a wider range of viewpoints, build capacity in the district councils, enrich RALGA's deliberations, and help to establish RALGA's legitimacy with its members. It seems especially desirable that *women* vice-mayors should have opportunities to represent their councils, on a regular basis.

6. District Development

- 6.1 It is not intended, nor is it appropriate here, to provide a detailed description of the institutions which comprise the several hierarchical layers of government in Rwanda. However, it may be useful to outline briefly the current structure, as the context of this Project.
- 6.2 At the central government level, the main instrument for the decentralisation process is MINALOC, specifically, the Decentralisation Management Unit (to be replaced in the ministry structure by a Unit of Good Governance and Decentralisation). Below that in the hierarchy are the (non-elected) Provincial Governments, headed by a Prefect. Below the province are the elected District Councils, which are statutorily responsible for the provision of basic local government services. At this level, we also find the Community Development Committee (CDC), chaired by the district council's Vice-Mayor (Economic Development). Below the district there are Sectors, and below them Cells, all with elected leaders. As might be expected at this early stage of decentralisation, the performance of districts varies enormously.
- 6.3 The intended purpose of this complicated and expensive hierarchy is that priority needs identified at grassroots levels – the cells – will be incorporated into District Development Plans (DDP) and provide direction for development activities.
- 6.4 At some stage in the future, provinces may be abolished, as the elected district councils become empowered and able to undertake their functions without supervision and assistance from above. The position of the Sector level seems ambiguous: some observers predict that it should become the focal point for all development, supervised and supported by the district councils; in contrast, others assert that it is superfluous and, like the province, should be abolished.
- 6.5 These arguments reflect a tension always found in decentralisation processes: between the real need for institutions of government which actually plan and *implement* development, and the entrenched bureaucratic obsession with *supervision* and *control*. Ideally, in our view, Cells would articulate priority needs to the District Council, via the CDC, for incorporation into the DDP. Ideally also, district councils would have the necessary institutional capacity and be provided with sufficient human and financial resources to enable them to undertake their functions as autonomous bodies. In this scenario, the sector and province levels would be unnecessary.
- 6.6 From an external perspective, the financing of local development seems curious. District council budgets are so small that councils are generally unable to carry out what are normally viewed as the most basic statutory functions of local government, such as road maintenance, public health inspection, market management, etc. It is the stated intention of GOR that eventually local authorities will receive 10% of government domestic revenue. Last year the actual figure was 3%.
- 6.7 Alongside this reality, GOR has established the Common Development Fund (CDF), administered by a semi-autonomous board under MINALOC, to support the decentralisation process. CDF finances local projects which come from the cells, through the sectors, to the CDC, to be

presented to CDF by the district council, via the province. CDF evaluates project proposals, which are also scrutinised by the National Tender Board. Priorities (established from Vision 2020 and PRSP) by CDF for funding are income generation, infrastructure, water, tourism, and environment (under review).

- 6.8 In 2003 RWF4 billion was allocated to projects, to rise in 2004 to RWF5.5 billion. In 2003 188 projects were approved, with about RWF51 million allocated per district. There is an established ceiling of funding per district, to ensure that funds are equally distributed.
- 6.9 CDF staff physically visit districts to monitor funded projects. Provincial governments also undertake monitoring of the same projects.
- 6.10 It might be observed then that the combination of very limited capacity at the district level, combined with the bureaucratic preoccupation with supervision of lower levels, has resulted in a situation where routine, day-to-day municipal services have been 'projectised', and funding has been centralised (in the CDF).
- 6.11 In fact, there seems to be a further contradiction here: GOR's decentralisation goal is that development will be 'bottom-up', yet the CDF, as we have noted earlier, decides its own priorities which guide its centralised scrutiny of project proposals. So, for example, it appears that a current favourite of the CDF is bridge repair (in many countries, a routine municipal function), but project proposals for rural primary schools – which people at cell level frequently want – are not finding favour.
- 6.12 Within this context, the District Development component of this Project works through *Task Teams*. As we mentioned in the Introduction, the teams operate according to the *action learning* philosophy, originated by Reg Revans and later adapted – using a different vocabulary – by Robert Chambers: that groups can learn how to learn and take action from reflecting on their actions and experimenting with new behaviours. This approach has been used effectively by SALA-IDA in Northern Cape Province, South Africa.
- 6.13 Task teams have been established under the Project in all the districts of Butare and Gikongoro Provinces (the intention being that experience in these provinces will constitute a *pilot* of the task team approach). During this evaluation a great deal of satisfaction and enthusiasm about the work of the task teams was expressed, by MINALOC, by RALGA, by the two provincial prefects, by mayors, district councillors and CDC members, by sector and cell members, by school teachers, pupils and parents, by members of the donor community, by NGO's, and others.
- 6.14 In a very brief time (just two years) the work of the teams has produced a variety of concrete, visible benefits. These include the building of two new primary schools and repairs to others; the rehabilitation of an important bridge; the provision of small loans to local entrepreneurs to enable them to develop or expand a business; assembling comprehensive technical monographs which provide extensive factual data about districts – essential for district planning purposes; assisting farmer associations with improving crop yield and livestock quality; developing a variety of practical strategies for combating the effects of HIV/AIDS; enhancing gender balance; supporting actions, initiated at cell level, to provide clean drinking water to the inhabitants of three cells; and many others.
- 6.15 These achievements are significant. Importantly, they are visible: they demonstrate concretely to people that they can improve their lives by local initiative and involvement in development projects; and they reflect local priorities.

- 6.16 In the process of establishing the task teams and getting them to work, the Project has provided a wide range of capacity development activities, particularly in training members in teamwork skills. A comment repeated frequently by team members during the evaluation was that they had been surprised by their effectiveness in exploiting their pooled abilities, and in their collaborative actions. All team members expressed their intention to continue and broaden this team-based method.
- 6.17 Synergy – the whole being more than the sum of the parts – is frequently claimed but rarely achieved. It is not too fanciful to say that it seems to have been achieved in the task teams. It is worth noting that this was also the case in the Northern Cape project. To action learning practitioners this is not a surprise. But it is rare for action learning to find its way out of the books and journals of academe into practice in development contexts.
- 6.18 A major strength of this approach is that it *energises* the formal administrative structure, *galvanises* action, and provides a highly visible *exemplar* of what is possible with sustained local participation.
- 6.19 Additionally, the task team methodology *evolves* from real needs and priorities. It does not proceed according to a single template for action. It is an organic process, not a rigid mechanical one. Hence it is adaptable and replicable in other circumstances.
- 6.20 Each task team was launched via a self-generated project, so there are teams focusing on health, education, infrastructure, income generation, water and sanitation, and gender. Additionally, all teams have developed HIV/AIDS projects, and presented them for funding to the provincial Commission for HIV/AIDS. Each project was derived by the task team after intensive consultation with cell, sector, and district leaders, and reflects local priorities. Teams can and do work across district boundaries where appropriate.
- 6.21 The task teams are typically fairly small, in accordance with action learning principles (5–8 persons). Membership varies, depending upon local circumstances. Obviously, a team must have at least some members who have expertise/experience in the area of the team's current focus, for example in health or agriculture. Hence, there are some professionals, technicians, and extension workers in the teams. Teams commonly include members of the local CDC, councillors – including vice-mayors – and officials of the district council. The initial selection of task team members was made in consultation with the provincial governments. Team members are appointed by the district council.
- 6.22 About 30% of task team members are women, although some teams are almost exclusively male. Efforts should be made to correct this imbalance in some teams.
- 6.23 Extensive capacity-building has been provided under the Project within the task teams (in the form generally of short, practical workshops), to enable them to design and implement projects and to manage the funds provided by the Project for their operations. Because team members are drawn from existing organisations within their district, this capacity-building spreads organically across organisational boundaries, thus strengthening local governance capacity.
- 6.24 In addition, team members are now trained trainers as a result of the Project, and use their trainer skills to build the capacity of those involved in implementing task team projects; for example, in developing small businesses, improving agricultural production, and building primary schools.
- 6.25 Generally, much satisfaction with the task team approach and its results has been expressed at all levels. There have been few criticisms, but a degree of puzzlement or concern was expressed during the evaluation about how the teams relate to, and have their work integrated into, the

formal structures. This was expressed mainly in MINALOC, rather than at the provincial or district levels. It is a legitimate concern.

- 6.26 It is important to maintain the flexibility of the task team approach, which would be lost if the teams were subject to bureaucratic control and rigid procedures. But it is also essential that their work should be ‘owned’ by the local district council, and that local inhabitants can clearly associate the teams’ achievements with their elected representatives.
- 6.27 In our view this is primarily an issue of perception, information sharing, and reporting relationships. To make it clear to all stakeholders that the teams are part of the decentralised governance arrangements – appointed by the district council – they should be formally called District Council Task Teams.
- 6.28 It is suggested further that all task team projects should be approved by the local district council, via the CDC, as elements of the District Development Plan (DDP). Indeed, as district councils and CDC’s become more experienced and confident, they should be able to *commission* task teams to undertake work which is identified for priority action in the DDP. CDC’s should then be able to play their leading role in coordinating development, by actively pursuing potential sources of funding (CDF, donors, etc) for their task team projects.
- 6.29 Additionally, task teams should report regularly to the district council, via the CDC, on the progress of projects. Reports should be copied to the provincial government, for information. It is essential that such reporting should be non-bureaucratic.
- 6.30 Such a system of simple, direct reporting would enable district councils to understand and oversee the work of their task teams; to communicate it to the sector and cell levels; and to coordinate task team projects with others in the district. In this way the task teams would be perceived as an integral source of expertise and implementation capacity, *owned by the district council*.
- 6.31 What of the sustainability of the task teams? A major strength of this approach is that there is no single template for team operations. Their future roles will naturally *evolve*. The teams are not part of the statutory governance structure – although they are integrated with it and support it – and are not necessarily permanent. Their continued existence will depend on the individual circumstances of each team.
- 6.32 It may be, for example, that some teams will complete what they see as their task and will cease to exist. Others have ideas for many future projects, and will continue to operate. Some may amalgamate across districts, as their functions expand. Some may collaborate or amalgamate with, or be incorporated into, another local organisation, thus building capacity further. Some teams are already close to being self-sustaining. They are lending money, for instance, to small-scale entrepreneurs and as loans are repaid the funds are used to finance loans to other businesspersons: the money is being recycled.
- 6.33 The crucial element here is that the task team approach is thoroughly flexible, able to respond to local circumstances. Hence it can be adapted to needs and priorities expressed at the cell and sector levels, and to district development plans as they are formulated.
- 6.34 Looking to the future, it is possible to foresee a scenario where the task team approach will be well established as an integral development mechanism of some district councils, so that Sida might confidently consider providing funding directly to those councils, for task team activities. This will depend, naturally, on the development of capacity in councils to effectively manage and account for such funds. Some councils may be in that situation now.

- 6.35 During the course of this evaluation, as noted in 4.9 above, the media were carrying reports about alleged embezzlement of funds and corruption in district councils. These issues have ramification well beyond this Project, but it is important that all task team activities must emphasise and practice transparency and accountability.

7. Coordination Issues

- 7.1 It is not possible or appropriate within the limited framework of this evaluation to provide a comprehensive account of the myriad donor-funded cooperation activities impinging on the decentralisation programme. What follows is an account of some of the issues involved in coordination of the decentralisation process, with some examples from the central and district levels.
- 7.2 Coordination of cooperation between governments and donor agencies is a well known, widely acknowledged and intractable issue. Essentially, coordination is a voluntary, collaborative activity: organisations and individuals coordinate their actions when they see some benefit in doing so. Bureaucrats tend to equate coordination with having meetings, whereas real coordination consists of *actions*. Coordination cannot be directed from above. Hence the logical conclusion is that when coordination is not taking place it is because the parties concerned see more benefit in not coordinating than in coordinating. This will not, of course, prevent the parties complaining about lack of coordination.
- 7.3 Rwanda's decentralisation programme is no exception to this global reality. All parties encountered during the evaluation professed to be committed to coordination with other actors in the process, and complained about the lack of such commitment by others. This is despite the fact that at each level there exist formal mechanisms and systems for coordination, which are clearly described in the Decentralisation Implementation Programme. Among them are: the Secretary Generals' Forum, the Prefects' Forum, the Focal Points' Forum, the Donors' Forum, the Civil Society Forum, Decentralisation Support Units, RALGA, and the Association of the Private Sector.
- 7.4 In addition, MINALOC want donor project funds for decentralisation to be channeled through the Common Development Fund (CDF), and has asked donors involved to specify their contribution and potential contribution to the decentralisation process, so that a comprehensive activity matrix can be maintained. This may seem desirable administratively, but at present it appears that donors generally are not yet fully convinced that the CDF has the capacity to manage, distribute and account for such 'basket funding' arrangements; so it is not yet happening.
- 7.5 GOR's *Economic Strategy to Fight Rural Poverty* (2003) notes that "donors and lenders have supported Rwanda consistently during the post-genocide recovery phase...geographical coverage is a generous but *uneven patchwork*, with Dutch-financed support to Gitarama, Ruhengeri, Cyangugu and southern Kigali Ngali; World Bank-financed support to parts of Gikongoro, Butare, Gisenyi, Byumba and two districts and a town in Umutara; Belgian-financed support in four districts in northern Kigali Ngali; and Swiss-financed support to Kibuye" (our emphasis).
- 7.6 In addition, among other support, Germany is supporting sector decentralisation via a pilot project in Kibungu. The Netherlands is the lead donor in decentralisation, focusing primarily on district development, and it has also played a major role in the development of the DMU.

USAID/ARD is supporting fiscal decentralisation at district level; training materials have been supplied to RALGA. The project is also supporting MINALOC's Local Government Finance Department. UNDP has been supporting DMU for three years, and is considering a further extension – based on basket funding from donors. The EC is the lead agent for sectoral deconcentration in rural development. It has an upcoming capacity building programme for districts, including budget support later as capacity develops and district development plans are completed.

- 7.7 Of direct relevance to this Project and the issue of coordination, the World Bank is setting up a programme to support districts in Butare and Gikongoro provinces, in capacity development for local administration. The stated intention is to integrate these activities with the Sida-funded Project in these two provinces, using the task teams and training materials for these activities. This is perhaps an illustration of the point that various actors will coordinate their efforts voluntarily when they see an advantage in doing so.
- 7.8 This brief summary provides a picture of the fragmented nature of donor support to the decentralisation programme. The actors involved profess to be committed to coordinating their efforts with others. At all levels there are structures and mechanisms for coordination. There is, apparently, progress being made slowly to use these mechanisms, and it is worth noting that real coordination frequently happens on an informal basis. As we have emphasised, coordination mechanisms work when there is a shared will to make them work.
- 7.9 In the context of this Project, coordinating mechanisms exist; there is no need for more. What is needed is for the parties concerned to actually use these mechanisms – essentially at the the district level the CDC's; and in MINALOC the new Unit for Good Governance and Decentralisation, and the Donors Forum. As we have emphasised earlier, RALGA should be assertive to all stakeholders in communicating its legitimate leading role in coordinating elements of the decentralisation process which affect its members.

8. Crosscutting Issues: HIV/AIDS and Gender

- 8.1 It is considered that the Project has attempted with some success to integrate crosscutting issues of HIV/AIDS and gender into its activities. In particular, all task teams have produced HIV/AIDS projects and submitted them for funding to the provincial HIV/AIDS commissions.
- 8.2 Some concerns have been expressed in this report about the membership of RALGA's Executive Committee and Commissioners, and about the fact that the Association's members are represented by mayors, most of whom are men. It is important that RALGA should take steps to remedy this imbalance, especially as it has taken an admirable initiative in producing a Programme for Mainstreaming Gender in Local Governance.
- 8.3 In relation to the District Development component, we have recommended that more effort should be made to ensure a better gender balance in the membership of the task teams.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 MINALOC

- 9.1.1 It is recommended that the Project should continue to have an element of support to MINALOC, which is charged by GOR with driving the decentralisation process.
- 9.1.2 It is felt that there is a need for the provision of strategic advice to the Minister of State to be available on a more sustained basis, and that the relationship between the adviser and the Minister should reflect this requirement. New arrangements should be made to achieve this required continuity and focus.
- 9.1.3 It is important the Project should support the good governance values of transparency and accountability. At the central level, therefore, future capacity building activities undertaken in the Project with MINALOC and the decentralisation Focal Points in the line ministries should emphasise these issues, and be coordinated with the USAID project for the development of relevant skills such as monitoring, accounting, and auditing.
- 9.1.4 Many national decentralisation efforts have failed because line ministries have either resisted or failed to act on government decentralisation policies. This is frequently the most problematic and intractable factor in decentralisation processes. Therefore, it is recommended that a major focus of the Project should be to support MINALOC's Unit for Good Governance and Decentralisation in working with the Decentralisation Units of line ministries on implementing sector decentralisation.
- 9.1.5 Along with these recommendations, it is appropriate to enter a note of caution. Even if ideal arrangements are achieved for the Project's cooperation with MINALOC, progress with the main elements of the decentralisation process will take a considerable length of time. We have emphasised throughout this report the extreme complexity of institutional change processes, especially *real* decentralisation.
- 9.1.6 MINALOC's *Rwanda Five-Year Decentralisation Implementation Programme, 2004–2008* (2003) is in many ways a thorough and well reasoned document, clearly the product of a great deal of effort. Yet it does not provide a detailed action plan or schedule for the decentralisation process.
- 9.1.7 For example, the document anticipates the establishment of a National Decentralisation Implementation Secretariat, "linked to the MINALOC", to replace the DMU. The Secretariat is to be "the channel through which facilitation, support, monitoring, evaluation and capacity building coordination for implementation of decentralisation will be directed". The main role of the director of the Secretariat is to be *liaison* with those involved in the decentralisation effort. (A more recent organisation chart for MINALOC in addition includes a Unit for Good Governance and Decentralisation, whose functions include "decentralisation and capacity building").
- 9.1.8 The generality of these descriptions is neither unusual nor avoidable. It simply indicates how problematic it is for a central unit to drive the decentralisation process. Hence the Implementation Programme lacks, for example, the precision and direction of a strategic plan. This means that the Implementation Programme cannot provide a very specific guide as to how the Sida Project actually contributes to the decentralisation process and fits in with other donor-funded support. It will therefore be difficult – but essential – for the actors involved in any extension of this Project to establish very clearly the parameters of the support.

- 9.1.9 It would be desirable, ideally, to specify powers to direct the decentralisation process and enforce a schedule of actions to which all actors in the process must adhere. But in the real world of bureaucracy, this is never possible. Line ministries have mandates and functions to undertake; they employ professional and specialists to enable them to do their work. To a great extent, they must be allowed to decide how best to do so. They will, understandably, at best look at decentralisation as a potential – but time-consuming – way to improve their operations, possibly as interference in their work, and at worst as a threat to their authority. Either way, their day-to-day operations will take precedence over time-consuming deliberations about decentralisation.
- 9.1.10 This reality is the context for the cooperation provided under this Project. Its complexity and central involvement in bureaucratic issues of power and control mean that it is unrealistic to expect precise predictability as the decentralisation process unfolds.

9.2 RALGA

- 9.2.1 It is clear – and was so, at the inception of the Project – that RALGA will not achieve financial self-sustainability for a few years yet. The subscription levels that its member councils can be reasonably asked to pay are currently very low in relation to RALGA's operating expenditures. These levels can be expected to rise slowly as local authorities become more efficient in collecting local taxes and imaginative in generating income.
- 9.2.2 It is obvious that RALGA must seek potential opportunities for raising income, in addition to member subscriptions. As mentioned at 5.12 above, a study is to be carried out for RALGA, which will explore such opportunities and assess their income-raising potential and feasibility. We recommend that RALGA's plan to construct a training centre should be included in this study, particularly in relation to the huge costs that would be involved in building, equipping, staffing, and operating such a centre. We recommend also that RALGA should await the results of the study before proceeding with further steps in relation to the planned training centre.
- 9.2.3 To assist RALGA during this phase of its progress to becoming a flourishing, indispensable institution, it is recommended that Sida continues to provide budget support for a practicable period, diminishing progressively as the Association's self-generated income expands. Any additional support should focus on building RALGA's income generating abilities and developing its research capacities, as a basis for publicising best practice and contributing to national policy formulation.
- 9.2.4 It is very important to the decentralisation process that RALGA should continue to build its provision of capacity-building services for local authorities. The most effective and efficient way to do so, it is suggested, is to continue to commission training *at local levels*, using existing resources wherever possible, via the Association's networking activities with its stakeholders. In this respect, RALGA should continue to explore possible collaboration with such existing institutions as RIAM, IPA (NUR) and KIST; and to make full use of the trainers and training materials developed by the district Task Teams, and others produced by other programmes/projects. An example is the accountancy training manuals produced by USAID/ARD for training relevant staff in all districts.
- 9.2.5 In the context of this evaluation, it is essential that RALGA should play a leading role in exploring ways of extending the task team approach from the two pilot provinces into other provinces. It is emphasised that there is *no single template* for doing this. The process will vary from province to province and district to district, depending for example on what decentralisation activities – some

donor-supported – are already taking place. RALGA's role will be to spread the news about the task team approach and to commission necessary training activities in the provinces, drawing on training expertise which has been developed in the provinces and districts, and on its growing library of training materials.

- 9.2.6 RALGA has an important role to play in helping to coordinate the decentralisation process at district level. We have seen that donor support to the decentralisation process in various provinces uses a variety of different approaches. It is essential that experience with these approaches is shared across provinces and districts. It is considered quite legitimate in this respect for RALGA to 'lean' on donors and to assert its unique position to undertake a major role in coordination.
- 9.2.7 RALGA is in a unique position also to send signals to local authorities which reflect national priorities and values such as transparency and accountability. As we have noted, the Association has taken early steps to begin 'mainstreaming' such major issues as gender and HIV/AIDS in its activities. In relation to the former, it is felt that these signals would be much stronger if RALGA itself set an example; that is, if it took steps to ensure a proper female/male balance among its Executive Committee members and Commissioners.
- 9.2.8 In this connection also, to avoid a possible perception, among some stakeholders, of RALGA as a Kigali-based, exclusive, predominantly male, mayors' club, the Association may want to consider why local authorities should be always represented by mayors. The involvement of vice-mayors – especially women vice-mayors – in representing their councils is highly desirable, and would strengthen capacity at local level.
- 9.2.9 As we noted earlier, RALGA's strategic plan includes its intention to produce a newsletter and radio programmes. It is clearly very important that the Association should take advantage of all possible avenues for communicating with its local authority members and other stakeholders. It should not be difficult or expensive for the Association to start now to produce and distribute a brief newsletter on a regular – ideally monthly – basis. This should be simply produced, informative, interesting. Most importantly, it should be a two-way communication, with contributions from stakeholders. In relation to this Project, it would be appropriate, and very useful, if such a newsletter could incorporate reports on the work of district council task teams.
- 9.2.10 RALGA has made impressive progress in establishing its legal identity and setting up its management, financial, and administrative systems. Its strategic plan provides the Association with a basis for establishing itself as an indispensable, autonomous institution. It is imperative that in pursuing its mandate, RALGA should ensure that its activities always focus on the three *core task areas* of the Association's Mission statement.

9.3 District Development

- 9.3.1 It is considered that the district development element of the Project has proved to be highly successful in the brief time the task teams have been operating (just two years). The Project activities in the two provinces are clearly observable as a pilot for spreading the task team methodology to other provinces. As emphasised earlier, RALGA should have a leading role in this process. It is therefore recommended that this element should continue with only minor modifications.
- 9.3.2 As noted earlier, it is essential that the task team projects should be integrated into the plans and activities of the CDC's and district councils. For this purpose, it is recommended that District Councils should continue to appoint task team members, and that teams should now be formally called District Council Task Teams. Where it is appropriate (i.e. when a task team works in only

one district), the title should incorporate the name of the district council: e.g. the Mushubi District Council Infrastructure Task Team.

- 9.3.3 In addition, it is recommended that teams should, as a matter of routine: submit their projects for approval by the local district council, via the CDC; report regularly on their work to the district council, via the CDC; and copy their reports to the provincial government, for information.
- 9.3.4 It is recommended that the task teams should emphasise and practise transparency and accountability – especially to their district council – in all their work; including the capacity development activities which they provide at district, sector and cell levels.

Annex A: Persons Met

Sida

Joanna Athlin	Programme Officer, Development Cooperation, Kigali
Hallgerd Dyrssen	Division for Democratic Governance
Thomas Kjellson	“
Urban Sjostrom	“

SALA-IDA

Steinar Langbakk	Project Director
Finn Norgren	Project Manager
Alex Rutabingwa	Regional Project Coordinator
Karin Stenback	Financial Officer

SIPU

Bjorn Bengtson	Managing Director
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AF-International AB

Virginia Langbakk	Senior Consultant
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MINALOC

Protais Musoni	Minister of State, Good Governance and Decentralisation
Eugene Barikana	Secretary General
Alexandre Semarinyota	National Coordinator, Decentralisation Management Unit
Alexis Dukandane	Director of Planning

MINECOFIN

Ernest Rwamucyo	Director, S P P M D
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C D F

Vincent Gahamanyi	Project Analyst
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RALGA

Augustin Kampayana	President
Johnson Mugaga	Secretary General

EC

Alessandro Villa	Head of Section
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UNDP

Kjetil Hanson Programme Specialist, Governance

USAID/ARD

Henry Kellam Chief of Party
Ludovick Shirima Senior Adviser, Fiscal Decentralisation
Walter Espinoza Treasury & Budget Management Specialist

World Bank

Toni Kayonga Operations Officer

GTZ

Wolfgang Ahrens Principal Technical Counselor

Care International

Anne Morris Country Director
Afrodise Mboniyintwala Project Coordinator

Butare Province

Piere Karemera Prefect
Aimable Twagiramutara Executive Secretary
Mayor and Executive Team, Gikonko District Council
Mayor and Executive Team, Nyaruge District Council
Task Teams for Infrastructure, Water & Sanitation, Health, Agriculture
CDC members, Sector, Cell, Ubudehe leaders
Members of the Project Regional Steering Committee

Gikongoro Province

Epimague Nsanzurwanda Prefect
Emanuel Rukundo Executive Secretary
Mayor and Executive Team, Mushubi District Council
CDC members
Task Teams – Education, and Income Generation
Head, teachers, parents, school children
Vice-Mayor and Executive Team, Nyagure District Council
CDC members
Task Team, Agriculture
Farmers Association members
Members of the Project Regional Steering Committee

Annex B: Documents Consulted

Sida

Sida's Policy for Capacity Development (2000)
A Democracy and Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation (2001)
Methods for Capacity Development (2002)
Good Governance (2002)
Participation in Democratic Governance (2002)
Digging Deeper (2003)
Sida at Work: a Guide to Principles, Procedures and Working Methods (2003)
Sida at Work: a Manual on Contribution Management (2003)
Capacity Development by Strengthening Systems of Organisations & Institutions (2004)

SALA-IDA, SIPU International, VNG International

Sida Support to Rwanda's Decentralisation Programme: Tender Document (2001)
Project Implementation Mission Report (2002)
Inception Report (2002)
Sala/Ida – Minaloc/DMU Decentralisation Project: Startup Report (2002)
Quarterly Reports (2002–2003)
Delegation of decision making within MINALOC (2003)
Work order for assignment for developing a delegation order for MINALOC and a MINALOC proposal for rationalising MINALOC and enable MINALOC to retain key staff (2003)
Proposal for possible measures to adopt and actions to agree to in order to make MINALOC more effective and efficient in fulfilling its mandate and better able to retain competent staff (2003)
Annual Report, April 2003–April 2004 (2004)

GOR

Vision 2020 (MINECOFIN: 2000)
Implementation Plan for National Decentralisation Policy (MINALOC: 2000)
Fiscal and Financial Decentralisation Policy (MINALOC/MINCOFIN: 2001)
Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MINECOFIN: 2002)
National Programme for Strengthening Good Governance for Poverty Reduction in Rwanda (MINALOC: 2002)
Decentralisation of Health in Rwanda (MINALOC/SALA-IDA: 2002)
Economic Strategy to Fight Rural Poverty (2003)
Draft Rwanda Five-Year Decentralisation Implementation Programme 2003–2007 (MINALOC: 2003)
Rwanda Five-Year Decentralisation Implementation Programme 2004–2008 (MINALOC: 2004)
The Process of Decentralisation and Democratisation in Rwanda (1st draft) (National Unity and Reconciliation Committee: 2004)

RALGA

Statute of Association (2002)

Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual (2002)

Communications Strategy (2002)

Activity Report for 2002 (2003)

Action Plan for RALGA 2003 (2003)

Report of the Training on Gender Mainstreaming into Local Governance (2003)

The Role of RALGA in the Decentralisation Process (2003)

Future Activities for RALGA, 2004 (2003)

Draft Action Plan for RALGA 2004 (2003)

Annual Report for 2003 (2004)

RALGA Strategic Plan 2005–2008 (2004)

Achievements, Challenges and Future Activities 2002–2004 (2004)

Etude de Faisabilite du Project de Construction d'un Centre de Formation Pour le Compte de RALGA Denomme "RALGA Training Centre a Gahanga" (C.A.E.D.E.C.: 2004)

USAID/ARD

Quarterly Status Report (Jan–Mar 2004): FDP Activities/Component Deliverables (2004)

VNG International

Appraisal of the Decentralisation Process in Rwanda (2003)

Field Consultations: Final Report (2003)

Validation Field Report (2003)

Oxfam Great Britain

Survey of Decentralisation Policy and Practice in Rwanda (2002)

Care International

Care Rwanda (2003)

Annex 1

Terms of Reference for Evaluation of Swedish Support to Decentralisation Reform in Rwanda

1. Background

In May 2000 the Government of Rwanda, GoR, adopted a policy and a strategy for democratic decentralisation, aiming at legal, administrative and financial autonomy of the districts and towns that are the foundation of community development in Rwanda.

The decentralisation is a central component in the democratisation process that was initiated in 1999 and is expected to ensure political, managerial and technical empowerment of the local population and to bring decision making closer to the population.

As part of the Swedish development cooperation with Rwanda, Sweden has supported the decentralisation process since April 2002, through a support implemented by SALA-IDA (subsidiary of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Swedish Federation of County Councils) in close collaboration with local and central government as well as the newly established Rwandese Association for Local Government Authorities, RALGA.

The support is coming to an end in December 2004. In order to assess the results achieved and as part of the planning for a possible continuation of the Swedish support, an external evaluation will be carried out.

2. Overall Aim of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is threefold aiming at:

- i assessing the results obtained through the Swedish support in relation to the project document *Sida support to Rwanda Decentralisation Programme. Project Implementation Mission Report*, dated 20 January 2002.
- ii assessing how the project corresponds to national priorities in Rwanda, set out in various national documents, the central reference being the National Decentralisation Policy and Plan,
- iii recommend possible ways for Sweden to continue supporting the decentralisation efforts in Rwanda, taking into consideration Swedish and Rwandan priorities. The recommendation should also suggest ways of coordinating a possible Swedish support with other ongoing initiatives in the field of decentralisation.

In addition to the above, the evaluation shall study how the project has addressed the cross cutting issues of HIV/AIDS and gender.

3. Scope of work

The scope of the work shall include, but is not restricted to:

- assess the results obtained based on the project document and ToR for the consultant
- assess how the project corresponds to the priorities set by the GoR and in particular the national policy and strategy for decentralisation

- pointing out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks linked to the project
- propose recommendations for possible future Swedish support to local development in Rwanda, including decentralised administration, rural economic development and support to central level.

To meet this end, the evaluation will be composed of the following activities:

- study of relevant documents supplied by Sida before hand and additional material collected during a visit to Rwanda
- interviews with people involved in the project, both in Sweden and in Rwanda (including SALA/IDA, SIPU International, VNG, government officials both on local and central level, RALGA etc)
- discussions with other stakeholders involved in the decentralisation process in Rwanda, including government representatives from local and central level as well as other donors and implementing agencies for decentralisation support (EC, NL, USAID/ARD, GTZ, World Bank and others).

4. Swedish Priorities

Sida is presently elaborating a new strategy for the development cooperation between Rwanda and Sweden. Without anticipating the new strategy nor the recommendations from the evaluation, there are a few areas that Sida considers being of certain interest for a possible continued Swedish support in this field. These are

- i taking into consideration the nature and aim of a support to the decentralisation process, direct support to the local administration would be in line with the Swedish interest, both in terms of capacity building but also, in the long run, possible ways of direct support to districts
- ii the establishment and development of RALGA has primarily been supported by Sida, with a few other donors offering a limited ad hoc assistance in specific fields. A possible continued support to RALGA is therefore in line with the Swedish prioritise
- ii integration of the cross cutting issues of HIV/AIDS and gender continue to be a priority for Sida

5. Methodology

The consultant shall carry out the assignment through literature studies, interviews and a visit to Rwanda for data collection and interviews.

6. Time Schedule

The evaluation shall be carried out during April–May 2004 at the latest. The time is set to a maximum of 6 manweeks out of which at least three and a maximum of four shall be done in Rwanda.

7. Qualification

The consultancy shall be carried out by (1–2) individual (s) with the following skills and experiences:

- a) local administration
- b) capacity- and institution building

The following skills and experiences are desirable:

- c) experience from Africa in general and Rwanda in particular
- d) knowledge in French

8. Reporting and Follow-up

The consultant shall meet with the Embassy of Sweden/Development Cooperation Section in Kigali together with the stakeholders to discuss the results before leaving Rwanda. The consultant shall also brief Sida/DESA upon return, or whenever Sida/DESA so requests.

A draft report in electronic version shall be presented to Sida/DESA at the latest 17 May 2004 and the final report shall be presented in hard copy as well as in electronic version to Sida/DESA at the latest 27 May 2004. The report shall be written in the English language and not exceed 30 pages.

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