



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

IS SWEDISH AID RATIONAL?

A Critical Study of Swedish Aid Policy
in the Period 1968-1993

Ds 1994:75

Report 2

SASDA

Secretariat for Analysis of
Swedish Development Assistance

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The Secretariat for Analysis of Swedish Development Assistance

The Swedish government has appointed a committee with the task of analysing the results and effectiveness of Swedish development aid. A special Secretariat, SASDA, was set up on 1 March 1993 to carry out the work.

The Secretariat will work until the end of 1994 and will have as its main task to propose to Government suitable mechanisms for evaluations and policy analyses of Swedish aid. In its work SASDA will give priority to carrying out a set of selected studies world-wide, at country, sector and subject level and to studies of individual organisations to provide a basis for decisions on development co-operation in the future and to gain experience on how policy evaluations should be carried out. A major study concerns Sweden's co-operation with Central and Eastern Europe.

SASDA's point of departure is the aim of a better understanding of the mechanisms of development in order to enhance the results and increase the effectiveness of aid in achieving the five goals set by the Swedish parliament: increased resources, economic and social equality, economic and political independence, the democratic development of society, and the long-term management of natural resources and care of the environment.

The studies and analyses will be managed partly by the Secretariat's own staff and will include studies commissioned from different specialists in the committee's areas of priority.

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FOREWORD

Sweden's official development assistance (ODA) has ranked for more than ten years as one of the highest amongst OECD members in relation to GDP. Swedish ODA has assumed considerable proportions and gained more than 30 years of experience. But is Swedish aid rational?

Professor Helge Hveem and Dr. Desmond McNeill, Centre for Development and the Environment at the University of Oslo, have analysed the Swedish annual White Papers, where development cooperation policy is discussed every year, and have interviewed a dozen key individuals who have played, or now play, a central role in Swedish aid policy.

They trace the history of Swedish development cooperation from its origins to the present and investigate how Swedish aid policy has been influenced by both domestic and international ideas about development. Hveem and McNeill identify key issues which have especially been the subject of debate. Aid has historically enjoyed support from a range of different groups, with different motives and with varying views about underdevelopment. They conclude that the compromises that have been found necessary to achieve consensus have often resulted in policy that is far from rational. But how, more concretely, might Swedish aid policy analysis be improved?

The study has been commissioned by the Secretariat for Analysis of Swedish Development Assistance (SASDA). The opinions and conclusions of the authors of the report are their own.

Stockholm, May 1994.

Ingemar Mundebo
Chairman

SASDA

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Policy in the Period 1968 - 1993

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May 1994