

MAG
Rapp. Övr.
9.711

SASDA

Secretariat for Analysis of
Swedish Development Assistance

RAPP
Övr 9 711
Working Paper Nr. 12

Evaluation and Learning in BITS

Jerker Carlsson and Jan Jörnmark
Stockholm, Juni 1994

SASDA

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.

The staff are :

Ambassador Claes Sandgren	Head of the Secretariat
Dr Olle Edqvist	Senior Policy Analyst
Mr Enrique Ganuza	Senior Policy Analyst
Mr Per Johan Svenningsson	Senior Policy Analyst
Ms Kerstin Sandling	Assistant Secretary

Postal address: SASDA
P.O. Box 16418
S-103 27 STOCKHOLM

Telephone: +46-8 791 21 80
Telefax: +46-8-791 21 88
Visiting address: Klarabergsgatan 23, Stockholm



ANDANTE AB

Evaluation And Learning In B I T S

Prepared by

Jerker Carlsson

together with

Jan Jörnmark

For

SASDA

Table of Contents

1. Purpose of study	1
Some definitions	1
2. The way the study was done	4
3. Profile of the evaluations	5
4. What are evaluations for?	18
5. Conclusions	24
 Appendix 1. List of evaluations	 27
Appendix 2. Evaluations - Concessionary Credits	30
Appendix 3. Evaluations - Technical Cooperation	35
Appendix 4. Evaluations - Eastern Europe	39
Appendix 5. Evaluations - International Courses	42
Appendix 6. Questionnaire - BITS evaluation system	43
Appendix 7. Results from the survey	48

Chapter 1. Purpose of study

This report is concerned with BITS' way of evaluating its different activities. Similar studies are also done of the other Swedish aid agencies systems for appraisal and evaluation. The studies have been launched by SASDA as part of its mandate to analyse various aspects of Swedish development assistance. In order to offer a possibility for generalization all studies apply the same analytical framework.

The purpose of the study was formulated by SASDA in the following way:

1. Describe and analyse BITS' system for appraisal and evaluation. The following areas should be covered: Development credits, Technical cooperation, the Eastern Europe programme and the International courses.
2. Analyse BITS' ability to learn from the experiences from its various activities and systematically and critically assess its work.

Some definitions

What is an evaluation? An evaluation is an activity for finding out the value, or result, of something. It is an activity that answers to the information needs of various actors of the organization.

The basic function of an evaluation is to answer questions. More specifically questions regarding planning, monitoring and implementation, impact and efficiency.¹ Is an evaluation primarily concerned with an *ex-post* perspective? Not necessarily, questions can be raised at any time during the life of a project. This means that it is important to have a dynamic perspective on the assessment procedure and take the activity as the analytical point of departure.

¹ Rossi, P.H., Freeman, H.E. & Wright, S.R. *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*. Sage, London, 1979:33.

The common terminology is to call *ex ante* assessments appraisals and *ex post* assessments evaluations. Our definition of an evaluation, however, makes this distinction between *ex ante* and *ex post* irrelevant. Appraisal, mid-term reviews, project completion reports, impact evaluations are mainly terms that clarify when in time an evaluation activity is undertaken. They possess little analytical value. The format for answering these questions can also vary. An evaluating activity can take the shape of working documents, weekly letters, brief studies, scientifically based investigations etc. Thus, we do not equate an evaluation with an activity that usually takes place after termination of a project, or at mid-term, and made by somebody outside the project itself.

Evaluations are not made in isolation from a surrounding organisational context. They are determined not only by the requirements of the project they are set to assess. But also by the nature and needs of the organisation within which they are undertaken. To understand the evaluation system - the questions it raises and the answers it provides - it is necessary to have an understanding of the driving forces of the organisation.

Our point of departure for defining an organisation is different from the rational paradigm. We understand the organisation as a social construct, that thinks, learns and acts through its members. An organisation lives in motion and cannot be fully understood as a static phenomenon. The dynamics of an organisation is made up of how people cooperate, compete or end up in conflict with each other.²

Evaluations are not made in isolation from a surrounding organisational context. They are determined not only by the requirements of the project they are set to assess. But also by the nature and needs of the organisation within which they are undertaken. To understand the evaluation system - the questions it raises and the answers it provides - it is necessary to have an understanding of the driving forces of the organisation. Failure to do so often results in

² Morgan suggests that this point of departure will require a reevaluation of the ideological significance of the concept of rationality. The idea of rationality seems to be invoked as a myth to overcome the contradictions inherent in the fact that an organisation is simultaneously a system of competition and a system of cooperation. The emphasis on rationality attempts to bind together a political system which, because of the diversity of interests on which it builds, always has a latent tendency to move in diverse directions, and sometimes fall apart.
Morgan, G., *Images of Organization* Sage Publications, 1986:195.

frustration of the effectiveness of the evaluation systems when it comes to facilitate learning in an organisation.

Ideally evaluations are supposed to result in a feedback of knowledge to the people in the organisation. Thus equipped with new knowledge they are expected to use it in such a way that they do a better job than they did before. Evaluations which contain knowledge which is of relevance to somebody usually has a positive impact on learning. They facilitate a process of substantial learning. The opposite is symbolic learning, by which we mean knowledge of a superficial nature. This can occur when evaluations are used as more formal instruments for monitoring and control. Feedback from such evaluations do seldom have any substantial impact on knowledge structures.

The present study takes its point of departure from this understanding of the two concepts of evaluation and learning. We are interested not only in how BITS evaluates its activities, but also the functionality of the evaluation system. Does it provide BITS with the necessary information? Are staff members using the information? An answer to these questions requires an understanding of how the organisation works and how it perceives its role in an aid project. We do not pretend that we shall be able to analyse in the necessary detail processes of evaluation and organisational learning in this study, which the two concepts would suggest. Our theoretical position the direction of our analysis of the structure and functionality of BITS evaluation system. Within the limits of this study we shall try to provide some insights into these issues.

Our report is divided into five chapters. We have just presented the purpose of the study and some theoretical considerations which are important particularly for our final analysis. Chapter 2 presents how the study was done. Chapter 3 provides a profile of BITS evaluations. This serves also as an important input to Chapter 4 which deals with how BITS staff members utilizes evaluations. Chapter 5, finally, pulls the threads together and attempt provide a comprehensive analysis of the functionality of BITS evaluation system.

Chapter 2. The way the study was done

This study consists of two parts. One paints a picture of the structural characteristics of the evaluations. The other tries to determine how evaluation findings are used by the staff of BITS in their daily work. Each task required its own methodological approach.

To portray the characteristics of the evaluations a special framework was developed. This framework characterized the evaluations using 10 major indicators: characteristics of the evaluation object; the evaluation process; the composition of the evaluation team; the disposition of the evaluation report; evaluation methodology and techniques; methodology for data collection; analysis of project determinants; type of analysis made in the report; assessment of sustainability; the coverage of cross-cutting issues.

The empirical material consisted of evaluation reports from each of BITS departments. They were prepared during the period 1986-1993. A total of 25 evaluations was scrutinized and assessed by us. The reader should note that the indicators provided by the framework are mostly based on a subjective assessment. The value of the analysis is therefore dependent on the authors knowledge and pre-understanding of aid evaluation in general and BITS in particular. The most important aspects of the evaluations were summarized in fact sheets. A sample of these fact sheets is found in Appendices 1-5. In addition there are also a number of project reports, internal documents, etc. Material that certainly serves an evaluation purpose. These were not, however, analysed by us, primarily because of the time available for the study. We do not think, however, that this imposes any serious limitations to the reliability or validity of our findings.

The analysis of how evaluations are used in the agency was based on two sources. First, interviews were made with a selected number of BITS staff members and project decision documents. A total of 10 persons was interviewed, representing about 30 % of BITS programming staff. The selected officers were also asked to fill in a questionnaire. The full questionnaire is found in Appendix 6. Second, project decision documents that contain the motivations for approving, or rejecting, the project. The project decision documents were all prepared in 1993. Their analytical value lies in that they give us an opportunity to see how the

lessons learned from previous evaluations are reflected in BITS most recent decisions on projects and programmes.

Chapter 3. Profile of evaluations

BITS four departments cover a wide range of different projects and programmes. Among the Swedish aid agencies, BITS probably has the most multifaceted character. This multitude of sometimes heterogenous activities is to a large extent reflected in the evaluation pattern. We cannot say that our sample of evaluation objects represents a snap-shot of the total BITS portfolio. The sampling was not done with this in mind, but there are undoubtedly some common traits -- sectors, value, geographical spread, etc..

What characterizes the objects that are subjected to evaluation? Table 3.1 summarizes our findings.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of the evaluation object

Type (donor perspective)	Project 83%	Program 16.7%	Institution 0%	Other 0%
Region	Africa 20.8%	Asia 29.2%	L. A. 20.8%	Europe 20.8%
Size MSEK	< 1 4.2%	1-10 12.5%	10-50 41.7%	> 50 41.7%
Length in time years	< 2 8.3%	2-5 83.3%	5-10 4.2%	> 10 4.2%
Evaluated earlier	> 1	Once 12.5%	Never 75%	Unknow 12.5%
Sector	Agricult 8.3%	Industry 29.2%	Infra 25%	Publ.ad. 4.2%
Sector	Services 4.2%	Cross-cut 25%	General 4.2%	
Aid channel	Comm. 87.5%	Bilateral 8.3%	Other 4.2%	
Recipient	Public 54.2%	Private 4.2%	Mixed 33.3%	Other 8.3%

The object for the evaluation is usually a project type of activity. Evaluations of several different activities that together comprises a programme or focusses on a particular sector are less common. There is a very even spread between different regions -- Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. In terms of value the majority fall in the two highest categories, 10-50 MSEK and above 50 MSEK. It is primarily the development credits which creates this

bias towards high value projects. Most activities have a timespan of 2-5 years. Few objects have been subjected to any previous evaluation. There are only three projects who had been evaluated before. There are three sectors that pre-dominates: Industry, Infrastructure and those which are multi-purpose in nature. Examples of such "cross-cutting" activities are the international courses and the collaboration programme between Swedish and East European municipalities. The typical aid channel is a private or semi-private organisation, which, according to BITS principal way of working, collaborates with a recipient organisation, which is usually a public organisation or a semi-private organisation (commonly known as a "parastatal").

The typical evaluation is -- an evaluation. Reviews by which we mean less penetrating investigations into a project are less common. Pure research activities do not exist at all. A few of the evaluations obviously have a research character. These evaluations contain significant discussions of methodological issues. It is particularly during the last 2-3 years that BITS seems to have become more interested in developing evaluation methodologies appropriate to its activities.

Table 3.2 Type of evaluation

Type of evaluation	Study/review	25%	Evaluation	75%	Research	0%
Timing of evaluation	Mid-term	66.7%	Completion	33.3%	Ex post	0%
Cost of evaluation	Low	50%	Medium	50%	High	0%
Part of project	Yes	0%	No	0%	Unknown	100%

The evaluation is usually undertaken by mid-term, that is, before the project is completed. The purpose is to provide information before taking a decision about an extension of the project. Evaluations done at the time of project completion serve the purpose of providing future project designs with useful knowledge. Impact evaluations are rare, or more correctly does not exist at all. We have not been able to identify any evaluations with an ex-post perspective. This is a feature BITS shares with most aid agencies. The evaluations are usually low-cost activities. Our framework identifies as low-cost evaluation a study that takes less than three manmonths and involves one trip outside Sweden. At the present price level this would correspond to less than 400.000 SEK. This classification is not really appropriate in the case

of BITS as the range is too wide. As far as we can see a majority of the BITS evaluations fall in the lower range of the strata. They average around 150-250000 SEK. Evaluations are seldom an integrated part of the project activities. It is uncommon to have an evaluation activity written into the project document and financed from the project budget. They are launched independently from the project.

But who conducts the evaluation? The typical evaluation sent out by BITS is found in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.3 The evaluation team

Agency/donor present	Yes 8.3%	No 91.7%
Beneficiary country	Yes 8.3%	No 91.7%
Sector expertise	Yes 87.5%	Unknown 12.5%
Evaluation expertise	Yes 4.2%	No 95.8%
Gender	Women 9%	Men 91%
Team size	1-3	

The "typical" evaluation team has 1-3 members, with a generally low representation of women. It is very uncommon for BITS to have one of its staff members participating in the evaluation. There are only two cases where this occurred. One is the large evaluation of the impact of BITS international courses. The evaluators seem to be selected because they possess a sector expertise, rather than anything else. It has not been possible to identify whether experts in evaluation methodology are present to complete the technical expert. Most of the evaluators would probably also regard themselves as evaluation experts. Any further expertise is not needed. There are border cases, however. Again the evaluation of the international courses is a good example, where the BITS representative can be said to contribute technical experience, while the other team member was the evaluation expert. This probably takes place when there is an interest from BITS to see the evaluation as a methodological experiment. It is exceptional to find somebody from the recipient country participating in the evaluation team.

What kind of reports does the team produce?

Table 3.4 The evaluation report

Report language	Swed. 41.7%	Engl. 58.3%
Terms of Reference included	Yes 54.2%	No 45.8%
Workplan included	Yes 10%	No 90%
Recommendations included	Yes 87.5%	No 12.5%
Actionable by donor	Yes 87.5%	No 12.5%
Actionable by beneficiary	Yes 66.7%	No 33.3%

The reports follow the traditional format of an evaluation. There are some noteworthy features, however. The majority of the reports are written in English, but a surprisingly high proportion in Swedish. Often the Terms of Reference are not included. There can be two explanations for this: either because the evaluator has forgotten to do it, or because there was none written. In such a case the evaluation has probably been preceded by a discussion between BITS and the evaluator, outlining what was to be done. Is a workplan included? This is a difficult question. Virtually everybody has some kind of very generalized workplan: "We went to India and met representatives X, Y and Z. We visited the object K and discussions were held. Thereafter we left for Sweden." We have chosen to apply a more strict definition of a work plan. Such a plan should present in detail whom is going to do what, how it is going to be done, at what time, etc. Applying this definition few of the evaluations can be said to have a workplan. Finally, the recommendations tend to be more directed towards the donor than the beneficiary.

How do the evaluators approach their task? Systematically in the sense of using an approach that borders a research methodology, or is it more of an ad hoc approach?

Table 3.5 Hypotheses, methodology and techniques

	Adequate	Limited	No	Not relevant
Methodological issues addressed	8.4%	29.2%	62.4%	
Hypothesis & assumptions of the evaluation team are made explicit		41.7%	58.3%	
Formal techniques are used	29.2%		70.8%	

Again this is a difficult question. It is clear that there are seldom any signs of greater methodological awareness. Evaluators rarely approach their assignment along the lines of textbook evaluation methodology. Consequently, methodological problems are seldom discussed. The evaluator's hypotheses and assumptions are not either as transparent as they could have been. The lack of methodology does not necessarily mean a complete lack of formal analytical techniques. In around one-third of the cases they are applied. A typical example is the various industrial projects where the evaluators may look into the balance sheet and the profit-and-loss account and on that basis perform an analysis of the status of the company. More elaborate techniques such as cost-benefit analysis or cost-effectiveness analysis are very rare. Not because the evaluators don't want to use them. On the contrary it seems: there are frequent complaints of the weak data, and limited time available, which prevents them from using more sophisticated techniques.

The way the evaluator collects data is linked to his use of more formal evaluation methodologies. Table 3.6 gives an overview of the type of data the evaluator uses for his analysis of the problem.

Table 3.6 Methodology for data collection

	Adequate	Limited	No	Not relevant
Agency documents used	58.3%	37.5%	4.2%	
Use of other documents	37.5%	54.2%	4.2%	4.2%
Agency personnel interviewed	16.7%	12.5%	41.7%	29.2%
Project staff interviewed	75%	25%		
Beneficiary interviewed	95.8%	4.2%		
Other donor interviewed	8.3%	12.5%	79.2%	
Interview protocols or guides	16.7%	83.3%		
Direct observation of project work	70.8%	8.3%	20.8%	

In a majority of cases there is an adequate use of agency documents. This includes specific references to earlier evaluations and relevant project and country documents available at

BITS. It is less common to use relevant reports from other agencies, research reports and similar material. At first it appears surprising that only in a few cases are BITS staff members interviewed. However, this may be explained in two ways. The staff member naturally holds discussions with the evaluator before the evaluation mission starts. Although not a formal interview, it is nevertheless an opportunity for the staff member to express his views on the project. Second, a more formal explanation would be that given BITS role as financier it is not BITS, which is subjected to an evaluation. It is the project and the implementing agencies that are in focus. Interviews are normally always held with the beneficiary, and in most cases with the project staff. Interview protocols or guides are very rare. The evaluator uses his experience for formulating a basic set of questions that are related to the problem he is set to investigate. When interesting things are discovered this leads to further questions. Data collection also normally includes visits to the project and a direct observation of project work. When this does not take place it is normally because of the nature of the evaluation task. Evaluations of training programmes, for example, often work with questionnaires. They are often being sent out to the participants after they have completed their training and returned home.

Evaluations are expected to assess performance against agreed objectives. However, a general experience is that this is not always done. One reason may be that objectives and indicators by which activities shall be measured were too vaguely formulated at the inception of the project. Furthermore, targets are not always specified in the project document. This makes the task of the evaluator hard. Either he decides not to bring up these issues, or he may be forced to reconstruct what he perceives as the project's objectives, identify suitable indicators and realistic targets. Table 3.7 summarizes how well the achievement of objectives was discussed in the BITS evaluations.

Table 3.7 Analysis of main project objectives

	Adequate	Limited	No	Not relevant
Achievement of development objective	8.3%	79.2%	12.5%	
Achievement of immediate objective	91.7%	8.3%		
Examination of key project assumptions	20.8%	70.8%	8.3%	

Development objectives refer to the long-term objectives of Swedish development aid. Economic growth, democracy, environment, etc are common to all donor countries. It is rare that the evaluations in our sample relate the project to these overall goals. References are usually done in a superficial way, without much analytical effort behind it. The specific project objectives are, however, an entirely different matter. These are normally discussed quite thoroughly. Which also implies that BITS project documents normally contain well-specified objectives, which lend themselves to assessment. To what extent does the evaluation examine key project assumptions? The achievement of an objective is usually based on implicit or explicit assumptions about casual relations between actions and effects. Examples of such assumptions are: specific interests of actors in and around the project; prevailing economic conditions, etc. Is the relevance of these assumptions discussed? The importance of macro-economic policies, institutional issues are clearly of importance to the performance of a project. Many BITS projects depend very much on the motivation and efficiency of the collaborating institution. Their capacity is very much affected by policy variables external to the project. Our findings suggest that situating the project in its socio-economic context is mostly done in a limited way. Organisational efficiency is certainly discussed, but the causal links to external policy variables are not. They are referred to, and sometimes implied, but the societal context of local organisation is rarely subjected to any in-depth analysis. However, we can detect a change over time. Evaluations done in the late 1980's are more geared towards technical examinations of the project. More recent ones are much more prone to relate project performance to the socio-economic environment of the recipient country.

What kind of analysis is made in the evaluation? There are various possible approaches and Table 3.8 lists some of them.

Table 3.8 Type of analysis made

	Adequate	Limited	No	Not relevant
Country's need for the project	50%	41.7%	4.2%	4.2%
With/without comparison	12.5%	62.5%	25%	
Project expenditure analysis	33.3%	41.7%	25%	
Project benefit analysis	41.7%	58.3%		
Effectiveness analysis	87.5%	12.5%		
Efficiency analysis	45.8%	45.8%	8.3%	
Discussion of agency monitoring	12.5%	25%	58.3%	4.2%

The relevance of the project to the host country is nearly always discussed and reviewed. Less common is to try to create a hypothetical situation and answer what would have happened if the project had not been undertaken. This kind of discussion does take place in many cases, but in a very limited way. One would have expected that a common denominator in all evaluations would be an examination of how the budget was used. In around 1/4 of the cases this was not done, and in slightly less than half of the evaluations it was done in a limited way. BITS may perform this important function itself. It is also possible that it was not regarded as a particularly important issue when the Terms of Reference was prepared. Was the right thing done, in the right way and at the right time? In other words, was project effectiveness assessed? This nearly always took place, but not necessarily in a quantitative way. Similarly, the issue of a reasonable relationship between costs and output -- were things done in the most cost-efficient way -- was usually addressed. Which is not to say that the evaluators used any formalized techniques. We normally find qualitative assessments that are a function of the evaluators own experience and knowledge. BITS way of monitoring its projects does not seem to be a very important question. Again this may have to do with how the distribution of roles within the project is understood. BITS role does not exclude project monitoring, but primarily the responsibility is regarded to lie with the implementing organisations. They are the ones subjected to evaluation and not BITS.

In almost every project document, and in almost every Terms of Reference for an evaluation, the issue of sustainability features most importantly. Does the concept carry any significance at all? How well is project sustainability reflected in these evaluations?

Table 3.9 Sustainability of project

	Adequate	Limited	No	Not relevant
Sustainability after agency withdrawal	45.8%	50%	4.2%	
Alternative financing after agency withdrawal	16.7%	45.8%	29.2%	8.3%
Availability of foreign exchange	12.5%	45.8%	33.3%	12.5%
Degree of financing from internal revenues	25%	50%	12.5%	12.5%
Commitment of host country/local management	20.8%	75%		4.2%

The overall impression is clear. Sustainability is of limited concern to the evaluators. It is assessed, but mostly in a limited and superficial way. Our interpretation of this situation is that the concept of sustainability is never really given "a face". It is never made practical to become something specific at the stage of appraisal and the writing of the project document. Consequently, it is hard for the evaluator to carry out a more concrete discussion of the possibilities for long-term survival of the project. This is clearly reflected in the values of the other indicators. The issue of alternative financial sources after BITS withdrawal is not discussed very thoroughly. Neither is any possible foreign exchange constraints. In the case of industrial projects, the important issue of the possibilities of the firm to finance itself from internally generated resources, is only addressed in a limited way. The very important variable of local commitment to the project, from the government and the management of the organisation in question, does not either, in our opinion, receive the attention it warrants.

There are issues that tend to cut across sector barriers. Today they are quite important and are expected to be addressed by almost all kinds of aid interventions. Do the evaluations pay attention them? Table 3.10 provides a profile of the evaluation's treatment of the most common cross-cutting issues.

Table 3.10 Cross-cutting issues

	Adequate	Limited	No	Not relevant
Gender issues	4.2%		95.8%	
Environment	29.2%	20.8%	50%	
Human rights		12.5%	87.5%	
Democracy		12.5%	87.5%	
Market economy	33.3%	54.2%	12.5%	

It is easy to conclude that in general the evaluations tend to avoid these issues. It is quite obvious in the case of gender, human rights and democracy. Particularly gender issues seem to be of very little concern. Environment is discussed in around half of the cases. A good number of the projects in BITS portfolio deals with environmental problems, and we might therefore have expected environmental issues to feature more prominently. What do features, however, is a discussion of macroeconomic issues. The role of the "market economy" visavi the project is frequently discussed, especially the need to "get the prices right." The evaluations of the activities in Eastern Europe have a distinctive macroeconomic profile.

To what extent does the evaluations, and the evaluators, has a critical attitude towards their results? Is there a discussion of the limitations to the validity and reliability of the results?

Table 3.10 The validity and reliability of the findings

	Adequate	Limited	No	Not relevant
Reliability	16.7%			83.3%
Validity	25%	29.2%	45.8%	

Admittedly it is difficult to classify the evaluations with adequacy regarding their discussions of reliability and validity. Those evaluations where this takes place in an adequate way are those which are based on a more solid methodological approach. Evaluations of training programmes are perhaps the best examples. Where statistical methods are used, it is natural to

discuss validity and reliability. When, as often happen, the evaluation is concerned with studying a producing unit of some sorts, it becomes more tricky. Reliability does not really enter here, as we are mainly talking about an evaluation based on the evaluators own subjective observations. It rarely happens that the evaluator questions his own ability to make the correct observations and judgements

Validity can, however, be assessed. Has the evaluator examined the right things? Does he pursue a discussion of this problem? In most cases this is not done. An obvious reason is of course the general absence of more elaborate methodological approaches. There are examples where possible bias sources are discussed, in spite of the lack of a proper methodology. We have classified those cases as "limited."

The "typical" BITS evaluation

Before we try to summarize the main features of a BITS evaluation, let us briefly look at the characteristics of the evaluation object. The object is an activity that can take the form of a traditional project, a training course or a development credit.

BITS activities are evenly spread between the regions of the Third World, and Eastern Europe. They usually include a value among 10-50 MSEK, which is spent over a 2-5 year period. Sectorwise they are concentrated on industry, infrastructure and/or cuts across sectors. According to BITS mode of working, the activity is demand driven and emerges out of request from an organisation in a developing area. BITS is furthermore directed to primarily use the Swedish resource base. The activity is then carried out through a collaboration between public, private and semi-private organisation in Sweden and the recipient country. The activity, finally, is usually evaluated only once during its life-span.

Is there such a thing as a "typical" BITS evaluation? If there is, one could expect it to reflect BITS as an organisation: what it does, how it does it, etc.. The popular image of BITS is that of a very action-oriented organisation, quick decisions, with fairly well targeted activities. It is efficient in the sense that a small staff handles a substantial portfolio of activities. It deals with projects, where there is a beginning and an end, rather than processes of development. If this

image is true, then the "typical" evaluation would be a targeted, technical, project specific exercise. It is primarily geared towards directly assisting the decision process in BITS. It is mainly concerned with implementation problems and the fulfillment of the projects immediate objectives. It is less concerned with any analysis of more long-term development problems.

Our survey indicates that, at least in a historical perspective, this is exactly what a "typical" BITS evaluation is. In the previous presentation we have highlighted some specific characteristics of the BITS evaluation. First, it is done at low cost and often limited to maybe 8 manweeks, including one field visit. The evaluation team possess considerable technical expertise. Most of the evaluations read by us must be classified as very qualified in this regard. They are, however, often lacking in the application of a proper evaluation methodology. It is not often that somebody from BITS, or from the recipient country takes part in the evaluation. This may explain the dominant technical character of the evaluations and the lack of a more long-term development perspective.

Given the often short duration of the evaluation, there is seldom time for a more extensive collection of primary data. The reading of agency documents, interviews and direct observation of project work is the most commonly used ways of collecting information. The lack of evaluation methods is also reflected in the limited use of elaborate interview guides, etc. During the last 2-3 years there has been a strong call from the Government for a better and more transparent reporting of results. BITS have consequently made some efforts to develop methods and performance indicators. There are examples of studies and evaluations which have been launched where methodological development has been an integrated part of the evaluation. Good examples are the evaluations of the international courses and the various training programmes.

Fulfillment of the immediate objectives of the project is usually discussed and assessed. It is less common to relate project achievements to more general objectives of development aid. It is exceptional to find evaluations relating their findings to the experiences from similar projects within BITS and from other aid agencies. Generally evaluations do not either place their findings in a broader context of underdevelopment and development aid. Attempts towards generalization do exist, albeit of a more limited nature. They usually take the following form:

....from this we can see that the planning of construction works is a variable which should be more seriously considered in future projects of a similar kind." This pattern means that it is largely up to the BITS staff itself to pull the threads together and extract more general lessons from a particular project experience.

Institutional efficiency is of course a major preoccupation of most evaluations. Although the socio-economic context of the benefitting institution is receiving attention, it is less common to discuss the impact of policy variables in the recipient country on institutional performance. However, this is an area where we can see a change over time. More recent evaluations do treat these issues in much more in-depth than earlier ones.

Effectiveness and cost-efficiency are often discussed and analysed. But the analysis rarely uses formal techniques. It is more a qualitative assessment based on the evaluators experience from similar projects elsewhere. Sustainability of projects is not a major concern of the evaluations. There is normally a discussion of what influence project performance. There is, however, an absence of in-depth analysis of what happens after the project is completed and the agency has withdrawn.

BITS evaluations, finally, rarely touch upon the most common "cross-cutting" issues. The issue of gender is perhaps the best example. The exception to the general pattern is the question of the relationship between state and market.

Thus, we can conclude that the "typical" BITS evaluation is a very targeted, project specific exercise. It primarily deals with problems of immediate concern to the particular activity. It is important to note that there are signs, albeit small, of change. BITS evaluations are becoming a bit more methodologically stringent. They are also becoming more interested of circumstances external to the activity and how they affect performance.

4. What are evaluations for?

This chapter deals with the second objective of this study: how are evaluations used in the agency and how important are they for staff learning? It must be pointed out that the time framework for this study did not permit a full study of organisational learning. We can only hint at what appears to be the pattern of learning in BITS. In itself this does not say very much. However, by comparing our findings with those of other, more extensive studies, the analysis becomes more interesting. Studies of organisational learning in general are, unfortunately, not very common, and particularly not studies of learning in aid organisations. The most recent and extensive work of relevance for us, was the study of learning in the Norwegian aid administration.³ This study will be used by us as a point of reference when analysing how BITS staff utilises and learns from evaluation information.

We used the same data collection methodology as the Norwegian study - a questionnaire supplemented by interviews. In order to facilitate the comparative approach as much as possible, we used the same set of questions. They were only slightly changed to fit BITS circumstances. For each question the respondent was provided with a number of alternatives. He was asked to rank each alternative on a scale from 1-5, where 1 indicated a high value and 5 a low value. The rank values were then summarised for each alternative, thus giving the total value.

Each selected officer was then interviewed. The major purpose of the interview was to provide the officer with an opportunity to more freely elaborate on evaluation issues.

A group of 10 programme officers were selected, representing about 30% of BITS professional staff. There were two selection criteria. Firstly, the officer should have been with the agency for some time in order to have a historical perspective on the evaluation system. Given the high turnover of personnel in BITS, 3 years of service was regarded as sufficient. Secondly, each department of BITS - Technical Cooperation, Concessionary Credits, Eastern Europe and International Courses - should be represented. It was considered interesting to

³ Forss, K. *Spørreundersøkelse om læring og utredning*. Utenrigsdepartementet. Oslo. October 1992.

know whether their different ways of operating in any way would be reflected in the officers' attitudes to evaluations.

After these preliminary remarks let us turn to the results from our survey. The first and most immediate conclusion is that the assumption that there would be differences in attitudes between the departments was wrong. On the contrary what emerges is a considerably unified picture of what evaluations are for and attitudes to learning. In the following we shall therefore not pursue the analysis along departmental lines. Table 4.1 summarises the main features of the attitudes of BITS and NORAD programme officers to evaluations: why they launch them, how they use them and what they regard as their most important qualities⁴. Full details are found in Appendix?

Table 4.1 Assessment of Evaluations - A summary

	BITS	NORAD
Most important reasons for starting an evaluation	1. Provide inputs for major decisions 2. Audit and/or verify activities 3. Provide information for planning	1. Provide inputs for major decisions 2. Provide information for planning 3. As planned activities in the project document
Most important uses of an evaluation	1. An input to policy decisions 2. A useful source of learning 3. A useful input to operational decisions	1. An input to policy decisions 2. A useful source of learning 3. Important in understanding the project setting
Most important qualities of an evaluation	1. Achievements are clearly presented 2. The conclusions are valid and reliable 3. The recommendations are practical	1. Achievements are clearly presented 2. The conclusions are valid and reliable 3. The recipients are actively involved

What are the most common reasons to start an evaluation? In both cases it is apparent that there are a number of reasons which carry more or less the same weight. But launching an evaluation because there is a major decision to be taken somehow stands out before the others

⁴ The reader should note two things regarding Forss study. Firstly, it concerns officers in the Norwegian aid administration, which includes both NORAD and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. For the sake of convenience we have grouped them together under the label "NORAD". Secondly, Forss are analysing two types of reports. Project reviews usually undertaken in NORAD, and evaluations, which are done by the Ministry.

in both agencies. BITS projects are sometimes divided into phases, which means that before moving into another phase information is needed for planning purposes. In BITS, but not so much in NORAD, the evaluation is started because there is a need to audit and/or verify project activities. BITS evaluations are not planned in the sense that they form part of a project plan. This is on the other hand, more frequently the case in NORAD, where evaluations are much more planned, either as part of the project document or in response to bilateral documents. Forss suggests that this could signify a reactive (passive) approach to the evaluation activity. This suggestion is strengthened by the fact that evaluations in NORAD are seldom started to enhance learning and competence building. This is, on the other hand, one of the more important reasons for launching a BITS evaluation. The questionnaires and the interviews made with BITS staff are quite conclusive in this regard. Indicating a more active approach to evaluations. Common to both agencies is that you rarely start an evaluation because of implementation problems, nor does it function as a routine control measure. This suggests that evaluations satisfies a need for information of a strategic, rather than operational nature.

To sum up, in both agencies an evaluation is closely linked to the decision-making process and thus serve monitoring and planning purposes. But the comparison would also suggest that a BITS evaluation is also connected with the learning function. Evaluations are not started because they are planned, but because you want to know something.

BITS and NORAD basically shares the same experiences of how evaluations are used in the aid agency. Evaluation reports are useful inputs to policy decisions and as sources of learning. For BITS they are also important for operational decisions. This is not the case for NORAD evaluations, but for their project reviews. The pattern of use for BITS evaluations and NORAD project reviews is quite similar. Which tells us something about BITS evaluations. They are operational in character, both with respect to their format as well as their content. The reason as to why you start an evaluation thus largely corresponds to what you are expecting to use it for. In the case of BITS, the emphasis on learning is particularly noteworthy.

When it comes to what the respondents perceive as the most important qualities of an evaluation there are again similarities between the agencies. An evaluation should present the achievements in a clear way. The conclusions should be valid and reliable. For BITS it is more important that the recommendations are practical than it is for NORAD evaluations. On the other hand NORAD project reviews are highly valued if the recommendations. Again we can see evidence of the operational character that a BITS evaluation should have if it is to be regarded as a "good" evaluation. Another important difference is that NORAD aid administrator attaches a high value to an active involvement of the recipient in the evaluation exercise. This is not so much the case in BITS. This is also reflected in the structure of BITS evaluation system where we pointed out that it is rare to have somebody from the recipient country participating in the evaluation team. For BITS this would threaten the objectivity of the evaluation. For NORAD it is something which contributes something essential to the evaluation.

Let us then conclude our comparison of attitudes to evaluations and what they are for. BITS and NORAD programme officers share the same views of the role evaluations play for them in their work. Generally, they form an important input into the decision-making process. They are important instruments for planning and monitoring. The agencies differ, however, in important respects. BITS evaluations are much more active exercises. They have a high operational and practical value. In this they much more resemble NORAD project reviews, than the typical NORAD evaluation. Furthermore, BITS evaluations are launched because somebody has a direct interest in knowing something. Their function as learning exercises is therefore probably stronger than in the case of NORAD evaluations.

Thus, evaluations serves slightly different purposes in the agencies. Is this also reflected in the attitudes to learning? Table 4.2 summarises the findings of the two studies.

Table 4.2 Assessment of learning - a summary

	BITS	NORAD
The most important sources of learning in the work situation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Field visits 2. Experts returning from projects 3. Informal information from colleagues 4. Evaluation reports 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Field visits 2. Experiences from other aid agencies 3. Informal information from colleagues 4. Meeting and conferences
The main obstacles to learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Too little time to engage in learning activities 2. Too little time to reflect on experiences 3. Routine work is prioritized 4. Professional roles focus on other things than learning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Too little time to engage in learning activities 2. Too little time to reflect on experiences 3. Routine work is prioritized 4. Professional roles focus on other things than learning

How important are evaluations as sources of learning? Generally one could say that for BITS they are important, but not that important. For NORAD they are not very important at all. In both agencies the most important way of learning is from field visits. A direct contact with the project and the environment within which it operates is regarded as the most valuable source of learning. Informal information from colleagues is another high-ranking source of learning. For both agencies meetings, conferences, seminars, training courses, books and media are generally regarded as unimportant sources of learning.

A notable difference is the role returning experts has as a source of learning. For BITS programme officers they are the second most important source. But they hardly given any value by the Norwegian aid administrators. Another difference relates to the value of other aid agencies experiences for the programme officers. For NORAD it is an important source of learning, for BITS staff these experiences count for very little. It is quite noteworthy that BITS programme officers don't think that they learn much from the experience of other aid agencies. We are not able to explain this attitude, but can only offer some speculations. BITS way of operating is so unique the the experiences of other agencies are simply not relevant. BITS is a "self-contained" agency and feels that it does not really have to interact very much with other agencies. True or not, it leaves the impression of BITS as a bit isolated from the mainstream of thinking around aid policy and implementation.

What are BITS officers interested in learning? Evaluations are primarily valued because of their role in concrete decision-making. They provide specific information about the performance of a project which can be used when taking decision on another project. Thus, the knowledge that is sought for is concrete, practical and very project oriented.

Is this enough or should they learn more? Our review of the evaluations indicates that important explanatory variables of project performance are situated in the project's external environment. These variables are not sufficiently dealt with in the evaluations and as a consequence important information is lost.

What prevents the officer from learning? Here we find differences between the two organisations. There is a high level of personal motivation and interest. But it seems that the professional role of officer prioritises other things than learning. The officer finds that he/she does not have enough time.⁵ Too little time available to engage in learning activities and to reflect on experiences. Lack of time relates to how the officer understands his role in the organisation and when the organisation thinks that the officer has performed a job well done. How is this decided? In theoretical terms the nature of ones duties can be read in the job description. But a job description contains many duties and they are normally written in general terms. It is necessary to make a selection and concentrate on the most important ones. To a very large extent it is the organisation, in its practice, which establishes the priority order among the many duties and defines their exact content. This then forms the basis for how the officer understands his role and the job he is supposed to do.

The responses to both our and the Norwegian survey clearly suggest that the officers feel that their main duties relate to that of a operator. This means that they are primarily concerned with two basic questions: Planning and monitoring. Planning involves things like identifying the goals of the project, the general design of the project and the likelihood of satisfactory results. - Monitoring relates to following the results of the project. Does the project deliver the goods and services it was planned to do. Are they delivered in time and according to the budget? What they then require from the evaluation system is information that helps them

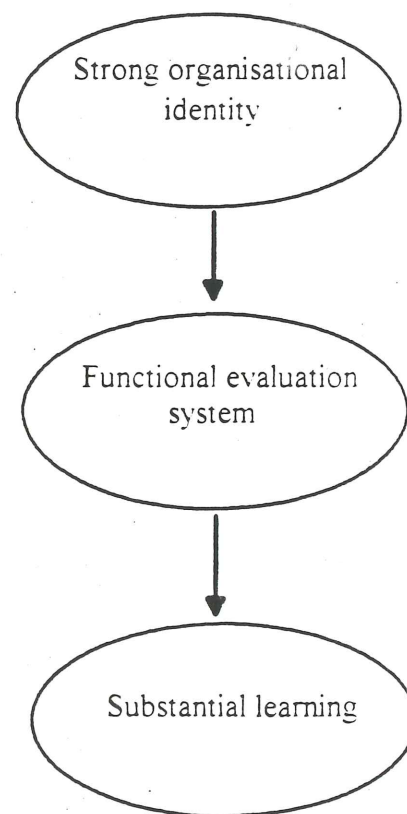
⁵ This correlates the findings of a study made by the author of SIDA programme officers and their attitudes towards the use of economic analysis in evaluations and project appraisal.

Carlsson, J. *Economic Assessment of Aid. Attitudes of SIDA Programme Officers*. Department of Economics, University of Gothenburg. February 1991.

answer these functions. The strength of the BITS evaluation system is that this is more or less what it does. By doing so it also provides a good basis for learning.

5. Conclusions

The connection between the evaluation system and learning can be illustrated by the following relationships. Our general conclusion is that learning in BITS is high because the links shown in the figure are strong.



The starting point is a clear organisational identity. What does this mean? It can be defined as the way how people perceive of the organisation: what it is supposed to do, how things shall be done etc. The image BITS conveys is that of a small, administratively efficient, no-nonsense organisation. The objectives are easily understood, as is the role of BITS in a development project. BITS mode of working emphasises quick decisions, based on a scrutiny of limited alternatives. BITS does not necessarily aim for the best, but is happy with the second best alternative. Thus, the identity of BITS can be easily communicated and understood by those within as well as outside the organisation. The fact that the identity is so transparent, has created a strong organisational culture.

It is present and it is understood by the staff member who can translate it into a job description which reflects the images of the organisation. Peoples perception of what their jobs are all about is surprisingly coherent. This is something which comes out very clearly in the interviews and the responses to the questionnaire. The transparent image of BITS has had a

direct impact on the structure of the evaluation system. A strong organisational culture leads to a strong, in the sense of a relevant, evaluation system. The transparency of the organisation means that the evaluation system - or rather the people who launch them - formulates questions relevant to them, given the functions they are to perform. Our material suggests that there is a shared view of what the evaluation system shall do, and how it shall be designed to do it. Given the coherence of the organisation, it means that the evaluation system is well adapted to what the staff member requires in order to do a good job. The system prioritises questions which are central to their needs. A system which is regarded as relevant and provides answers to the "right" questions, also lays the foundation for good, substantial learning.

BITS evaluation system is, however, far from fulfilling the technical requirements of a good evaluation system. It is methodologically weak, tend to disregard long-term development impact issues, and is generally not very interested in matters outside the project itself. But still, it is functional, since it provides knowledge about things which are regarded as important for the people who work in the organisation. The logical connection between the identity of the organisation and its evaluation system suggests that there exists an enabling environment for learning.

Would BITS deliver better and more effective aid if the evaluation system broadened its perspective? Is there a need for changing the system as it exists today? The question can be answered at two levels: Changes undertaken within the present system, and changes undertaken with the objective of changing the structure of the system.

Within the framework of the present structure changes can always be made without threatening functionality. Our survey of the evaluation system has shown that there are weaknesses which should be corrected. One example is the composition of the evaluation team where local expertise seldom participates. Another example is the low level of methodological awareness.

If the evaluation system was changed, but not the identity of the organisation, then such a change would be largely dysfunctional. The new knowledge generated by the evaluations

would probably be only marginally utilised, since it would carry little relevance for the programme officers and how they understand their duties. Changes in the evaluation system must reflect substantial changes in the strategy and mode of operation of the organisation to be effective.

Appendix 1. List of Evaluations

Concessionary credits

Country	Credit MSEK	Evaluation time
India		
Hydroelectric power, Uri	1.400	Every 6th month
High voltage transmission, Vindhyachai	425	September 1991
High voltage transmission, Rihand-Delhi	900	Autumn 1992
Creditline to development bank	94	End 1990
China		
Harbour project, Hangzhou	13.1	November 1989
Hydropower, Shi Lou Ti	10.8	October 1988
Coalwaterfuel, Beijing	35.4	July 1993
Papermachine, Yibin	5.7	July 1991
Papermachine, Jilin	21.2	July 1991
Pulp equipment, Jilin	12.9	May 1989
Papermachine, Dandong	13.2	July 1991
Pulpequipment, Yibin	8.7	July 1991
Fibreboard plant, Nanchu	67.8	July 1988
Spånskivefabrik, San Ming	28.2	March 1989
Vegetable oil plant, Nanjing	14.4	December 1990
Apple juice plant, Liaoning	9.0	November 1990
Soymilk plant, Wuhan	13.7	December 1990
Vegetable oil plant, Hefei	23.3	November 1990
Black currant juice plant, Heilongjiang	13.4	November 1990
Childfood plant, Tongliao	10.6	October 1990
Hard metalplant, Zhuzhou	99.6	February 1989
Telephone cable plant, Tianjin	11.2	April 1992
Lesotho		
Rural electrification	84	1988
Malaysia		
Transformerstation	28.6	September 1990
Mauritius		
Telecommunications	137	Late 1992
Pakistan		
Creditline to development bank	64	Spring 1992

Country	Credit MSEK	Evaluation time
Thailand		
IFCT 1	59	November 1991
Tunisia		
Creditline to development bank	93	June 1993
Zimbabwe		
Strategic oil storage	250	Pre-study 1990
Expansion of national control center	124	1986

Technical cooperation

Algeria ²⁸		
Steelmill	12.7	September 1990
Mauritius		
Institutional support to telecommunications		November 1990
Tunisia		
Environmental protection		August 1990
The Philippines		
Satellite mapping	12.15	September 1992
Bolivia		
Mining industry	40.4	June 1992
Costa Rica		
Forestry projects Coopeindio, Aguade for & Asiera	9.8	January 1993
Dominian Republic		
Forestry project Plan Sierra	15	May 1990
Uruguay		
Support to Department of Water Development		June 1991
Technical collaboration programmes		
Universities in aid programmes		June 1992
BITS consultancy funds in the World Bank		November 1992
Courses in industry and management		November 1992
A study of certain consultancy companies		August 1992

Eastern Europe

Country	Credit MSEK	Evaluation time
Poland		
Industrial management	32	May 1992
Forestry	30	May 1993
Labor market institutional support	5.5	September 1993
The Baltic countries		
Environment air pollution	3.5	September 1993
Municipal colaboration	14	October 1993
Transport	27	November 1993
Training board technique	3.6	December 1993
Various countries		
Masters education in bankig and finance	12	January 1994
Industry and finance training	31	April 1993

Appendix 2 Evaluations - Concessionary Credits

1. The National Control Center - Zimbabwe (December 1986)

The evaluation was done in December 1986 and describes a rather successful project. The center were put into operation according to the original time schedule. The evaluation handles the technical operations in a very satisfactory way, but there are important questions regarding economic and organisational matters. At the time of the evaluation the control center was functioning satisfactorily, even though minor problems were encountered. One important problem though, with important repercussions for the sustainability of the project was analysed in a relatively limited way: the organisation of the Zimbabwe Electrical Supply Authority (ZESA). A discussion of the political economy of this newly formed power company - pricing policy, expansion plans, possibilities to generate funds for maintenance, ability to generate funds from internally generated revenues for investments - was never done. But would undoubtedly had provided important insights into the long-term sustainability of the center.

2. Navigational system in the Gulf of Suez - Egypt (May 1988)

This project is very central to the Egyptian economy: installation of a vastly improved navigational system (lighthouses etc.) in the Gulf of Suez. The centrality of the project touches on two different branches: international shipping and domestic oil exploration. An improved navigational system has a direct bearing on Egypt's ability to attract international shipping. For the domestic oil industry the importance was just as big as off-shore exploration in the Gulf had increased, leading to congestion and safety problems. Problems that were more or less acute at the time of the start of the BITS financed project.

The evaluation analyses a rather successful technical implementation, but it also points out potential future problem areas. The most critical one concerns the maintenance of the equipment. The installations require recurrent maintenance inspection. Something which will put a great strain on the Egyptian organisation in charge of the operations - the Power and Lighthouse Authority (PLA). The state of this organisation is discussed in the evaluation. Several weak spots are also identified: low salaries, personnel standards are sometimes inadequate etc. The analysis of the PLA's ability to solve these problems by itself is somewhat hampered by a lack of "hard facts". The ball is thrown back to BITS, which is recommended to continue to take some kind of responsibility over the project through its entire life-span. The important thing here is that the factors limiting effectiveness are clearly identified: the receiving organisation. A more general discussion of what really causes PLA's problems in its Egyptian context - macro-economy, relations to ministries, availability of funds etc. - would have been needed to give the analysis and the recommendations the necessary depth.

3. Fibreboard factory - the Peoples Republic of China (August 1988)

In a technical sense this is a successful project. It is less clear whether it is also a commercial success. The original time schedule was followed, and after commencement of operations in early 1986 production reached 60% of the installed capacity. As break-even was reported to be reached at 42% it is possible that the factory operated profitably. There were problems, however. As early as in 1987 there was a lack of spare parts. Where the management had started to replace foreign equipment with domestic, quality problems were encountered. In view of the fact that the company had already in 1987 started to export its products, the lack of spares became a significant problem. A discussion of pricing and availability of foreign exchange for this state-owned company would clearly have been very significant for an assessment of the long-term sustainability of the project.

There are several indications in the evaluation of the need for a discussion of the organisation's - Nancha Wood Hydrolysis Plant - strength and weaknesses. There is, for example: a rampant overmanning; underutilization of equipment; problems regarding spares supply and, insufficient know-how. The "General Observations" of the evaluation are interesting: "The factory seems to be well taken care of. There are some signs of the lack of spares. Management is well motivated and proud over its factory, but simultaneously somewhat frustrated over external circumstances and the lack of spares which leads to a lower utilization of productive capacity than necessary". A more thorough discussion of the external circumstances would have been enlightening. It would have provided a picture of the environment in which the organisation existed. As can be seen from other evaluations of projects in the PRC the experience of the fibreboard factory is not an isolated phenomenon.

4. Hard metal manufacturing - the People's Republic of China (February 1989)

This project concerns the construction of a hard metal manufacturing plant. Again we are encountering a project which is regarded as a technical success. After the signing of the contract in 1984 construction progressed according to the plan and a Final Acceptance Protocol was signed in 1988. At the time of the evaluation the factory had been in operation for one year. Capacity utilization was still low and problems relating to spares supply were already visible. The factory also encountered problems replacing foreign equipment with domestically manufactured. The need for a continuing transfer of know-how had also been under-estimated, particularly by the Chinese.

With regard to pricing, profitability and management autonomy vis-a-vis the government, there is more or less total confusion. As the author of the evaluation concludes: "it is not satisfactory that these critical (to the sustainability of the project) variables are shrouded in deep uncertainty". With sustainability a critical issue, the need for continued collaboration with Sandvik seemed necessary, but: "The practical possibilities for cooperation seems hard to find with regard to the Zhouzhou project. Even so, the experiences should be kept in mind in future projects". The interesting thing here is, as all three evaluations of projects in the PRC demonstrate the same problems, if these experiences really have been used during the last few years.

5. Vegetable oil factory the People's Republic of China

(December 1990)

According to the evaluation this is the least satisfactory one of all the three PRC projects. What is described here is a project with a fragmented commissioning of equipment. Something that contributed to significant delays in construction and start-up of the factory. Even after the start-up of production, problems haunted the project. Capacity utilization was low, maintenance not paid enough attention to, environmental problems were encountered and raw material consumption was excessively high.

The problem of marketing was solved when the Grain Marketing Board started to use the refinery for its marketing of subsidized edible oils. This had, on the other hand, created internal inconsistencies in the project. The heart of the matter was identified as the "transition in China from entirely planned to parallel markets and towards decentralisation and more clear-cut responsibility on the part of the factory managements /which/ is still an ongoing process". For the new refinery the problems related to this transition seems rather critical. With underdeveloped marketing strategies, and a relationship to the Nanjing Grain Board which seemed to create confusion regarding the management's responsibilities and pricing policies. From the evaluation we get the impression of an operation plagued with difficulties. The most important was identified as the relationship between the plant organisation and a changing Chinese environment, where the role of the factory was never properly defined.

From the evaluations of the PRC projects a picture emerges where technical feasibility is only one side of the coin, when factors emerge which threatens the long-term sustainability of the projects. Given the experiences from the projects in the PRC it would have been useful to have a comparative study which had addressed issues such as: what pressures the state-owned factories are experiencing in an emerging market economy, their pricing policies, their relationship to other state enterprises, the new competitive climate etc. Such a comprehensive analysis would certainly have facilitated BITS possibilities to make use of the lessons learned.

6. Development credits - Pakistan and Tunisia

(April 1992 and June 1993)

In comparison with the other development credits reviewed here these two were differently structured. This is why we discuss them jointly. Their different structure is important when considering the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluations.

The purpose of this line of credit (introduced in 1988) has been to reach new projects and beneficiaries in both Sweden as well as in the receiving country. It is aimed at projects and suppliers which does not fit into the normal pattern of development credits because of their relatively smaller size. The Swedish credit is channelled via one or more development banks (these banks are defined as "the project"). They are in turn supposed to distribute the credits to beneficiary companies. The evaluations therefore need to assess two sides of programme: the utilization of the credit, and the credit institution responsible for distributing the credit. In the case of the credits to Pakistan and Tunisia, the evaluations refrain from discussing sustainability since a too short time has elapsed from the actual releasing of the funds. The evaluations focus instead on

whether the projects supported by the banks were of the kind intended in the original agreement, whether they would have materialized without the credits and what kind of problems that have been encountered.

The second part of both evaluations assesses the receiving credit institution. In both of these cases an overview of the economic conditions and reforms in the respective countries is presented. Thus, trying to place the institutions in a broader socio-economic framework. The improvements in the banks positions during the years are also discussed. The aspect of institutional strength is naturally very important here, if the banks are to be able to handle the BITS supplied credit. Particularly the Pakistani evaluation is very strong in this respect. It must be pointed out that a stronger emphasis on a macro-economic discussion would have improved these parts even more. A more thorough discussion of the respective governments commitment to economic reform could also have been useful. Overall, though, the evaluations must be considered as useful in several respects. Placing the "projects" in a broader societal context serves not only to evaluate the "old" programmes, but also offers guidance to the future design of these credit schemes.

7. High voltage direct current transmission project - India

(September 1991, November 1992)

BITS provided a credit to construct a HVDC transmission line in India in 1984. Two evaluations discuss this project.

In the first one the major technical problems are identified. These are further elaborated upon in the second. Even though these problems are connected to the project's economic environment this is less well covered. The major technical problem faced by the project, causing serious delays in implementation, were related to the quality of the Indian sub-contractors. As the civil works part of the project fell way behind schedule, completion was delayed about two years, compared to the original plans. Another problematic area, although less extensively covered in the evaluations, concerns the existence of disproportionalities, as well as marketing problems, which together reduces utilization levels. In this connection a thorough discussion of the Indian electricity generation sector would have been of interest to explain the persistence of problems such as these.

The financial status of the responsible Indian organisation - the National Power Transmission Corporation - is analyzed and it is noted that "NPTC's cash flow... in 1988/89 was equivalent to only 8% of investment expenditures. This moderate contribution reflects both the size of NPTC's revenue base relative to its investment programmes, and also its supply contract with the State Electricity Board which include a fixed price over five years".

In this quotation we find some of the explanations to the problems of this project. The electricity industry was heavily regulated with heavily subsidized prices, which created a pattern where expansion was constantly dependent upon concessionary foreign credits, the local organisations being structurally unable to finance development projects from their own funds. Thus it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Indian electricity markets would need to be liberalized if disproportionalities, delays and maintenance problems was to be avoided in the future.

Discussions of these problems appear in the two evaluations. But still leaves the impression that the institutional weaknesses in the Indian electricity industry is insufficiently dealt with. Institutional factors do have an important bearing on future capacity levels and therefore the sustainability of the project.

8. Telecommunications - Mauritius (December 1992)

This evaluation is, in fact, more of a mid-term review of the project and deals with some immediate problems in the relationship between the Swedish contractor (Ericson) and the Mauritian organisation (Mauritius Telecom). The project was subject to several delays and the relationship between the counterparts had deteriorated to a critical point. The evaluation concluded that the project had made important progress, but that the final stage was hindered by institutional constraints. Mauritius Telecom was clearly not properly organised for the task it had. The project had also been delayed by frequent changing of personnel during the early stages of the project. It was also concluded that the first time frame given for completion of the project (18 months) was overly optimistic. Ericson was asking for extensions already at the stage of tendering.

The evaluation might have made references to "wider" lessons learned as the problems encountered were common in many development projects. Another area which might have offered insight into similar problems would have been a discussion of Mauritius Telecom's pricing policy. This is indicated by the few references actually made to the strategy of the corporation.

Appendix 3. Evaluations - Technical Cooperation

1. Steel industry - Algeria (September 1990)

Technical support to the Algerian steel industry in the form of different studies had been provided under two contracts. The purpose of the evaluation was to analyse the prospects for further support. The evaluation found that the studies had been sensible, but that their recommendations had not been implemented by the Algerian counterpart. The basic problem was that the steel industry was not economically feasible. The evaluation applied a broad perspective in its analysis. The steel company was at the time of the evaluation literally bankrupt and in need of a total restructuring. It had suffered from a policy framework which was not conducive to profitable operations and sound business principles. Although the Algerian political economy had since 1988 undergone changes, aiming towards making state companies such as the Enterprise Nationale de Siderurgie (SIDER) autonomous and long-term economically feasible. But the team concluded that it "has no way of estimating the probability of a successful solution to the financial problem, the forex problem, nor the autonomy of the company. Only the Algerian government can do so". The strong points in this evaluation are easily seen. The technical and economic problems are discussed, while simultaneously the socio-political framework of SIDER is being analysed.

2. Satellite photography - the Philippines (September 1992)

The project concerns the provision of land-use maps to the Philippines. The use of which is to support the ongoing reorientation of the natural resource management policy of the Philippine Government. One important point here is that the provision of satellite based maps "has gained an increasing share of technical cooperation provided by BITS". The evaluation concluded that satellite mapping is a very cost-efficient technique. The use of the French SPOT-satellite was economically sound. The study also concluded that the product and the necessary know-how for the transfer had been satisfactory transferred. Moreover this resulted in a product that was used by several different end-users.

Overall, we are getting the impression of a rather successful transfer of resources. It is a strong point in the evaluation that it addresses weaknesses in the institutional context. In order to assess the sustainability of the project, NAMRIA's institutional strengths and weaknesses are being extensively discussed. NAMRIA lack, however, autonomy, which makes it dependent on the central government for funds. The inability to charge the end-users for maps is resulting in a situation where NAMRIA's marketing and distribution efforts are regarded as too weak. The evaluation pinpoints a strategic choice which has to be made: either a continuing donor/government dependency or an increase in NAMRIA autonomy. "As long as this need can not be expressed in a market demand, NAMRIA will have to rely on its political bargaining power in the national budgetary game". Combining technical discussions with an assessment of economic feasibility, as well as institutional constraints, the evaluation seems exceptionally well-balanced.

3. Mining - Bolivia

(June 1992 and November 1993)

These two evaluations deal with a sector of critical importance to Bolivia. BITS support to the rehabilitation of the mining sector up to 1992, had consisted of several projects: a) satellite based maps; b) the provision of services aimed at the restructuring of the state-mining company COMIBOL; c) the provision of laboratory services; d) a computerized information system. Several of these activities should have been of great importance for the upgrading and restructuring of the Bolivian mining sector. The World Bank had complemented BITS support by financing inputs into the restructuring efforts.

The problems inherent in the restructuring process are discussed in the evaluations. The evaluator especially points to the continuing constraints that prevents the development of the restructuring of laboratory services and COMIBOL. In these cases the technical support provided was facing institutional resistance. The provision of mapping services, which is more neutral to institutional constraints, could operate less affected by institutional problems.

The evaluations are technically and economically relevant. They also provide overviews of the resistance that technical assistance might meet in these kind of situations. The commitment of the receiving country to reforms is also discussed.

4. Forestry - Costa Rica (January 1993)

The evaluation of the Costa Rican forestry sector analyzes the structural constraints for development in even more detail than the previous evaluations of the Bolivian project. In a thorough discussion of the politico-economic environment in which the BITS supported project operates the evaluation concludes: "A political-bureaucratic environment with very unclear strategies vis-a-vis forestry, a legislation that discriminates against a productive use of resources and a sawing industry geared towards the needs of natural forest resources (hardwood), as compared to planted forests (softwood).

The evaluators suggest that a technological shift is necessary in the sawing industry - something the Swedish assistance is aiming for - but that the current policies and vested interests are making this shift very problematic. It is a great merit of the evaluations that it points out the necessity for reform and restructuring of the bureaucracy, as well as the regulations surrounding the sector, if BITS assistance is to be productively used. The more technical aspects of the assistance are also clearly analyzed. This particularly concerns one of the projects where technical and economic factors caused it to fail. Likewise an understanding of the other two projects reasonably successful performance is explained by an analysis of the projects broader structural setting. Generally, this should be regarded as an excellent evaluation, which provides an extensive picture of the future possibilities and constraints facing the respective projects.

5. Forestry - the Dominican Republic

(May 1990)

In the Dominican Republic technical support had been channeled via the Plan Sierra, a semi-independent foundation which had been in charge of overall agricultural development in the El Sierra area since 1979. The foundation had received support from BITS, the Ford Foundation, Kellogg Foundation etc. The evaluation deals with one of the more important Plan Sierra programmes - the Celestina programme - where the Plan Sierra was pursuing a "pilot project". The evaluation possesses several strengths. Emphasis is placed on Plan Sierra's position in relation to other Dominican authorities concerned with activities in the forestry sector. Like the case in Costa Rica, the sector is found to be beset by a long-term stagnation caused by a lack of government interest and red tapeism. Even though a multitude of government organisations exists, the continuing depletion of the natural forests has not been stopped. At the same time import dependence is massive in the cases of roundwood and paper and pulp. A situation very similar to the one in Costa Rica. There is therefore little doubt of the relevance of the Swedish assistance. The problems in channeling the funds through the Plan Sierra is extensively discussed. The foundation form, and the centralization of decisions is effectively blocking the efforts. Most importantly, economic criteria has been blurred by a certain strategic confusion on the hand of the Plan Sierra.

The evaluators recommended an incorporation of the foundations market-oriented activities in order to avoid these problems. In the long-run the mix-up of social and commercially oriented objectives would undoubtedly threaten the sustainability of the BITS supported activities. In general the evaluation stressed the importance of clear strategies. Both with regard to the overall Dominican situation, as well as with regard to a continuation of BITS support.

6. Work environment - Ecuador

(November 1993)

This project aimed at providing incentives for improvement of workers safety standards. Three pilot enterprises had been selected in order to serve as examples. The evaluator worked under difficult circumstances. There was no possibility to do a field study in Ecuador. Instead she had to rely entirely upon secondary material available through a Swedish institution with a clear stake in the project. Questionnaires had been distributed, however, but none of them was returned. On the basis of this material, the evaluator concludes that the programme had been a relative failure in one of the enterprises. In another case there seems to have been no control over implementation. In the third case the programme is considered an enormous success. Labor standards had increased, and so had labor productivity with an impressive 40%. The evaluation accepts this figure without reservation, although a more critical discussion could have been useful. The evaluator also concludes that the programme had created a bandwagon effect and the interest in Ecuador for this kind of programme had increased thanks to this pioneering effort. There are some contradictions here: how could a programme with such limited success have created such a strong demonstration effect. Furthermore, if those participating were so enthusiastic, how come that none of them returned the questionnaire?

7. Industry related courses

(November 1993)

Between 1979 and 1991 industry related courses represented about 1/5 of the BITS Department for Technical Cooperation's costs. The objectives are familiar - transfer of know-how, institutional development, increased technical competence, more efficient production processes. The evaluation uses a sample, taken from a selection of courses (conducted between 1982 and 1991), in order to calculate the efficiency of the courses as a method for transferring know-how. Cost-efficiency is also measured. The courses turn out to be both cost-efficient and effective. There are, however, important problems. A large part of the participants has not been able to make use of their new knowledge with their organisations. The participants have not managed to communicate their newly acquired knowledge to their colleagues. The reason for this failure lies in the selection of participants which were not optimal. From a methodological point of view the return rate of the questionnaires constitutes a weakness. Only 30-40% of the participants responded to the questions. The evaluation naturally recommends an improved selection process. It is also recommended to more carefully identify needs and relevance of the courses. Furthermore, BITS should exercise more stringent monitoring of the courses.

Appendix 4. Evaluations - Eastern Europe

1. Technical support from Swedish to East European municipalities (October 1993)

This concerns a programme where Swedish municipalities have been providing "sister-municipalities" with different kinds of technical support. At the outset the objectives of the programme were not very well defined. "The efforts should develop and deepen the bonds between Swedish and East European municipalities. The goal is to strengthen local democracy, by increasing competence and strengthening local authorities. Efforts could aim at 'different' kinds of local government tasks. It is a fundamental demand that efforts should aim at a concrete and well-defined object, having the potential to be sustainable and contributing to the ongoing process of restructuring"

The dynamics of this far-reaching programme are well analysed in the evaluation. Clearly the large number of projects that the programme generated is in itself an impressive accomplishment. The problems that this has led to concerns the inner dynamics of the projects. If, for example, studies of water distribution systems are made, this is something which in itself will create a demand for a deepening of the support. The programme was creating expectations of something which the evaluation calls "inter-communal development cooperation". It is a merit of the evaluation that these dangers are pointed out. The recommendation that the limits of the programme should be more sharply defined seems very well founded. The recommendation that the more ambitious plans should be referred to an organisational level where "the planned project could be seen as part of general development plans seems also very relevant. A general impression from all evaluations of the East European projects that Western aid is massive and multifaceted, something which must create risks of over-lapping, duplication, aid dependency etc.

A special concern of the evaluation is the cost-efficiency of the various projects. It is concluded that the projects in general are cost-efficient, even though the evaluators themselves are well aware of the impossibility of measuring effects. In fact, the evaluation states very clearly that few tangible effects can be identified. This seems to represent a considerable dilution of the term "cost-efficiency". A more serious short-coming of the evaluation is a lack of a discussion of the projects in the context of the economic reforms taking place in these countries. It is all very well for the representatives of Swedish municipalities to state that "projects planned in the framework of communal cooperation are cheaper and more realistic than comparable projects that is made by other experts". In reality the problems are probably much more complicated than that. It would, for instance, be interesting to discuss if there is some kind of "crowding-out" effect here, where Swedish communal projects replace entrepreneurial initiatives.

2. Transport - the Baltic states

(November 1993)

Like the previous case this was a programme that had got off the ground within a very short time span after 1991. A large number of programs aimed at institutional development had been

initiated. The question which the evaluation deals with concerns the possibilities of continuing these programmes.

The evaluation faces the same problems as the previous one: "It is difficult for an outsider, including this consultant, to obtain insights into how the implementation of the projects are programmed, there appears to be a lack of time schedules for project implementation, including milestones and reporting dates...indicators of performance have often not been established...completion reports have not been prepared". The consultant suggests that more stringent and regular rules should be set and enforced in the field, suggestions very similar to the ones made in the case of municipal collaboration. In this context the consultant notes that projects appear to have been cost-efficient, although the beforementioned shortcomings of not really being able to measure effects appear once again.

The great advantage of the evaluation is the review of the Baltic transport and communications sector. In view of the multitude of projects and the very considerable increase in the number of donors such an inventory is very valuable. The risks for duplication and overlapping are high indeed.

The evaluation identifies suitable areas for BITS financing: "...BITS should be restrictive as concerns support to investment oriented activities. Generally speaking, it is not very difficult to mobilize the money required, if indeed the envisaged investment is a viable one. Second, many of the investments will be made by revenue-earning entities, which should be operated on a self-financing principle. To initiate project preparatory and implementation activities free of charge, i.e. on a grant basis, would give the wrong signals to the management of these entities, and would be contrary to the stated aim of introducing market-based principles".

Apart from this, the evaluator makes suggestions aiming towards greater efficiency in the support, by concentrating resources to a few basic fields. The development of a functioning institutional structure, as well as the formulation of consistent strategies for the sectors are strongly underlined. The findings of the evaluation seem to be well supported by the empirical material.

3. Technical training in industry and management - East Europe (April 1993)

Within a short time period after 1990 BITS had financed a total of 48 courses in the fields of industry and management. The evaluation considers the effectiveness of the courses, by measuring their possible effects on the economic reform process. Four different learning levels are identified, and a sample population is used in order to measure possible effects. The method used appears to be effective in producing reliable results. The analysis makes it possible to identify the types of courses most relevant to the participants. Some of the courses have had too wide objectives. Something which has made them less interesting to the receivers. It is programmes with high technical/practical elements which have had the best impact. The evaluation also looks into the implementation and follow-up of the projects. It is found that delays were frequent, while the transparency of certain projects was a problem, i.e. information was not easily obtained. The evaluation recommends that more responsibility should be delegated to the receiving institutions in order to increase their sensitivity to costs.

4. Labor market project - Poland

(September 1993)

Generally, this cooperation can be described as a quite coherent technical assistance project. The project aimed at institutional strengthening. With the coming of market economy reforms in Poland, institutions in the labor market field were being subjected to wholly new demands. Active labor market interventions were now needed to a much higher extent than before. For example, implementing effective labor market training programmes and increasing labor mobility between regions and branches. The experience of AMU and AMS in these fields was regarded as useful and provided much of the rationale for this project. The relevance of the project to Poland was considered as very high.

The evaluation discusses the regional emphasis of the project. The objective to spread the effects into new regions was considered as too optimistic. A discussion of the applied "bottom-up" versus an alternative "top-down" approach is discussed. The identified problem is the limited generality. It was difficult to trace any spread effects. The possibilities of strengthening these "multiplier effects" are discussed. Some kind of strengthening of the center is necessary in order to somewhat ensure some diffusion from the centers of Torun and Katowice.

To the evaluator it is this problem - center-periphery and coordination of efforts - that is central in his discussion of the possibilities to continue the project. Furthermore, as other donors are entering this area, coordination is recommended where the Swedish organisations clearly concentrate on their particularly strong areas.

5. Bank training - East Europe

(December 1993)

This project is a training programme where employees at East European banks were given the opportunity to study in Sweden and receive a Masters degree. The evaluation uses the same four levels of learning and impact as in the case of the management training project reviewed above. The methodology enabled the consultants to differentiate the results of the project. The project had communicated both theoretical and practical knowledge, and also contributed to the establishment of a network of professional contacts between the course participants. It had been less successful in changing work behaviours among individuals, and particularly the routines and systems of the banks. Although this had been a stated objective which carried a lot of importance for BITS. The project was found to have measurable effects - both with respect to creating opportunities for personal promotion and introducing tangible changes - within the beneficiaries respective institutions.

Overall, the evaluation analysed a project which was concrete enough to be able to have an impact. Although the expectations for organisational change as a result of the training never really materialized.

Appendix 5. Evaluation - International Courses

To date there has been only one evaluation of BITS extensive programme of international courses. It was done in May 1991. The evaluation deals with the effects of the training, given the general objective of transferring Swedish knowledge and experience in areas central to the development of LDC's.

The evaluation addresses two central and interrelated problems: a) the efficiency of the courses as a method for transfer of knowledge, i.e. have the participants learnt anything, and have they been able to use this knowledge inside their organisations; b) the cost-efficiency of the courses.

A broad spectrum of instruments were used in the evaluation. Questionnaires were distributed to a selection of participants, their superiors and their teachers. Interviews were also conducted. The evaluation arrives at the conclusion that in both respects the courses have been effective. Institutional resistance to change have naturally been encountered. But still, the overall result were regarded as satisfactory.

Regarding the selection of participants it was a concern that as many as 25% were unable to make use of their knowledge. Again a strengthening of the selection process was recommended. One of the major problems of the evaluation concerns the low rate of response to the questionnaires. This created problems of skewed populations. As the courses are found to be extremely efficient instruments for transferring and applying knowledge the suspicion arises: maybe it was only the most satisfied and best educated pupils that answered the questionnaires. With regard to cost-efficiency, the very high value - 70% - seems incredibly high. Can this value be accommodated with the fact that only 38% of the participants superiors would have sent their subordinates to the courses if they would have had to cover the costs from their own funds? Being aware of these questions we can still appreciate the value of the evaluation. It identifies the strength and weaknesses of the programme by using a variety of techniques, while also being able to question its own results.

Appendix 6. BITS Evaluation System

A. What is, in your experience, the most common reasons to start an evaluation. Please rank each of the alternatives listed below on a scale from 1 to 5, where:

1 = often a reason; and 5 = seldom a reason

	Rank Value
1. In response to bilateral agreements	_____
2. In response to implementation problems	_____
3. As routine control measures	_____
4. As planned activities in the project document	_____
5. To audit and/or verify the activities	_____
6. To improve the quality of a project	_____
7. To establish a project in its historical setting	_____
8. To provide information for planning	_____
9. To provide inputs for major decisions	_____
10. Because of changes in policy or strategy preconditions	_____
11. To enhance learning and competence building	_____
12. Other,	_____
13. Other,	_____

B. Which evaluations did you read during 1993? Please indicate how much of each of the reports you read as follows.

1 = most of it 2 = selected parts 3 = only the summary

(if you need more space please continue on a separate page) Rank Value

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____
11. _____	_____

C. How important are different sources of learning in your work situation?
Please rank each of the alternatives listed below on a scale from 1 to 5, where:

1 = very important and 5 = not important

	Rank Value
1. Field visit	_____
2. Informal information from colleagues	_____
3. Evaluation reports	_____
4. Books of professional interest	_____
5. Professional journals	_____
6. The mass media (TV, newspapers etc)	_____
7. Internal seminars	_____
8. External seminars	_____
9. Training courses	_____
10. Meetings/conferences	_____
11. Professional advice from researchers	_____
12. Professional advice from other expertise	_____
13. Professional advice from international expertise	_____
14. Experts returning from BITS financed projects	_____
15. Other donor's experience	_____
16. Other,	_____
17. Other,	_____

Please indicate your three most important sources of learning in your profession during 1993 from the list above

18. Number: _____

D. What is your experience concerning the use of evaluations?. Please mark your agreement or disagreement to each of the statements below according to the following scale:

1 = agree

2 = undecided

3 = disagree

	Rank Value
1. The reports are a useful input to policy decision	_____
2. The reports are a useful input to operational decisions	_____
3. I often refer to these reports	_____
4. The reports have too much information of less relevance	_____
5. The information is not presented for easy access	_____
6. The information is not structured for easy access	_____
7. The reports are a useful source of learning	_____
8. The reports are important in understanding the project setting	_____

E. What is, in your view, the most important qualities that evaluation reports should have?
Please rank each of the alternatives listed below on a scale from 1 to 5, where:

1 = very important and 5 = not important

	Rank Value
1. It presents the achievements accurately	_____
2. It has practical recommendations	_____
3. It can be used in decision-making	_____
4. It contains new thoughts	_____
5. It puts the findings in a wider perspective	_____
6. It follows a standardized format	_____
7. It is well written	_____
8. It contains a summary	_____
9. The methods of the investigation are clearly presented	_____
10. The conclusions are valid and reliable	_____
11. The recipients are actively involved	_____
12. The final report is short	_____
13. It follows the terms of reference	_____
14. Other,	_____
15. Other,	_____

Please indicate what you consider the three most important qualities that reports should have from the list above

16. Number: _____

F. What are the three most important areas where you would like to increase your knowledge or proficiency in your present position?
(Please think of learning in a wide sense, e.g. as professional development, increasing competence and synthesizing experience, knowledge etc.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

G. What is, in your opinion, the main obstacles to learning in your present position. Please rank each of the alternatives listed below on a scale from 1 to 5, where:

1 = very important and 5 = not important

	Rank Value
1. Too little time available to engage in learning activities	_____
2. Too little time available to reflect on experiences	_____
3. Lack of feedback to provide stimulus for learning	_____
4. Inadequate information systems	_____
5. Lack of interest to discuss fundamental issues	_____
6. The colleague's openness to new ideas and visions	_____
7. The organisations openness to critical reflection	_____
8. Personal prestige which block discussion	_____
9. Routine work is prioritized	_____
10. Professional roles focus on other things than learning	_____
11. Resources available for professional development	_____
12. High turn-over in the organisation	_____
13. Personal motivation	_____
14. Other,	_____
15. Other,	_____

H. We conclude with four questions concerning your position in the aid administration

How long have you been working with development aid?

0-3 years ___ 4-5 years ___ 6-10 years ___ > 10 years ___

How long have you been working with BITS?

0-3 years ___ 4-5 years ___ 6-10 years ___ > 10 years ___

Have you ever been stationed abroad in a developing country?

No ___ Up to one year ___ 1-3 years ___ > 4 years ___

Which part of BITS are you presently working in?

Technical Cooperation ___ Development Credits ___

International Courses ___ East Europe ___

Appendix 7. Results from the survey

A. What is, in your experience, the most common reasons to start an evaluation.

1=often a reason, and 5=seldom a reason

	Rank value
1. In response to bilateral agreements	39
2. In response to implementation problems	30
3. As routine control measures	27
4. As planned activities in the project document	27
5. To audit and/or verify the activities	20
6. To improve the quality of a project	23
7. To establish a project in its historical setting	36
8. To provide information for planning	20
9. To provide inputs for major decisions	19
10. Because of changes in policy or strategy preconditions	34
11. To enhance learning and competence building	24

D. What is your experience concerning the use of evaluations?

1 = agree 2 = undecided 3 = disagree

	Rank value
1. The reports are a useful input to policy decision	9
2. The reports are a useful input to operational decisions	10
3. I often refer to these reports	15
4. The reports have too much information of less relevance	20
5. The information is not presented for easy access	18
6. The information is not structured for easy access	18
7. The reports are a useful source of learning	9
8. The reports are important in understanding the project setting	11

E. What is, in your view, the most important qualities that evaluation reports should have?

1 = very important and 5 = not important

	Rank value
1. It presents the achievements accurately	9
2. It has practical recommendations	11
3. It can be used in decision-making	13
4. It contains new thoughts	26
5. It puts the findings in a wider perspective	21
6. It follows a standardized format	37
7. It is well written	26
8. It contains a summary	24
9. The methods of the investigation are clearly presented	19
10. The conclusions are valid and reliable	10
11. The recipients are actively involved	18
12. The final report is short	31
13. It follows the terms of reference	24

Appendix 7. Results from the survey

How important are different sources of learning in your work situation?

	Rank value
1 = very important and 5 = not important	
Field visit	11
Formal information from colleagues	16
Evaluation reports	19
Books of professional interest	27.5
Professional journals	29
Mass media (TV, newspapers etc)	32
Internal seminars	26
External seminars	23
Training courses	26
Meetings/conferences	24
Professional advice from researchers	29
Professional advice from other expertise	21
Professional advice from international expertise	24
Experts returning from BITS financed projects	15
Other donor's experience	32

What is, in your opinion, the main obstacles to learning in your present position.

	Rank value
1 = very important and 5 = not important	
Too little time available to engage in learning activities	9
Too little time available to reflect on experiences	15
Lack of feedback to provide stimulus for learning	31
Inadequate information systems	38
Lack of interest to discuss fundamental issues	43
The colleague's openness to new ideas and visions	35
The organisations openness to critical reflection	30
Personal prestige which block discussion	37
Routine work is prioritized	22
Professional roles focus on other things than learning	25
Resources available for professional development	42
High turn-over in the organisation	28
Personal motivation	40