



08
2016

**SUSTAINING A DEVELOPMENT POLICY:
RESULTS AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE
SWEDISH POLICY FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT**

Måns Fellesson, Lisa Román

Sustaining a Development Policy: Results and Responsibility for the Swedish Policy for Global Development

Måns Fellesson and Lisa Román

Rapport 2016:08

till

Expertgruppen för biståndsanalys (EBA)

Måns Fellesson holds a PhD in Sociology from Uppsala University. He has worked extensively with development issues in various positions both academically, as leader for the research cluster on migration, mobility and transnational relations at the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), and as advisor at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He is currently holding a position as deputy director at the Global Agenda Department in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Lisa Román holds a PhD in Economics from the Stockholm School of Economics. She has been secretary to the Expert Group of Development Issues (EGDI) at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, policy specialist at the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), and has held various positions at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), where she is currently working as advisor at the unit for research cooperation.

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ISBN 978-91-88143-19-8

Printed by Elanders Sverige AB
Stockholm 2016

Cover design by Julia Demchenko

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Preface

In 2003, the Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament) adopted the Policy for Global Development, a strategy focusing on the impact of domestic policies on developing countries. At the time, Sweden was a pioneer in launching such a visionary policy of shared responsibility for global development. The importance of cross-sectoral collaboration between a broad range of actors is highlighted in the policy. Over time, the policy has been both praised and criticised. In spite of broad political support, it has proved difficult to implement the proposed Policy for Global Development. As a response, the Government has tried to revitalise the policy using a number of ‘re-launches’, most recently in 2015. But why is it so difficult to implement a policy that everybody seems to agree on and what do we know about the results so far?

In this EBA report, the authors Måns Fellesson and Lisa Román present the Policy for Global Development as well as a systematic analysis of the activities and results reported by the Government in the period 2004–2014. According to the authors, reporting to the Riksdag contains a broad selection of ‘results’, but due to the fact that reporting changes in focus and specifics over time, it is difficult to know what implications the policy might have had in broader terms.

Fellesson and Román also explore possible explanations as to why it seems so difficult to achieve a coherent policy for development. They especially highlight three dimensions for successful implementation: political commitment (*motivation*), organisation and formal steering (*coordination*) and how the policy is understood by different actors (*cognition*). When looking at reported results and past experiences of the policy, one might doubt whether past ‘re-launches’ and future efforts will generate much more than before in terms of global development. On the other hand, today there seems to be a more general understanding of the need for broad responses to global development challenges. There is now also a universal framework for development and a global movement in a common direction, which did not exist earlier.

Sustainable development is a key priority on the global agenda today. Over the last few years, we have seen a number of international consultations, conferences and summits on how to address global development challenges. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is a new framework to be used globally. A critical question now is how to reach these goals

and what role international development cooperation and other policy areas should have in transforming these aspirations into reality.

In the most recent report to the Riksdag, the Government explains that the Policy for Global Development is an important tool for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, international development cooperation is not enough for global development. The responsibility needs to be shared with other policy areas. Perhaps the universal agenda is what has been missing for the Swedish policy to be something more than an ambitious agenda that has primarily resulted in activities financed through development cooperation. Yet it is important to learn from previous experiences and take them into account in future efforts.

As has been discussed in a previous EBA report (*Swedish Responsibility and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*, EBA 2016:04) there is a need for several actors to strengthen their capacity and to take on responsibility if Sweden is to deliver. This report raises important issues that should be considered if Sweden wants to take on a leading role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We believe that the report is not only useful for the Government and for government officials, but that it could also be of interest to other stakeholders, including the Riksdag.

The work on this report has been conducted in dialogue with a reference group chaired by Torgny Holmgren, member of the EBA. The analysis and the conclusions expressed in the report are solely those of the authors.

Stockholm, September 2016



Lars Heikensten

Sammanfattning

Globala utmaningar aktualiserar betydelsen av en samstämmig politik för utveckling. En sådan politik bygger på idén att bistånd inte är tillräckligt för att möta utmaningarna; andra politikområden måste bidra till utvecklingsmålen.

Betydelsen av en samstämmig politik för utveckling framhålls i Agenda 2030 och de globala målen för hållbar utveckling (*Sustainable Development Goals* – SDGs). En samstämmig politik är en förutsättning för att möta de utmaningar och uppfylla de åtaganden som gjorts i denna agenda. Men hur genomför och upprätthåller man en sådan politik?

Sverige har en förhållandevis lång tradition på området. Den svenska versionen, Politiken för global utveckling (PGU), antogs av den svenska riksdagen 2003. De nylanseringar som gjorts kan ses som försök att vitalisera och stimulera ett förnyat intresse för politiken. Samtidigt som behovet av samstämmighet för utveckling i Sverige och på andra håll är större än någonsin, kvarstår dock det återkommande problemet med ett otillräckligt politiskt intresse och genomförande.

Granskningar och utvärderingar pekar ofta på brister i styrning och engagemang, men fördjupar sällan analysen av *varför* problem med svagt ägandeskap, otillräcklig styrning och begränsat genomslag uppstår. Syftet med denna rapport är att bidra till en djupare förståelse av de utmaningar som finns för en samstämmig politik för utveckling i ett svenskt sammanhang.

Analytiskt ramverk

Först presenteras ett analytiskt ramverk med olika dimensioner i genomförandet av en samstämmig politik för utveckling. En dimension handlar om *motivation*. Svårigheter att genomföra en samstämmig politik för utveckling ligger dels i bristande politisk vilja på grund av intressekonflikter och skilda prioriteringar, liksom i allmän brist på incitament. En annan dimension handlar om *samordning* när det gäller organisation och formell styrning. Dessa dimensioner påverkar i sin tur *förståelsen* för politikens syfte och hur den bör genomföras bland olika aktörer.

En övergripande politik som syftar till att involvera alla aktörer och politikområden är dessutom beroende av ett frivilligt engagemang. Individer och organisationer (inom olika politikområden) är ofta bäst lämpade att själva identifiera vad de kan och bör göra. Det finns olika motiv till frivilliga insatser (strategiska, att uppgifter delegeras, eller ren filantropi) som kan bidra till men också i vissa fall hindra den typ av nationellt ansvar för utveckling som en samstämmig politik för utveckling förutsätter.

Resultatskrivelserna

Vi tittar sedan på hur den svenska PGUn har genomförts i termer av konkreta resultat såsom de har rapporteras av regeringen i dess skrivelser till riksdagen. Genom en systematisk analys identifierar vi nästan 1000 olika resultat i sju olika rapporter under tidsperioden 2004-2014. Mer än två tredjedelar är aktiviteter utan information om vem som agerat (dvs. vilket politikområde), detaljer om hur verksamheten har finansierats, eller vilka specifika resultat som har uppnåtts. I de fall finansieringskälla anges kommer denna främst från biståndsbudgeten.

Våra resultat bör dock behandlas med viss försiktighet. Regeringens rapportiering ändrar fokus och omfattning över tiden och gör inte anspråk på att vara fullständigt. Vi menar ändå att den bild vi presenterar visar på en diskrepans mellan innehållet i skrivelserna och ambitionen att mäta och bedöma resultat in enlighet med en resultatbaserad metod (så kallad *Results Based Management* eller RBM), den av regeringen angivna ansatsen.

Två politikområden

Vi för samman dessa två perspektiv i en analys av två områden relevanta i ett genomförande av den svenska PGUn. Ett område är migration och utveckling som för närvarande ligger högt på den politiska dagordningen. Den andra är högre utbildning och forskning som så här långt spelat en ganska undanskymd roll i PGU-sammanhang, men som rymmer viktiga utvecklingsdimensioner.

Den bild som framträder är att en samstämmighetspolitik på båda dessa områden är beroende av en gemensam förståelse kring de frågor som ryms inom de olika politikområdena och hur de förhåller sig till

utveckling. En gemensam förståelse tycks dock över tid ha utvecklats vad gäller de komplexa sambanden mellan migration och utveckling. Inom politiken för högre utbildning och forskning är dock utvecklingsperspektivet fortfarande relativt frånvarande.

Bistånd som medel för en gemensam förståelse

PGU handlar i första hand *inte* om vad som uppnås genom svenskt bistånd, utan snarare vad som uppnås inom andra politikområden. Att förlita sig på att biståndet genomför politiken kan ha en pacificerande effekt på andra politikområden. Ändå vill vi hävda att biståndet kan ha en katalytisk funktion i förhållande till andra politikområdens engagemang. Dessutom kan biståndet vara ett stöd för utvecklingsländer att dra nytta av andra politikområden. Biståndet kan också skapa förståelse för hur andra politikområden är kopplade till olika utvecklingsmål.

Hur resurser används är ändå alltid en fråga om alternativkostnader och det kan finnas politikområden som är mer effektiva än det traditionella utvecklingssamarbetet när det gäller att uppfylla ett utvecklingsmål. Inom ramen för de globala utvecklingsmålen (SDGs), är utveckling ett gemensamt mål med gemensamma vinster.

PGU-arbetet som process

Det är ingen lätt uppgift att genomföra politiken för globalt ansvar. Vårt analysramverk ger viss vägledning till varför samstämmighetsarbete ibland misslyckas eller inte lever upp till förväntningarna: Om människor saknar en gemensam förståelse av vad en samstämmig politik för utveckling innebär, kommer de mest troligt inte agera samordnat och heller inte vara motiverade för att utveckla och driva relevanta positioner i nationella och internationella forum. Om arbetet är dåligt organiserat finns lite utrymme för att utveckla en gemensam förståelse vilket i sin tur leder till att motivationen avtar. Om aktörer saknar incitament att samordna aktiviteter kommer potentiellt goda argument för samstämmighet inte till ytan. Men om istället aktörerna är överens om innehållet och betydelsen av en samstämmig politisk ram, kommer de att vara mer motiverade att organisera arbetet på ett framgångsrikt sätt. Det kognitiva elementet, dvs. förståelsen av vad samstämmighet för utveckling innebär för ett

visst politikområde, är viktigt och ofta ett resultat av hur policyarbetet är samordnat och motiverat.

Hur en samstämmig politik med ett tydligt och väl definierat mål kommuniceras och följs upp över tid är avgörande för att skapa en förståelse för intresse, roller och ansvar mellan olika politikområden och aktörer. Regeringens resultatskrivelser rapporterar många framsteg, men få konkreta resultat. Resultat-baserad uppföljning (RBM) har följaktligen inte varit ett tillämpligt sätt att hantera och rapportera resultatet av politiken.

Målet med en samstämmig politik för utveckling är förstås att de aktiviteter och resultat som genomförs och uppnås ska vara samstämmiga i förhållande till utvecklingsmålen. Resultat kan dock vara svåra att föra in i ett strikt rapporteringsformat. Därför är det mer konstruktivt att se en samstämmig politik för utveckling som en process. Ett processorienterat synsätt innebär en kontinuerlig diskussion om hur man för in en utvecklingsdimension i olika politikområden.

Policy för en samstämmig politik för utveckling

Att driva en samstämmig politik är viktigt men svårt. Motstridiga intressen och skilda prioriteringar kan lägga hinder i vägen. Det finns ett behov av tydlig samordning, men komplexa beslutsprocesser leder ofta till otydliga instruktioner. Det finns ett behov av en fortlöpande dialog om vad PGU innebär, men en sådan dialog kommer inte alltid till stånd.

I ljuset av dessa utmaningar för PGU och med vår analys som grund, lämnar vi några konkreta rekommendationer.

- *Tydligt och starkt politiskt ledarskap.* Ansvar för genomförandet av PGU måste formaliseras i instruktioner. Regeringen skulle kunna utveckla ett instrument som mäter "utvecklingsåtagande" för varje policyområde, and som klargör intressekonflikter, motstridiga normer, och de fall då åtagandet brister, för att på så sätt bereda vägen för tydligare politiska ställningstaganden för utvecklingsfrämjande samstämmighet.
- *Tillför resurser för genomförandet.* Även om det finns ett frivilligt moment i samstämmighetsarbetet räcker det inte om inte individer och politikområden åläggs konkreta uppgifter och

belönas för sina prestationer på området. Ytterligare resurser behövs för att bygga samordningsfunktioner. De handlingsplaner som nu har tagits fram av varje departement är ett steg i rätt riktning, men svårigheten ligger inte i att ta fram dem utan i att genomföra dem.

- *Placera politiken för global utveckling mer centralt.* Regeringen bör överväga att flytta samordningen av PGU till en mer central position, eftersom politiken är i behov av politiskt åtagande från den högsta nivån.
- *Ta fasta på vikten av kontinuerlig analys.* Det behövs analys och kunskapsutveckling, både för att stärka politiken och för att öka medvetenheten om den.
- *Rapporterandet kring vad politiken åstadkommer måste bli mer process- och dialogorienterad.* Regeringen bör överväga en mer processorienterad ansats i sin rapportering, som lyfter både goda exempel och sådana där olika politikområden skaver mot varandra och är i behov av mer intensiv dialog.
- *Genomförandet av PGU måste hänga ihop med andra tvärfrågor i politiken.* Den allomfattande ansats som kännetecknar PGU behöver förhålla sig till andra tvärgående politikområden, som till exempel jämställdhet och klimat. Om dessa initiativ inte integreras i PGU finns en stor risk att det skapas parallella processer och en ineffektiv resursanvändning.

Summary

Global challenges highlight the relevance of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD). PCD builds on the idea that development aid is not enough to counter development challenges; other policy areas must cohere with development objectives.

The spirit of the PCD is mirrored in the recently adopted Agenda 2030 and the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs). Coherent policies in a number of areas are a prerequisite for meeting global challenges and fulfilling the commitments made. The question is to how to implement - and sustain – such coherent policies for (sustainable) development?

Sweden has a comparatively long tradition of PCD through its Swedish version, the Policy for Global Development (PGD), endorsed by the Swedish parliament in 2003. Various re-launches may be seen as attempts to vitalize and spur a renewed interest in the policy. While the need for PCD in Sweden and elsewhere seems more relevant than ever, there is also a recurring concern with fading political will and inadequate organization of policy work.

Reviews and assessments often point to weaknesses in steering and commitment, but rarely address *why* observed problems of lacking ownership, inadequate steering, and limited impact of the policy appear. The aim of this report is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges in implementing policy coherence for development in the Swedish context.

The analytical framework

Firstly, we present an analytical framework for various implementation dimensions of policy coherence for development. One such dimension is *motivation*, including reasons for failing political commitment to pursue PCD, due to conflicting interests and diverging priorities, and also disincentives for individual policy areas and for individuals. Another dimension is *coordination*, in terms of organization and formal steering. These dimensions influence *cognition*, i.e. how the policy is understood by different actors; if inadequate, this blurs and reduces a common understanding of the policy's purpose.

Moreover, an overarching policy to mobilize all actors and all policy areas requires *voluntary* engagement from different agents, who are often best suited to identify exactly what they can and should do; there are different reasons for voluntary action (strategic motives, delegated tasks, and mere philanthropic concerns) which contribute or hinder a national responsibility for development.

The results communications

Secondly, we assess the Swedish PGD in terms of concrete results in the Government's communications to the Parliament. Through a systematic analysis we identify close to 1000 different results in seven different reports in the 2004 to 2014 period. We find that more than two thirds are activities without information on either who (i.e. which policy area) has been engaged, how the activity was funded, or specifics on the output/outcome. Also, any explicit funding comes mainly from the aid budget.

Our findings should be treated with caution. The Government's reporting changes in focus and specifics over time, but never claims to be exhaustive of achievements. Still, the picture emerging has implications for the type of results based management (RBM) approach to the PGD taken early on by the Government, and thus how the policy has been implemented.

Two policy areas

We tie these two approaches together, by looking at two areas of relevance to the ambition of the Swedish PGD. The first is migration and development, undoubtedly high on the current political agenda. The other is higher education and research, these days playing a more modest role in the PGD context, albeit important from a development perspective.

The picture emerging is that coherent policies in both these areas are dependent on a common understanding of the issues at stake and how they relate to development. While such understanding has gradually evolved for the complex relationships between migration and development efforts, policies on higher education and research seems less occupied with the sector's role from a development perspective.

Aid as a tool for a common understanding

The PGD is *not*, primarily, about Swedish aid, but rather what is achieved in other policy areas. However, a large share of activities belongs to the aid sphere in the Government reporting on the PGD. On the one hand, relying on aid to do the job may pacify other policy areas' development efforts. On the other hand, aid may have a catalytic role for other policy areas, and may help developing countries benefit from the activities in other policy areas. Aid may also contribute to an understanding of how policy areas are linked with development.

We argue that aid has these two, partly contradictory, effects on the PGD. Yet, it should be remembered that spending (aid) is always a question of opportunity costs, and other areas may be more efficient for development purposes than traditional development cooperation.

PCD as a process

The general call for global responsibility meets with implementation challenges. Our framework gives some insights as to why: If people lack a common understanding of what a coherent policy for development means, they will not coordinate properly and will not be motivated to promote relevant positions in national and international forums. If the work is poorly organized, a common understanding has little room to develop and motivation fails. And if agents lack incentives to coordinate activities, potentially good arguments for coherence will be scarcely communicated and agreed. In reverse, if agreeing on the ingredients and the importance of a coherent policy framework, agents are more motivated to organize the work successfully. The cognitive element, i.e. the understanding of what coherence for development means, is important and often a result of how the work of the policy is coordinated and motivated.

Thus, the way the policy is communicated and monitored over time is decisive for creating an understanding of meanings, roles and obligations among different policy areas and actors. The Government's results communications report many achievements, but few concrete results. The ultimate objective with PCD is policy actions coherent with development objectives. But these outcomes may be difficult to frame in a strict reporting format. The RBM

approach hence does not seem an efficient way to manage and report on the policy.

Policy coherence for development might better be seen as a process. A process-oriented approach means a continuous negotiation about inclusion of developmental concerns in various policy areas. The reporting on the policy would consequently benefit from focusing on reporting on how the process proceeds, highlighting conflicts on interests, difficulties, and achievements.

Sustaining a development policy

Pursuing policy coherence is important but difficult. Conflicting interests and diverging priorities may step in the way, instructions are often inexplicit, and the decision process is complex. And there is need for a continuous dialogue on what the policy implies, but such dialogue does not always materialize.

Recognizing these challenges and backed by the findings of the study we make some concrete recommendations:

- *Clear and strong political leadership.* Responsibilities for the implementation of the policy need to be formalized in instructions. The Government could develop a “commitment to development” instrument for each domestic policy sphere, and clarify conflicting interests, conflicting norms, and at times lacking commitment to pave the way for more explicit political stands on policy coherence for development.
- *Increased resources for implementation.* Although there is a voluntary element in play in coherence work, this is not sufficient if agents are not assigned the task nor rewarded for it. Additional resources are needed also to build coordinating functions. The action plans currently developed are indeed a step in the right direction, but the difficulty lies not in producing them, but to implement them.
- *Place the policy at a more central organizational position.* The Government could consider moving the coordination of the policy to a more central position, since the policy needs political commitment from the highest political level.

- *Acknowledge the importance of continuous analysis.* There is need for analysis and knowledge development, both for strengthening the policy and to increase awareness around it.
- *Reporting of the policy's achievement must be more process- and dialogue oriented.* The Government should consider a more process-oriented approach for reporting, highlighting both good examples and examples of friction between policy areas in need of more intense policy dialogue.
- *The implementation of the PGD must be aligned with other cross-over and integrative policy initiatives.* The comprehensive and whole-of-government approach of the PGD needs to relate to other existing mainstreaming and integrative policy measures, for example the integrating approach to gender and climate. If these initiatives are not integrated in the PGD there is a potential risk of creating parallel processes and ineffective use of resources.

1 Introduction

Global challenges highlight the relevance of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD). Climate change and other environmental threats affect the poorest countries severely, but require regulation in rich countries and international commitment. Capital flight from poor countries is influenced by taxation rules in rich countries. Epidemics and antibiotic resistance link health threats in poor countries with rich countries' health systems. Wars and conflicts call for development efforts and humanitarian assistance, but also agreements on arms trade and migration policies in countries where people seek refuge. The concept of PCD builds on the idea that development aid is not enough to counter development challenges; other policy areas must cohere with development objectives.

The spirit of the PCD is mirrored in the recently adopted Agenda 2030 and the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), which address global challenges and require action in a large number of policy areas (UN, 2015a). The SDGs address challenges for *all* countries and differ thus from their predecessors, the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs), which primarily concerned conditions in the poorest countries. The UN resolution from the *Financing for Development (FfD)* conference in Addis Ababa, lays out the financial pathway to fund SDG commitments, and emphasizes the importance of a broader approach to financial flows, including international regulation of business, international trade and taxation (UN, 2015b). The climate conference in Paris in late 2015 reached agreement on curbing global warming (UN, 2015c).

Clearly, coherent policies in a number of areas are a prerequisite for meeting these challenges and fulfilling the commitments made. Moreover, the task is even more challenging, as this policy coherence includes a target to enhance policy coherence for *sustainable* development (PCSD), which implies the need for policy areas not only to be coherent with development objectives for poor countries, but also ensure coherent policies to achieve SDGs at home (Concord,

2015)¹. The question is how to implement - and sustain – such coherent policies for (sustainable) development?

Sweden has a comparatively long tradition of PCD. The Swedish version, the Policy for Global Development (PGD), was endorsed by the Swedish parliament in 2003 as the base for a coordinated and coherent policy to contribute to an “equitable and sustainable development in the world” (*Proposition 2002/03:122*; 1). Throughout political changes, the PGD has remained an overarching policy, although various “re-launches” have introduced modifications: firstly, in 2008, when the policy was to focus on “six global challenges”, each with specific “focus areas”; and recently, in 2015 (the exact content of which remains to be seen).

The re-launches of the Swedish PGD may be seen as attempts to vitalize and spur a renewed interest in the policy. While the need for PCD in Sweden and elsewhere seems more relevant than ever, there is also a recurring concern with fading political will and inadequate organization of policy work. Official reports on PCD in the EU and in the OECD emphasize the progress made in individual countries (e.g. EU, 2015; OECD, 2015).

External observers are more prone to report on lack of political commitment, and weak steering and monitoring of PCD achievements. An example is the European NGO confederation for relief and development, Concord, which regularly monitors the European Union’s work on policy coherence for development. Concord assesses that many countries have taken positive steps to reinforce the strength and commitments to PCD and that there have been initiatives for the set-up of inter-departmental coordination and assessment, but their effectiveness is questionable and overall there is “insufficient political will to change the way policies are made to engender policy changes that comply with the objective of PCD” (Concord, 2015; 12).

In Sweden, the Agency for Public Administration (Statskontoret) in 2014 reviewed the PGD with respect to steering, organization and mechanisms for further evaluation of the policy. The review concludes that the PGD needs clarification with respect to the concept of

¹ The OECD defines PCD as an approach and policy tool to integrate the economic, social, environmental, and governance dimensions of sustainable development at all stages of domestic and international policy making (OECD, 2016).

coherence, the relevance of the PGD for different policy areas, and the role for development cooperation. The review also points to the need to mobilize the Government as a whole for the policy, and the importance of making this visionary policy more public and visible. In addition, the report stresses the need of developing systems to assess coherence impact for development (Statskontoret, 2014; 41-42).

Framing the implementation problem

These reviews, and others, assess achievements (and failures) of PCD, and they highlight weaknesses in steering and commitment, but there is little attempt to explain *why* observed problems appear. The overall aim of this report is to contribute such explanations and provide a deeper understanding of the implementation challenges for policy coherence for development in the Swedish context.

More specifically, our ambition is to:

- sort out and discuss dimensions of implementation problems important for policy coherence for development;
- assess the attempts to measure results in the Swedish policy coherence for development;
- illustrate how the Swedish PGD in two different policy areas; migration and development, and higher education and research.

Our analysis focuses on problems of implementation and results measurement. It is not an assessment of the degree to which Swedish policies are coherent with development objectives or not. Such assessments exist, both for Sweden per se (for example by Concord Sweden in 2010, 2012, and 2014), and for global comparison (such as the “commitment to development” index produced by the Centre for Global Development, CDG). And in a global context, Sweden is a high-achiever, ranking as number two on the CGD index (in 2015). But as suggested by the external reviews cited above, this does not mean that policy coherence for development, in Sweden or globally, is without problems. We try to explain why PCD might be difficult to pursue. We approach this from two angles.

Firstly, we present an analytical framework of dimensions important to implementation, drawing extensively on examples from the Swedish PGD. One such dimension is *motivation*. The political

commitment to pursue PCD often lacks sustainability, despite a stated long-term commitment (in terms of goal, and in terms of continuous follow-up), due to conflicting interests and diverging priorities; in addition, disincentives for individual policy areas and for individuals in these areas occur. Another dimension is the *coordination* of the policy, in terms of organization and formal steering. These dimensions influence *cognition*, i.e. how the policy is understood by different actors, and may, if inadequate, blur and reduce a common understanding of the policy's purpose and how it should be pursued; a shortage of such common understanding in turn may aggravate motivation and coordination.

Moreover, an overarching policy to mobilize all actors and all policy areas requires *voluntary* commitment and initiative from these different agents, who are often best suited to identify exactly what they can and should do. How different reasons for voluntary action (strategic motives, delegated tasks, and mere philanthropic concerns) contribute to or hinder (if conditions speak against them) the kind of national responsibility for development that PCD postulates, adds to the picture of how motivation, coordination, and cognitive aspects influence the implementation of the policy.

Secondly, we assess the Swedish PGD in terms of concrete results as they appear in the Government's recurring communications to the Parliament. We make a systematic analysis of the reported activities in these communications, to investigate which activities have and which do not have information on a specified actor, specified funding or specified results. We identify close to 1000 different results in seven different reports in the 2004 to 2014 period. We find that more than two thirds are activities without information on either "actor", in terms of which policy area has been engaged, details on how the activity was funded, or specifics on the output/outcome of the activity. Also, if there is explicit funding, it comes mainly from the aid budget.

Of course, and as we argue, these findings should be treated with caution. The Government's reporting changes in focus and specifics over time, but never claims to be exhaustive of achievements; in later reporting the account of "results" is explicitly a selection (except perhaps for a specific focus area in each report; economic exclusion in the 2012 report and migration in the 2014 version). Moreover, the vagueness in results reported might not be truly problematic for the PGD as such (i.e. the PGD may be doing better than our analysis

indicates). Still, we argue that the picture emerging has implications for the results based management (RBM) approach to the PGD taken early on by the Government, and thus how the policy has been implemented.

We tie these two approaches together, by looking at two areas of relevance to the ambition of the Swedish PGD. One is migration and development, clearly an issue on the current political agenda. The other is higher education and research, which has come to play a more modest role in the PGD context, albeit important from a development perspective. Our aim with these examples is not to assess to what extent Swedish policy is coherent with development in these areas per se, but rather to show the inherent conflict between the overall PCD requirement and changing political ambitions, and thus how implementation problems may arise and how they can be understood.

As indicated above, discussing problems of implementation, weaknesses in results reporting, and challenges for specific policy areas makes our analysis problem oriented. But it may well be that Sweden is doing quite well in terms of PCD, at least in a global comparison (as suggested by the CGD index). So whether PCD in general is a lost cause, or the Swedish PGD is a failure, largely depends on the time frame applied and also on what expectations one may have. It may be that PCD is a very successful instrument to reach development objectives, although evaluated at an early stage. And it may be that the Swedish PGD is already a success, perhaps not fully captured in official documentation, but rather manifested in attitudes and processes beyond the government's formal steering. Our ambition with this report is to contribute to an understanding of implementation challenges, which hopefully may add to (further) successful policy coherence work.

The report is structured as follows. Section two gives a background to our study object, the Swedish PGD. It introduces the concept of policy coherence of development, and gives a brief account of the history of the PGD, how it has been reported on by the Government and assessed by external reviewers. Section three discusses dimensions of PCD in terms of motivation, coordination, and cognitive challenges, as well as the voluntary element required to pursue PCD. Section four sorts out the results of the Swedish PGU as they are presented in the Government's communications to the Parliament, and discusses the RBM model for PCD assessment. Section five applies the analysis to two different cases or policy areas: migration

and development, and higher education and research. Section six, finally, builds on the analysis and concludes the report in three steps: firstly by assessing the role of development cooperation (aid) in the PGD context, secondly by discussing PGD as a process rather than an outcome, and thirdly by making some concrete policy recommendations.

2 The Swedish Policy for Global Development

The Swedish PGD sees development as a concern for Sweden as a whole (*Proposition* 2002/03:122). All policy areas and actors, such as national and local public authorities, civil society, private business and trade unions, should be involved and take responsibility. In addition, it takes a whole-of-government approach, as linkages between different policy areas, and possible conflicts of interests are to be identified and addressed nationally and internationally, in order for Sweden to pursue a coherent political agenda.

The 2003 bill was the result of a parliamentary committee, appointed in 1999 and leading to comprehensive report on global development presented in (SOU 2001:96). The bill defines goals both for Sweden's policy for global development: to contribute to an equitable and sustainable global development, and for development cooperation: to contribute to create conditions for poor people to improve their living. In addition, the rights perspective, based on international human rights conventions, and the perspectives of the poor, are to permeate all parts of the policy.

In addition to these goals, perspectives, and numerous actors and arenas for cooperation, the bill identifies eight so called main features for a fair and sustainable global development (largely capturing previous sub-goals for development cooperation), grouped into three different categories: basic values, including democracy and good governance, respect for human rights, and equality between women and men; sustainable development, including sustainable use of natural resources and the environment, economic growth, and social development and security; and conflict management. An additional category is global public goods. The bill then discusses eleven different Swedish policy areas, in terms of how they may contribute to global development, and how development cooperation may catalyze these areas: legal policy; foreign, security- and defense policy; trade policy; migration policy; policy for social care and public health; economic policy and financial issues; education, research, and youth policy; agriculture, fisheries, and consumer policy; culture and media policy; environment policy; business, employment and transportation policy.

A separate section outlines the basic framework for a twelfth policy area, i.e. Swedish development cooperation.

Development cooperation - aid - has a particular role in the PGD, with a specific goal to “contribute to create conditions for poor people to improve their living conditions” (Communication 2004/05:4:53), or, in a recent re-formulation: “to contribute to improved living conditions for people living in poverty and oppression” (Proposition 2013/14:1, Expenditure area 7:13). Aid is thus a direct tool for development interventions, but is also an area that may inform and motivate other policy areas to consider and engage in development objectives.

Government communications on the PGD

The original 2003 bill on PGD paid limited attention to the implementation of the policy, but advised on the establishment of a unit within the government to coordinate the reporting of the policy to the Parliament and inter-ministerial working groups. Hence, in the first phase of the policy, the government reported on conditions for and achievements of the policy in three annual communications to the parliament: in 2004, 2005, and 2006 (Communication 2004/05:4; Communication 2004/05:161; Communication 2005/06:204). These communications list Swedish positions and activities within each of the twelve policy areas identified in the 2003 bill (including development cooperation), and gradually operationalize the policy further. For example, the 2005 communication identifies and accounts for some 70 specific goals in the different policy areas.

The new conservative/liberal coalition government, which took office in late 2006, announced a re-launch of the Swedish PGD in March 2008 in yet another communication to the Swedish parliament (Communication 2007/08:89). The government signaled a continued commitment to the policy, but called for increased focus and clarification of synergies. Six global challenges were singled out: 1) oppression, 2) economic exclusion, 3) migration flows, 4) climate change and environmental impact, 5) conflicts and fragile situations, and 6) communicable diseases and other health threats. For each of these global challenges, three so called focus areas are identified, i.e.

altogether 18 different areas; this fairly large number of sub-areas counters the ambition of increased focus.²

Since the re-launch, the Government has reported on expected and achieved results biannually in three additional communications to the parliament (Communication 2009/10:129; Communication 2011/12:167; Communication 2013/14:154). In these communications, the Government gradually develops a reporting model, where achievements in different sub-areas are assessed, stating the Government's position in these areas, and also identifying conflicts of interests in certain areas. The latest two reports have, moreover, concentrated on one global challenge each (economic exclusion in the 2012 report, and migration in the 2014 report), where achievements in other policy areas are only briefly summarized.

External assessments

There are conspicuously few external (i.e. beyond the Government itself) assessments or analyses of the Swedish PGD, particularly with respect to implementation aspects and the policy work per se. Hermele (2006) is an unassuming attempt to discuss some of the prerequisites behind the PGD. Flaum (2013) addresses the PGD, but rather as an (untapped) instrument to promote general responsibility for the development of society. The think tank Ecdpm (European Centre for Development Policy Management) in an evaluation of PCD in the EU in 2007 includes a specific report on the Swedish PGD, concluding that despite a commendable approach and some achievements, the policy needs more political support and a systematic and independent monitoring and evaluation mechanism (Ecdpm, 2007).

There are also more official assessments of the Swedish PGD. The OECD/DAC peer review has had the PGD as its point of departure

² For the six global challenges, these focus areas are: 1) freedom of speech; sexual and reproductive health; organized crime and trafficking; 2) financial markets; trade with agricultural products; Swedish trade and investments in developing countries; 3) labor migration to Sweden and the EU; remittances and return of knowledge to developing countries; protection and permanent solutions for refugees; 4) climate: adaption and reduction of emissions; management of chemicals; sustainable urban development, 5) security sector reform; women, peace and security; from conflict to long-term sustainable development; 6) sustainable health systems and increased access to medication; early warning and rapid mitigation; health promotion and disease prevention.

for recurring peer-reviews of Swedish aid (OECD, 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015). When these peer-reviews are compared with other member countries' coherency work, Sweden is often high-lighted as a high-achiever in terms of political commitment and policy coordination mechanisms (for example OECD, 2009). Still, in its summary of the 2015 peer-review, the OECD/DAC concludes that the "2013 DAC peer review urged the Swedish Government to consolidate policies on development, to improve transparency around work on policy coherence for development (PCD), and to provide a clear hierarchy of policies", while also commending the new (i.e. 2014) aid policy framework establishing "a legislative basis for Sweden's work on policy coherence for development" (OECD/DAC 2016; 1-2). Another more official assessment is *Statskontoret's* review, mentioned in the introduction, which calls for stronger political commitment, clarifications in various respects, more visibility of the policy, and better monitoring and assessment of coherency for development (*Statskontoret*, 2014).

There seems to be more work done on the extent to which Swedish policies actually cohere with development objectives in various concrete policy areas (not so surprisingly, perhaps: concrete policies are the proof of the pudding, in the end). Since 2006, the PGD has been monitored by the civil society confederation, the Swedish Concord, in bi-annual reports (in parallel to the reporting on European coherence/incoherence by the European NGO confederation Concord).³ The reports highlight areas where there is need for more coherency to development objectives, and criticizes Swedish political positions in specific areas.⁴ An example is how the Government has acted *against* the objectives of the PGD in the area of Swedish arms transfers according to the report (Concord Sweden, 2014; 17). Also international assessments of PCD deal with Swedish achievements or short-comings in specific areas. We will make use of some these issues as examples later on, but, again, our interest in this study is the implementation of the policy work per se, rather than the resulting (in)coherencies in specific policy areas.

³ <http://www.concord.se/material/rapporter/barometern-rapporter-om-sveriges-samstammighetspolitik/> and <http://www.concordeurope.org/coherent-policies>

⁴ For example, Concord Sweden (2014) addresses climate policy, capital flight and tax policy, foreign trade, arms transfers, migration, and the private sector and human rights.

3 Dimensions of PGD implementation

The concept of policy coherence for development (PCD) originates in the debates on increasing global challenges and growing concerns about the effectiveness of aid in the early 1990s. Before presenting our analytical framework, we give a brief introduction to the concept and various ways to define and categorize the phenomenon in political contexts and in the academic literature.

The OECD/DAC coined the term around 1991; the EU Maastricht Treaty in 1992 stated that the community should take account of its development cooperation objectives; the Lisbon Treaty (signed in 2005 and entering into force in 2009) reconfirmed the approach (in Article 208).

Today, most of the 29 members of OECD/DAC do commit to coherent policies for development, although the degree of commitment varies (EU, 2015). Importantly, PCD has had its historical precursors in earlier attempts to integrate various objectives into development policy through ideas of “comprehensive planning” (1960s), “integrative development” (1970s). Commonalities could also be found in the conceptual understanding of the structural adjustment programs (1980s) and the political reforms program (1990s; Hydén, 1999).

Policy Coherence as such is not a univocal concept by definition but includes shades like coherent policy-making, policy coordination, policy integration, holistic government, and whole-of-government (WoG) policymaking. The most commonly used definition of policy coherence *for development* is maybe that of the OECD-DAC: “Policy coherence means different policy communities working together in ways that result in more powerful tools and products for all concerned. It means looking for synergies and complementarities and filling gaps among different policy areas so as to meet common and shared objectives” (OECD, 2012:3).

PCD is the topic for a literature seeking to define and categorize the concept (see for example Sianes, 2013; Picciotto, 2005; Hoebink, 2004; Forster and Stokke, 1999). One issue is *the geopolitical* framing, where policy coherence has often been an in-state matter, although increased international cooperation, such as in the EU, blurs the distinction between internal and external policies (Carbone, 2008).

Moreover, the aim with PCD, as di Francesco points out, may either be the “absence of incoherencies between policy areas or the interaction between policy areas to achieve overriding objectives”; importantly, he also stresses how the PCD may be seen either as *an outcome* or *a process* (di Francesco, 2001). This is an aspect we will come back to.

Various typologies of PCD have also been presented. One is to distinguish between; i) horizontal coherence - ensuring that policy areas align with each other and minimize inconsistencies in the case of conflicting objectives, ii) vertical coherence - ensuring the same approach across spatial and jurisdictional levels of governments, iii) temporal coherence - ensuring that current policies continue to be effective even in their future deployment, iv) organizational coherence - ensuring the coordination between organizations involved in policy deployment and v) institutional coherence – ensuring synergy and the minimization of conflicts among the various formal and informal rules adopted by the various organizations (Hill and Smith, 2011).

Another slightly different typology is the OECD framework which distinguishes between i) internal coherence (within development policy); ii) intra-governmental coherence (between different policy areas); iii) inter-governmental coherence (across different countries’ different policy areas to contribute to development objectives); iv) multilateral coherence (across policies and actions of donors, multilateral organizations and other sectors), and v) developing country coherence (so that policies in these countries allow them to take full advantage of the international climate for their economic and social well-being; OECD, 2012).

Apart from these attempts to define and categorize the concept, the idea of PCD as such requires some challenge: What do we mean by PCD? Is it realistic? Is it always desired? Several scholars point out that perfect coherence is an unrealistic goal in a pluralistic society, but that identifying and handling conflicts of interests between policy areas is necessary nonetheless (Carbone, 2008; Hoebink, 1999, 2004). Moreover, the international policy framework is constantly moving; thus defining the central issues of policy coherence of what, by whom and for what requires continuous attention to be relevant. Policy coherence “in the abstract” is not useful (Winters, 2002).

Still, policy coherence for development is often an imperative: all countries and all policy areas *should* contribute to global development

in a coherent way. The ambition often conflicts with other, more immediate national and sector interests, making political commitment to PCD difficult to maintain. In this study we don't problematize the PCD concept as such; we take the imperative as a given, and ask why the Swedish version, the PGD, meets with implementation problems.

Our approach, in this section, is to look deeper into different institutional features determining the functioning of the policy; we thus apply yet another way to sort the phenomenon, by framing the problems into the categories of *motivation*, *coordination* and *cognition*. The theoretical base for these categories is new institutional economics, which captures features of formal and informal rules (institutions) that foster behaviour (Scott, 2013). Motivation (relating to agency theory and theories of property rights) and coordination (analyzing centralized or decentralized solutions for an organization) are central concepts in this school of thought (Milgrom and Roberts, 1992). North (2006) emphasizes belief systems (among individuals or in the society as a whole) as important for changing institutions and societies. Related to these cognitional elements are new developments in behavioural economics and neuro-economics (Thaler and Mullainathan, 2008).

Incidentally (or not), these categories resemble the three “types of mechanisms” or the “building blocks for policy coherence” (Ecdpm and ICEI, 2005; OECD, 2009), which also the Swedish government has applied in recent years: i) policy design and execution, ii) coordination and interaction, and iii) knowledge and analysis. These building blocks are used to assess how far countries have reached in their PCD work (e.g. how articulate a country's policy statements on PCD are, how well a specific country coordinates its PCD work, or whether there are mechanisms for monitoring, analysis and reporting), but they do not address *why* features of these desirable building blocks may not always materialize.

Motivation

Policy coherence (for development) is politics: the political community has agreed on the necessity of coherence because it (supposedly) brings enhanced efficiency and because it corresponds to values (believed to be) important to its constituency. What motivates – and what discourages – this engagement?

A recurring and fundamental problem in assessments of policy coherence for development is the general *lack of political commitment* (Ecdpm, 2007; Carbone, 2008; Galezzi *et al*, 2013, Concord, 2013). *Statskontoret* (2014) voices this critique for the Swedish PGD. Their recommendation is that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as the central coordinator of the policy, should push for better interaction with other policy areas, and make better use of specific political processes.

There are several reasons for failing political commitment (Ashoff, 2005). Firstly and perhaps most obviously, there are *conflicts of interests in specific political areas* (e.g. protection of domestic agricultural production against poor countries' need to access global food markets). Conflicting interests may originate in truly conflicting interests (perhaps even legitimate, in the sense that one interests stands against another, and it's truly difficult to choose between them), but the conflict of interests may also originate in a complicated political decision making process (e.g. interest groups may put pressure on politicians, while decentralization further complicates consistent decision making). Similarly, true commitment to international development varies between politicians, political parties, and countries; politicians, perhaps, do not really care (Kapstein, 2004).

In addition, problems arise when there are conflicting norms on what is best for development. Politicians who take different positions on an issue may all be concerned with developing countries' prospects but the result may be contrasting views on how the international community should react. If there is disagreement on what position to take, it is difficult to cohere. An example is debt relief, which on the one hand is seen to reallocate developing countries' fiscal resources from (unproductive) debt repayments, to more productive local investments, on the other hand, may encourage countries to take on even more debt, and shrink financial flows to if lenders fear that financial claims eventually risk being challenged. These two positions are both concerned with developing countries' public finances and economic prosperity, but result in contrasting views on how the international community should react (Barry, King and Matthews, 2010).

The importance of identifying and addressing conflicts of interests was part of the Swedish 2003 bill on PGD (Proposition 2002/03:122:31). The two most recent results communications discuss conflicts of interest thoroughly in the areas of economic exclusion and migration

respectively. The discussion is however related to global challenges and resistance, which Swedish policies and positions, according to the communications, strive to counter. Although there is mention of conflicting interests within Swedish policy-making in some cases (for example on remittances), it takes an external party to highlight other potentially sensitive issues for the Swedish government, where there are tensions on positions domestically (Concord Sweden, for example, mentions the ILO Convention 97, ratified by some 50 countries, but not by Sweden; Concord Sweden, 2014: 23).

It is not surprising that the Government plays down these domestic conflicting interests in their reporting. The communications conveys the Government's ambition for the PGD, while also seeking legitimacy for the approach. Thus, it has little interest in producing a complicated message of trade-offs and failed results. But the consequence may be that the communications, and thus the political commitment to the policy, are perceived as lame, given that they do not reflect real dilemmas and trade-offs.

From a more practical perspective, the *individual incentives* for actors expected to engage in the realization of the policy (politicians, civil servants, and also the civil society as a whole) may also cause problems. Serving different stakeholders in order to get reelected makes politicians at times motivated to promote interests conflicting with development objectives. And if politicians refrain from signaling a PCD *priority*, civil servants have limited reason to engage. Their action may also depend on how it fits with other duties and their individual incentives to perform at work (remuneration, recognition, and career opportunities).

A related aspect is to what extent PGD work is allocated *specific resources*. The PCD literature is rather quiet on the issue of resources for PCD implementation. Costs of PCD are discussed on a more elevated level: incoherent policies are costly to developing countries, since they constitute an obstacle to development, hindering growth and generation of resources, while causing various kinds of problems (in terms of bad health, lack of employment, poor environments, and poverty etc) for the individual.

At the same time, there are *direct costs* for parties involved in pursuing policy coherence. Coherence work may be financed either by reallocation of policy areas' own funds or by additional funding. But agencies or ministries need explicit formal instructions to prioritize

coherence work, if they are to spend own resources. If not, there is a risk that PCD is down-prioritized, compared to the agency's core tasks.

The Swedish 2003 policy on PGD as well as the 2008 version declare that no additional funds are to be allocated for implementing the policy: any required resources should be made available through reallocations (Proposition 2002/03:122: 33; Communication 2007/08:89: 51). *Statskontoret* (2014: 34) notes that a presumption in several of the ministries and public agencies is that PGD activities should be funded by aid.

This presumption is nourished by the fact that Sida (the Swedish aid agency) indeed engages various actors (e.g. other Swedish public agencies) as implementers and experts in aid interventions. In addition, Sida has specific funds for so called 'partner driven collaboration', where the ambition is to connect actors in Sweden and in developing countries with a mutual interest to interact (such as public agencies, municipalities, civil society, trade organizations, and universities); Sida also funds business collaborations to promote private sector development and make use of the business community in development efforts (Sida, 2014b).

These activities are linked to the PGD and probably contribute to insights of development in general and of various links between different policy areas, and are thus motivating agents to pursue policy coherence for development. But they also contribute to the notion that anything to do with global development or developing countries should be backed with aid funding, and may discourage unfunded activities promoting policy coherence. As we will see later on, the assumption that aid should fund PGD activities is manifested also in the reporting of the PGD in the Government's results communications.

Coordination

Policy coherence is the task of identifying and organizing a large number of actors, issues, and interests into a coherent framework. This implies challenging coordination of a complex decision process, especially in the absence of a strong center (Forster and Stokke, 1999; Carbone, 2008). In Sweden, the Parliament, and the Government with all its different ministries, do not constitute a homogenous entity for

the PGD with a clear center. Moreover, coalition governments have become standard in recent election periods: the final position on a specific policy is often the result of negotiating exercise between the coalition's different political parties.⁵ All this makes coordination complicated.

According to the 2003 bill, the *organization* required for the implementation of the PGD was a latter consideration: the policy must be known, and development understood by all parts of the Government; efficient results management is the responsibility of the entire Government, says the bill. Nevertheless, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) was assigned the coordination task in the original PGD, and has maintained the responsibility for reporting, promoting, and renewing the policy.⁶

Possibly up until the recent re-launch (in the making), this engagement from the MFA appears to have dwindled, at least judging from how the work has been staffed. At the start, a top civil servant at the MFA (the *Utrikesråd*) was assigned to lead the work, and some 60 employees at a specific department at the MFA had tasks partly related to the PGD. In latter years, one officer in the MFA is responsible both for the coordination of other responsible officers ('focal points') in various ministries, as well as for the Government's reporting on the policy to the parliament; moreover, these 'focal points' are mostly assigned their PGD-task in addition to other duties (*Statskontoret*, 2014: xx). One could argue that this reduction in staff resources assigned for the PGD is a reflection of the policy permeating the whole of the Government anymore, so that specific staff for the task of pursuing PGD is no longer necessary, but this argument does not seem vindicated; the down-sizing at the MFA rather appears to reflect a de-facto down-prioritization of the PGD over the period.

The *complexity* of a wide-grasping policy such as the PGD also aggravates coordination. The general formulations on a vast sphere of political areas, made the parliament call for more operationalized goals

⁵ At the so called Statsrådsberedningen; for a personal account of how this coordination office (Samordningskansli) played out during the recent conservative coalition government, see <http://www.ekonomism.us/entry/finns-samordningskansliet-egentligen> by Mattias Lundbäck.

⁶ The Ministry was also later explicitly assigned the responsibility of coordinating the policy, in accordance with a clarifying request by the parliament in its formal response to the bill (*Utrikesutskottets betänkande 2003/04:UU3*).

(*Utrikesutskottets betänkande* 2003/04:UU3: 178). The response materialized as 70 different goals formulated in the 2005 communication. The concentration to six global challenges and a limited number of focus areas in the 2008 version of the PGD, was also partly a way to improve steering. However, the cross-sectorial quality of these challenges makes it difficult for the ministries to know whether they are to be guided by the overarching goal for the PGD, a specific challenge, or by one particular focus area (*Statskontoret*, 2014: 30-38).

Moreover, the Government's *formal steering* of public agencies in their PGD work is weak. Out of 16 public agencies deemed to have a particular interest in PGD issues, only five had a formal instruction to contribute to the PGD in 2011, according to an internal government report referred to in *Statskontoret* (2014). This had, however, increased to 12 of these 16 agencies by 2014, although several of the agencies involved in PGD related activities complained about lack of feedback and other signals relating to the PGD from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Statskontoret*, 2014). Similarly, there is no explicit instruction to Swedish embassies to take responsibility for or consider the PGD (*Svensk Författningssamling* 2014:115).

The difficulties for steering a general and overarching policy are not unique to the PGD. In the Swedish context, the problems of so called "general requirements", i.e. policies and issues which all government bodies should consider and apply, were explored in a study commissioned by the Swedish government already in 2002; these "requirements" referred to overarching policies in twelve different areas, including the PGD (*Ekonomistyrningsverket*, 2003). The study concludes that the number of requirements is a problem, that the implications for different policy areas must be clarified, and that there is need for more coordination and more evaluation.⁷

Yet, it is not evident that more formal instructions on PGD work would do the trick. Ashoff underlines the limited importance of formal responsibilities for policy coherence for development in an overview of coherence work in the Netherlands, in the UK - and in Sweden (Ashoff, 2005). Instead, political leadership, the cabinet rank

⁷ General requirements are identified in the areas of children's perspective, youth policy, public health, national security, disability issues, long-term aspects on environment and sustainability, environmental issues, integration policy and human rights, gender equality, regional development, financial crime, and the PGD (*Ekonomistyrningsverket*, 2003).

of development policy, and thorough analysis and documentation of strategic objectives for coherence are important features. The relative success of these countries' coherence work also depends on a general understanding of development policy's role, inter-departmental networking and joint analysis of coherence (especially at desk-officer level), intensive analytical and information work, and the proactive work of the ministries for development. Put simply, there is a strong cognitive element in pursuing policy coherence for development.

Cognition

Policy coherence builds on the idea that separate policy areas move in the same direction. This requires a *common understanding* on what policy coherence, in general and for specific fields, means. Indeed, one can argue that PCD in itself is a 'tool to better understand' complex and interconnected global challenges, as does the OECD (2014:3).

The extensive consultative process behind the Swedish 2003 bill (the parliamentary committee preparing for the bill and the work on the bill itself) was no doubt an element in such cognitive process. It established a shared view, among Swedish stakeholders, that development in poor countries was not only an aid issue, but also related to global processes, to political decisions in a large number of policy areas, and to all parts of society taking development effects into account.

The 2003 bill emphasizes the importance of analysis and knowledge for identifying and realizing potential synergies between different policy areas. It discusses how to enhance learning in the ministries and public agencies, and stresses the importance of internationally linked analysis of development and global challenges (Proposition 2002/03:122: 81-83).

Knowledge, analysis, and learning are elements also in the 2008 re-launch of the policy, but now there is more emphasis on results orientation, increased steering, and continuous monitoring (Communication 2007/08:89: 50-55). By this time there was more trust in formal systems to enhance the impact of the policy, partly to do with an increased emphasis on results based management (which came with the new conservative government's take on aid). But it also reflects a lack of interest in the PGD among stakeholders and policy areas, which the Government recognized and tried to counter with

more results reporting and formalized steering (Communication 2007/08:89: 5-8).

The Government had a point. A common understanding implies agreement on objectives, approaches, and results of policy coherence, and for this there is need for adequate measurement. But policy coherence is difficult to measure and assess (which we come back to in section 4).

A somewhat different approach to communicating results and achievements is made in the 2012 and 2014 communications. They focus on one specific “global challenge” each (economic exclusion in 2012 and migration in 2014). Potentially, this more issue-centered approach opens for a closer dialogue with stakeholders. The story told is often that of good benevolent Sweden trying to advocate development interests to a less inclined world (the EU and the OECD). Still, it’s possible that the attempts to systematically assess a number of areas and openly bring up at least some conflicting interests, may produce a more common understanding of what a policy for global development is and could be.

The 2014 communication follows up on the previous report’s focus on economic exclusion, with a discussion on government positions and activities in areas raised by the report and a subsequent seminar (Communication 2013/14:154: 7-12). However, it takes some cross-readings with civil society’s scrutiny of the PGD, to grasp governmental achievements and shortcomings also in this particular domain. For example, the Government claims a positive view on so called country-by-country reporting for multinational enterprises, i.e. the requirement to report financially on a country level rather than globally, thus potentially disclosing tax evasion and illicit financial flows. The Government refers to ongoing processes in the OECD, but the civil society voices quite severe critique against the Government for not having strongly enough advocated country-by-country reporting or so called beneficial ownership registers in the EU (Communication 2013/14:154: 8; Concord Sweden, 2014:10).

The Government’s communications on the PGD have a double function. They report on performance in the framework of policy coherence and global development. But they also carry visionary political statements. As such they carry a tendency to overemphasize achievements and downplay true incoherencies also in the Swedish context. This may hinder a common understanding of real obstacles to

development, globally and in poor countries. But such common understanding is central for actors (in policy areas and others) to draw conclusions on what policy coherence for development means in their particular area of responsibility. PCD builds partly on such voluntary recognition, in the spirit of the policy but beyond what is indicated in official policy documents.

Voluntary responsibility

The PGD is a formal instruction from the Swedish parliament to different policy areas and actors to take responsibility. At times, the instruction is fairly specific (stating for example that Sweden should work for abandonment of export subsidies in WTO negotiations, or that international peace keeping should become a main task for the Swedish defense). But at times it is quite difficult to fully regulate, monitor and enforce all policy areas and actors (so that they include development aspects in all their different activities). Thus, the policy is also a call for voluntary contributions.

In this respect, PCD could be seen as a mechanism to produce a specific *public good*: a fair and peaceful world without poverty. This engages a large number of policy areas and other actors, who identify and pursue development coherent activities.⁸ Typical for public goods is that they are non-excludable and non-rivalrous in consumption, which makes them difficult to regulate.⁹ A peaceful world may be enjoyed by anyone, regardless of his or her contribution to peace. This creates a problem of free-riding, i.e. some may not contribute to the production of the good, although they may consume it, and consequently the good may not be produced in sufficient quantities. So, why would different policy areas engage in PCD, if they, for reasons touched upon above, perceive it as something peripheral to their core mission?

‘Policy area’, in this context, should be read in broad terms, referring both to an individual ministry and to public agencies, as well

⁸ Regulation fails either because governments are not motivated to make socially responsible decisions (captured, perhaps, by various interest groups), or by a shortage of information or other inefficiencies (making it difficult or costly to specify the adequate regulation), or by territorial constraints (Benabou and Tirole, 2010).

⁹ Nobody can effectively be excluded from consumption of the good once it exists, and its availability is not affected by consumption; for example, if the air is fresh, it’s fresh for everyone - in a specific geographic area.

as other national (and international) stakeholders. Moreover, a policy area, of course, is a number of individuals, people, who are employed or engaged in a specific area. A policy area engaging in PCD, is thus the people working in that area who individually and/or jointly deciding to act. In addition, the demarcation of voluntarism is rather fluid. Adhering to development objectives may be an official instruction (as in the Swedish case, which is based on the parliamentary decision and a joint national responsibility), but the adherence might still be more or less strongly advocated and assessed, and leave room for voluntary engagement (or not) by a specific policy area.

There are at least three separate reasons for voluntary engagement in policy coherence for development.¹⁰ The first is when responsibility is a response to a demand: when somebody is *delegating philanthropic ambitions* to the policy area. The second is when responsibility is *strategically beneficial* for a policy area. The third is when responsibility occurs because the policy area has a self-generated, intrinsic interest in *philanthropy*, i.e. a need to pursue responsible policies or actions by taking into consideration development objectives, despite it not being a (perceived) core task for the policy area.

First, policy areas' voluntary engagement in PCD may be a rational response to a demand for responsibility. Stakeholders may *delegate philanthropy* because some specific policy area is best positioned (in terms of information or ability) to promote certain development objectives. It may not be enough to have a specific policy area (foreign aid) dealing with certain issues; other policy areas can do things which aid (charity) cannot achieve

Indeed, policy areas engage in development efforts in a rational response to a demand for their services, bringing them a financial gain. For example, the Swedish aid agency Sida allocates some 500 million Swedish kronor (roughly three percent of total aid disbursed by Sida) to other Swedish agencies for development work (Sida, 2014; 137). Swedish public agencies are thus engaged as experts in development projects on taxation, statistics, cadastral surveying, trade issues etc.

¹⁰ This is in analogy with the reasons for corporate social responsibility (CSR) discussed by Benabou and Tirole (2010), where CSR is also viewed as a public good, difficult to regulate in sufficient quantities.

To claim this delegated task as an expression of “voluntarism” is perhaps misleading; the specific policy area is simply expanding their activities in response to demand. In that sense the voluntarism is rather ideas on concrete ways to perform the task. But there is also a more subtle delegation of global responsibility to policy areas, in situations where, for example, the public (voters, or the Government in a visionary policy such as the PGD) expects coherence for development in various ministries and agencies. Engaging in development might benefit a policy areas’ image. For example the Ministry of Defense, may gain politically and in public esteem by recognizing linkages between defense policy and global challenges, thus abandoning military exports to undemocratic states.

Second, engaging in PCD could be *strategic* and a way to overcome a short-sightedness in a policy areas’ position on a particular issue. If actors in a specific policy area take into consideration how their activities and decisions affect global development, they might realize that a narrow view speaks in favor of one decision, benefitting the policy area in the short-run, but a broader, more long-term and development oriented stand, may pay off in the longer run, also for the policy area itself.

Of course, in many areas, such long-term development oriented strategic considerations are difficult to fully accomplish. The example above of country-by-country reporting to combat tax evasion and potentially illicit financial flows is one illustration. The importance is recognized widely (for example AU/ECA, 2015; 81). Yet there is a lot of variation in how well OECD countries are doing (OECD, 2014; 28). The explicit response to a question in the Swedish parliament on this issue, from the then Minister of Finance, was to argue for more analysis that takes into consideration ‘different stakeholders views and the international development’ before further advocating the issue in the EU (Sveriges Riksdag, 2014). This ambivalence and reference to stakeholders is arguably a reflection of short-sighted domestic interests influencing the (lack of) political drive for increased transparency. A more long-term view would be to push for more transparency and country-by-country reporting; this would potentially might bring more taxation to Sweden, in addition to improved taxation in developing countries which opens for alternative use of (Swedish) development funds, and also potentially improving the investment climate in these countries (good also for Swedish interests). If Swedish politicians would realize these benefits, Sweden

might volunteer to push for more transparency in multi-national companies' financial reporting.

Another example is arms transfers. Despite stated adherence to the Swedish PGD, and to other international codes of conduct (for example, Sweden's ratification of the ATT, Arms Trade Treaty, and the EU positions on arms transfers incorporated into Swedish law) Swedish arms exports have tripled during the past ten years, with one third going to non-democratic states, and the share of weapons to countries in armed conflict increasing from 2.8 percent in year 2000, to 37.2 percent in 2012 (Concord Sweden, 2014; 18). The situation reflects the dilemma for Sweden with an interest in domestic military production, in case of a military crisis, but also driven by a need to protect local employment and promote regional development. This leads to exports of military equipment to potentially destabilizing powers, a short-sightedness in conflict with a more long-term strategic interest for Sweden to curb weapons floating around in politically unstable (and often poor) countries, with a highly destructive potential. Stronger adherence to the PGD/PCD in the Swedish Ministry for Defense may thus conceivably be a tool to move the policy in the area of defense closer to domestic long-term interests in peace and stability.

Third, responsibility may also be spurred a *philanthropic drive* among the various policy areas, going beyond what is perceived as the central task of the policy area. This explanation builds on various psychological and behavioral motives. People in politics, in ministries, and agencies – and others - try to do good because of altruism and self-esteem (i.e. doing good in your own eyes) and because of social esteem (i.e. reputation: doing good in the eyes of others, which may or may not originate in a self-interest).¹¹

In this, there is an element of a 'warm glow', arguably very important in any political engagement, at least any political engagement depending on voter approval, regardless of what 'doing good' exactly is. Governments (politicians) want to do good (i.e. promote coherence policies for development) both because they genuinely feel it's the right thing to do, and because it gives them a reputation of responsibility (and possibly re-election).

¹¹ See Andreoni (2015) for an overview.

These three aspects of motivation for voluntary responsibility may be difficult to distinguish. What is at one point in time perceived as philanthropy may at another point in time be understood as a long-term investment (for development). Policy areas may first engage in development because they are asked to do so (delegated a task) by the development agency (or the Ministry for Development). For example, technical expertise is sought from a specific public agency in a specific international negotiation. Through this experience, the agency and the policy area may eventually include global perspectives as a core mission.

A common understanding?

These intrinsic motives to act for the benefit of global development (either because the policy area is asked to, or because it realizes the strategic benefit of the engagement, or because it just seems like a good idea to contribute capacity and knowledge) resonate with the overriding policy objective of PCD as everybody's responsibility.

It is not self-evident, however, that this virtuous circle of engagement for development will happen, even though there is a growing understanding of how global forces could be tackled by responsibility and altruism. There are risks in the process. One is that multiple objectives may blur management accountability and performance criteria for a policy area. Although the Government in principle is one unity, different policy areas and public agencies report back to different parts of the Government, and the perception of to what degree coherence with development objectives applies to a particular policy area might differ within the Government.

Moreover, interest in coherency differs. The more interdependent and complex the issue, for example in the cases of climate change or migration flows, the more obvious, perhaps, is the need for coherency with (sustainable) development objectives. Other areas might be viewed as strictly domestic concerns. The arms production, despite its complications, may be an example in the Swedish context, where this production is viewed as necessary for domestic security and employment, regardless of development impacts (although this view appears increasingly challenged: current Swedish military export priorities are questioned with reference to human rights and global security; e.g. Büser et al, 2015).

In some cases, the lack of interest is of a cognitive kind, which can be countered by a more long-term, global analysis. In other cases the preference for the domestic (short-term) priorities is more conscious, reflecting true conflicts of interests. There is a risk that the warm glow radiating from the virtuous acts of global responsibility turns cold in hard times, when there are strains on the domestic economy, when public opinion pushes for other priorities, and the perception is that there is little room to look ahead, and be wise and generous.

To counter narrow, self-interested priorities in a policy area, recognition from the center (of the policy area) is important. If global responsibility remains a side-show, it will never have full impact. Again, we come back to the need for political commitment to pursue PCD. Without a continuous reference to the importance of the policy at a central level, it is difficult to adhere to the ambitions.

Motivation, coordination, and importantly cognition are in play for PCD also if the policy rests on voluntary initiatives to cohere and take responsibility: What is at one point in time perceived as a rather independent and straight forward domestic interest may at another point in time be seen as a complicated global concern. The understanding of what policy coherence for development is and means influences political stands, organization of work, and engagement from different policy areas and actors.

4 The Swedish PGD and results based management

We turn now to a more systematic assessment of the Swedish PGD as it is presented in the Government's reporting. Although no operational measures were put forth, the importance of effective management by results in accordance with results based management (RBM) was emphasized already when the policy was launched in 2003. The bill states that “[c]ontinuous control will be exercised through appropriation instruments, cooperation plans and dialogue” and that “[r]esults-based management calls for precisely-defined objectives and description and analysis of the effects of the measures that are taken, for example in relation to the internationally agreed development goals”, and also that “[e]valuation is a central element of goal-based and results-based management” (Proposition 2002/03:122: 78-79).

The reference to RBM for monitoring the PGD has remained throughout the policy's existence and possibly been reinforced by an increased application of so-called New Public Management methods in international development cooperation (Vähämäki *et al* 2011; Bourguignon and Sundberg, 2007; Rakar, 2007). The Swedish parliament has also repeatedly emphasized the need to advance results management for the PGD (see for example *Utrikesutskottets betänkande* 2013/14:UU12: 9).

The Government's results communications to the Parliament constitute the principal instrument for mediating results and progress of the policy. They also communicate the Government's ambitions, for example in the re-launch of the policy in 2008: “Many of the challenges facing the world now, over four years later, are more apparent and more urgent than ever” [...] “The need for coherence and cooperation across policy areas to deal with these common challenges has never been greater. Yet the policy has thus far not lived up to expectations.” (Communication 2007/08: 89:5).

The Government has obviously worried about weak performance of the policy: “In the absence of proper goals and targets for policy implementation, it has not, for example, been possible to follow the way in which knowledge and awareness of the policy for global development has developed. [...] On the basis of the performance

and outcome evaluation of last year and previous years, the Government concludes that policy implementation – and thus the results available for reporting – has been hampered partly by the large number of objectives (65) and partly by the fact that some of these lack relevance and/or are inadequate as policy instruments.” (Communication 2007/08:89:65-66).

The Government’s response has been a higher level of concentration to fewer policy areas, deemed as central global challenges where Sweden has a potential to contribute, and also in order to “identify objectives that can be followed up” (Communication 2007/08:89:2). In the 2010 communication, the OECD (2009) model of “building blocks” is applied on focus areas, categorizing achievements according to i) policy design and execution, ii) coordination and interaction, and iii) knowledge and analysis. The achievements are graded as to whether the Government in each area has reached *far*, *relatively far*, or if there are *some deficiencies*. The aim is to create a base line and identify areas in need of improvement, but also to assess change over time by returning to these criteria in forthcoming communications.

Results in the Swedish PGD reporting

Has the results-oriented perspective, displayed in the results communications, been a useful approach for monitoring the Swedish PGD? To test this we have designed a screening instrument by which we examine the way results have been conveyed over time in these results communications. The rationale for focusing on the results communications is the function and value these documents are ascribed by the Government and the relative absence of other types of formal references dealing with the implementation of the policy.¹² They also express the Government’s view and approach to the PGD at a given moment, and as such they may be viewed as a temporal fixation of meaning, content - and results - allowing for comparative analysis over time.

¹² Since there are explicit documentary sources available in the form of the results communications, the Swedish PGD provides an advantageous opportunity to practice the “outside” approach, which rely on documentary sources rather than narratives from informants working with the policy – the “inside” approach (Humes, 1996)

In constructing the screening instrument we have focused on what in the context of policy coherence analysis is termed the *outcome level* (i.e. the achievements of coherent policy work; di Franscesco, 2001). The Swedish PGD holds relatively favorable conditions for applying an outcome level approach, because it presents a clear starting point, containing both policy guidelines and a status report, that could be seen as a baseline, followed by periodic reporting of results in the form of the results communications.

RBM is a broad concept. Our approach to measure the quality of results reporting is guided by some basic characteristics of RBM: i) the need to identify clear and measurable results, i.e. what a project aims to achieve, defined at ‘output’, ‘outcome’, and ‘impact’ levels; ii) a selection of indicators to measure progress for these levels; iii) setting targets for each indicator; iv) develop systems to assemble and compare data; and v) base decisions on this performance information.

The instrument builds on three variables believed to be basic to any kind of policy result reporting:

1. *Actor*; i.e. who - what policy area - has initiated and carried out a specific action in line with the objective of the policy? A policy area is here intimately linked to a ministry or government agency. In principle, a policy area could include activities from a broad range of ministries and government agencies that do not belong to the core group of actors in a specific policy field. For example, activities aimed at combating corruption concern not only juridical issues (Ministry of Justice and subordinated agencies), but could also involve issues of finance, foreign policy, trade and aid – which fall within the remit of other ministries and their subordinated agencies. The same pattern applies to most other policy areas, such as migration, education, agriculture, climate and environment, health, etc. The distinction is important, because it exposes questions of ownership and operation, as well as the proliferation of the policy to policy areas other than development aid.
2. *Source*; i.e. which policy area’s funds/resources are used for the reported activities in relation to the policy? The variable is central, because of the intimate relation between activity and resources in the PGD. The variable could be regarded as linked to the *actor* variable previously described, but because policy areas sometimes carry out activities with funds/resources from other policy areas, we draw a distinction between them. In this case, it is particularly

interesting, since it may reveal the magnitude of development aid funds used as resources for implementation of the policy.

3. *Outcome/output*; i.e. what is reported as an outcome/output of an activity? In line with the principles of results reporting stated in the Swedish PGD, we have deliberately used established terms for results reporting applied in RBM. *Output* refers to specific goods and services produced by a specific activity/intervention (UN, 2012). It can also represent changes in skills or abilities or the capacities of individuals or institutions that result from the completion of activities within a development intervention under the control of the organization (OECD, 2001.). *Outcome* describes the intended changes in development conditions/institutional performance resulting from an activity/intervention.

Reviewing the quality of results reporting by trying to sort ‘valid’ results from ‘less valid’ or ‘invalid’ results in documents aimed specifically at mediating results is, of course, a challenge. To avoid the risk of getting enmeshed in a web of subjective multilayer categorizations, the selection criterion used could only result in two types: valid or invalid as *output/outcome*. To qualify as a valid *output/outcome* in accordance with the RBM principles, the results reporting must describe some kind of effect linked to a specific activity that directly or indirectly responds to the principles of the policy. Consequently, a reported commitment to an activity is not a result, but only provides the condition for different *outputs/outcomes* to materialize. For example, support for an organization could not by itself be considered an *output/outcome* –only the reported effect (any kind of developmental/institutional changes in line with the objectives of the policy) resulting from that support. The principal rationale behind this seemingly strict division of validity is that we are interested in displaying the qualitative progress of the results reporting as we move along the time line of policy implementation.

We apply these variables to three different types of activities found most frequently in the results communications, which we label 1) *action* (a specific action, which directly or indirectly has bearing on the objective of the policy; for example, when the Ministry of Finance takes an initiative to construct a website to improve the overview of transfer costs for remittances); 2) *policy* (a reported activity intended to produce or influence policy processes aimed at improving coherence and/or contribute to poverty reduction; for example, the Government endorses UN conventions to fight corruption); 3)

participation (activities where representatives of policy areas participate in various international initiatives on coherence and/or poverty reduction (e.g. in the UN or the EU)).

This categorization exercise gives rise to a potentially complex matrix. We concentrate on a limited number of categories for each type of activity: *actors* are either development actors (the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish aid agency, Sida etc) or non-development actors (other ministries or public agencies etc); *sources* are either aid money or not, and specific *outcomes* are either reported (for example a new formulation in the EU policy on fisheries) or non-specified. Each reported result in each communication is thus identified and categorized. As it turns out, any one of these activities falls into one of ten categories for each activity; for example, a specific *action* can be pursued by a non-development *actor* (e.g. a public agency), funded by non-development *sources* (i.e. the specific non-development policy area's own resources), and produce a non-specified *outcome*.¹³

From the RBM perspective, the best scenario is arguably one where it is possible to discern the specific actor (which policy area), the specific source of funding (from which policy area) and the specific output/outcome(s) from a reported activity. The opposite is one where none of these variables are discernible in relation to a reported activity.

The screening of the communications for the purpose of this categorization of course involves interpretational subjectivity. Still, the mechanism provides a level of precision adequate for displaying patterns of reporting. In total, we identify 998 reported activities for 21 activity categories.

As shown in Figure 1, more than two-thirds of the all reported activities could be sorted into categories where a reported activity contains no information on actor in term of policy area, details on how the activity was funded, and specifics on the results in terms of output/outcome (485, 86 and 49 for the Action, Policy and Participation categories respectively, in total 620). This example illustrates this type of reporting: "Sweden is working actively to make

¹³ Note that we exclude a certain number of potential categories, for example the sub-group of action, policy or participation activities where a development actor has applied non-development funds to pursue a certain results. The categories excluded never appear as a result in any reporting.

the transition from fossil fuels to cost-effective renewable energy sources” (Communication 2005/06:204:40).

Specifics on results (*output/outcome*) were identified in 211 cases (30, 16 and 165 for development funds, the policy area’s own funds, and unspecified funds respectively). Activities that could be linked to the development aid budget as the source of funding were found in 123 cases (of which activities had no specified results in 93 cases and had specified results in 30 cases). Information on a discernible non-development aid actor in relation to an activity was found in 143 reported activities (127 in the Action category and 16 in the Policy category).

By far the most reported type of activity refers to what we have termed *action* in the categorization matrix, where a specific policy area initiates and/or supports a specific activity, which accounted for 795 cases of the total number of reported activities. Activities on involvement in policy processes and participation in international activities initiated by others were reported in 142 and 61 cases respectively.

Figure 1: Categorization matrix for reported activities in results communications on Swedish PGD 2003-2014

	Dev.funds No spec. results	Dev. funds Specified results	Policy area funds No spec. results	Policy area funds Specified results	Unspecified funds No spec. results	Unspecified funds Specified results	Sub- total/ Total
1. Action: specific policy area initiates or supports a specific activity.							
Dev.actor	67	22					89
Non-dev actor	6	3	20	13	48	37	127
Unspecified actor					485	94	579
Sub-total	63	25	20	13	533	131	795
2. Policy: activity intended to produce or influence policy processes							
Dev.actor	9	4					13
Non-dev. actor	0	0	2	3	4	7	16
Unspecified actor					86	27	113
Sub-total	9	4	2	3	90	34	142
3. Participation: policy area participates in international initiatives intended to produce or influence policy processes.							
Development actor	11	1					12
Non-development actor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unspecified actor					49	0	49
Sub-total	11	1	0	0	49	0	61
Total							998

Looking at trends in the reporting, there is a notable increase in categories containing information on results (output/outcome) of a reported activity over time. Close to all reported activities (205 of 211) within this category are found in the three most recent results communications. Notably, the 2010 communication stands out as the most substantial in this regard. The three latest communications (2010, 2012 and 2014) presents fewer activities in total, however (401), compared to the earlier communications. This has to do with the Government's new approach, reporting on selected challenges in depth in these latter communications, while only summarizing achievements in other areas.

RBM results?

Our screening exercise of reported PGD results displays a notable discrepancy between the content of the reporting and the stated ambition of a results-focus, based on the principles of RBM. Arguably, the application of RBM would have implied a systematic follow-up around clearly defined baselines, repeatedly subject for revision in every report. Our findings show ambivalence and inconsistency in the approach. The level of monitoring is hampered by lack of specifics articulated in wordings such as “raise the level of ambition”, “increase awareness”, “promote” and “develop”. In addition, there is no assignment of a leading actor(s) (e.g. a specific ministry) in the fulfillment of the goals, other than “Sweden” (the Government) in general.

Attempts to operationalize measurement indicators in accordance with the principles of RBM have been made. As mentioned above, the Government has applied the OECD's model of ‘building blocks for policy coherence’ in the latest three communications (OECD, 2009). For the eighteen focus areas from the 2008 re-launch, assessment is made as to whether the Government has reached “far”, “relatively far” or if there are “some short-comings” for each dimension and each area. Comparing the reporting periods, and summarizing achievements, there is general progress in most of the dimensions so far.

Whether this appraisal is informative or not might depend on the reader. It is certainly an attempt to systematize. The appraisal might help the Government to identify and focus attention on issues where

there are “some short-comings”. And given that achievements are valued by the same criteria in each period, it does check relative progress. However, we don’t know if achievements are valued by the same criteria, since these “certain criteria” are not further elaborated (Communication 2013/14:154: 8), which opens for obscurity and arbitrariness. The assessments (“far”, “relatively far” and “some short-comings”) lack definition and base line, and do not break with the independent and subjective mode of assessing results used in earlier communications. This problem is noted also by the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Swedish parliament, which recommends continued work on “assessable results indicators” (*Utrikesutskottets betänkande* 2013/14:UU12: 9).

Our analysis of the Swedish reporting on the PGD confirms findings in the literature on the difficulties to measure policy coherence for development. Specific outcomes of actions aimed to increase coherence between policy areas are difficult to identify, since the domains risk crowding out each other and the specific features of the policy become indistinct (May *et al*, 2006; Piccotto, 2005). Incomplete and imprecise targets and indicators constitute other problems hampering a systematic approach for evaluating PGD. The policy coherence process also implies a lack of a clear base line for analysis (Keijzer, 2012).

The screening also confirms the picture of a significant share of activities in the results reporting belonging to development cooperation (primarily pursued by Sida), with writings such as “[t]hrough its development cooperation with the least developed countries, Sweden helps these countries improve their capacity to integrate climate policy into the work of combating poverty and creating growth” (Communication 2005/06:204:40). In addition, in our exercise, “development cooperation” was counted as the “actor” only when this was explicitly stated, but it is likely that the number of unreported cases where in fact the actor was from the aid sphere may be larger than our results indicate. In any case, the relative absence of reported contributions from other policy areas clearly places development cooperation in the driving seat of the policy.

The majority of activities reported in the Government’s communications to the Parliament belong to the category where no actor, no funding, and no results are specified. For example, according to one of the results communications to the Parliament, “Sweden is working actively to make the transition from fossil fuels to cost-

effective renewable energy sources.” (Communication 2005/06:204:39). Which policy areas have worked on this? How has the work been done and financed? What has been the outcome of it? What is the baseline for this work?

If we apply a strict results-based approach, the lack of precision is problematic. But, if coherence work is viewed more as a process than an outcome, this reporting on the on-going work to promote a Swedish policy position internationally may be viewed differently, probably making it more relevant. The reporting could be seen more as an instrument to produce a common understanding of what is necessary for coherency with development objectives in different fields; assessing precise outcomes in a precise moment is less relevant.

Furthermore, it is not necessarily a problem that PGD activities are not funded by a specified source. It may well be, that the majority of the relevant coherence activities precisely consists of “working actively” in various national and international arenas to promote certain political stands, and is a matter of attitudes and understandings, rather than funding of specific activities.

Yet, in the end there is also need for more precise information on the progress of actions taken in a specific area, or else there is a risk that credibility is lost. There is a balance to strike between reporting results in a credible way while recognizing the gradual process involved.

5 Two Swedish examples

We have framed reasons why policy coherence for development might be a challenge, in terms of motivation, coordination, and cognition, and also discussed the voluntary element in play. We have looked at the Swedish PGD reporting, and seen that it often lacks in specifics and consistency, although it might fulfill a different function than stated, by contributing to a common understanding of the PCD process.

In this section, we give these findings some more substance. We present two Swedish policy examples, illustrating implications and tensions that can arise at the intersection of the PGD and other policy priorities. The two areas are first, migration and development, and second, higher education and research. These areas possess a high degree of multidimensionality, making them relevant for policy coherence, and they were both part of the original PGD bill in 2003. But while migration and development was also one of the global challenges identified in the 2008 restart of the PGD (and as we write, in early 2016, appears even more critical), the significance of higher education and research for development and global responsibility is today less pronounced in coherency contexts.

Migration and development

International migration has become one of the most important issues on the global policy agenda. Current statistics reveal that the stock of international migration in 2015 was close to 250 million, compared to some 170 million in year 2000; more than two-thirds of these migrants reside in countries in developed countries, of which 76 million are living in Europe; in 2014, there were around 20 million refugees in the world (UN, 2015). The growing number and complexity of migration raise the need to harmonize policy actions and develop shared policy objectives to avoid inconsistency.

To frame the Swedish work on policy coherence for migration and development, we need to explore how these two areas have been viewed and dealt with (both in research and as policy areas). Up until quite recently migration and development were largely seen as separate. Migration policies largely had to do with domestic concerns,

while development policies concerned conditions elsewhere. This has produced a division in the conceptual understanding of the migration and development nexus. An example is remittances. The development perspective is primarily making sure that remittances reach the poorest in low-income countries, while in other policy areas, such as public finance, the focus may rather be on legal issues of money transfers (and concern with illicit financial flows). This difference in focus and interest may lead to incoherent policies in terms of making remittances possible and safe.

Moreover, when not seen as separate the policy debate has often placed development in a dependent position to migration (de Haas, 2012). The reason for this has however varied. Until quite recently, migration was seen as a result of lack of development: migration was a bad (e.g. brain drain from developing countries), which could be reduced by tackling the root-causes of under-development (e.g. modernization theory). This view has gradually been replaced by a more positive view on migration (still based on a dichotomise relation between migration and development) as something that can contribute to development in poor countries (de Haas, 2010; Dfid, 2007; GCIM, 2005).

Still, the idea that development may reduce migration (i.e. if poverty and violence is tackled, the migration will decline) remains to some degree, not least among policy strands in favour of more restrictive policies (now on the raise in many European countries). The agenda of the EU Valletta Summit on Migration in mid November 2015, for example, put the need for measures to tackle the root causes of migration at the top, and revealed in parts an actualization of this view (EU, 2015).

However, research shows that development actually may create conditions for more migration (Castles, 2008). Thus, migration policies alone cannot substitute for broader policy initiatives to tackle inequality and poverty in poor countries (Global Commission on International Migration International, GCIM, 2005). This suggests the need for more policy coherence, where prosperous countries acknowledge the impact of their own policies on the dynamics of international migration, for instance in policy areas such as trade (developing countries' access to global markets), and arms export to countries and regions in conflict.

Likewise, in countries of origin, a reliance on migrant remittances to fund development can be misguided. Remittances may be more likely to lead to inflation and greater inequality than to positive development if not accompanied by political and economic reform in the country of origin (e.g. effective institutions, infrastructure and investment-friendly climate). This implies that migration cannot be treated as a separate policy area, but must be seen from a coherency perspective, including wider issues of global power, wealth and inequality: “Mobility of people is an integral part of the major changes currently affecting all regions of world” (Castles, 2008).

The separation between migration and development implies that the work in the two policy areas has largely been uncoordinated. The solution is more coordinated action, but even with more coordination, the issue is complex. The different takes, for example on migration either as an asset for a country or a cost (e.g. through brain drain), means that there is a shortage of a common understanding of these issues. This may result in different views on relevant policies and coherence.

So what does this imply for the Swedish PGD? Ever since its first launch there is awareness of the complex relation between migration and development. The 2003 bill emphasises the potential of migration (in terms of global labour mobility), but also the need to improve the understanding of migration and its effects on development; there is reference to push-factors behind migration (poverty and conflicts), and a need to make remittances contribute to development in countries of origin (Proposition 2002/03:122; 39). Ten years later, the results communication for 2014 focuses on migration specifically, and highlights the potential link between migration and development, indicating a view on migration as relative and depended. The Government notes that greater coherence between policy areas and actors is needed to maximize the positive development effects of migration (Communication 2013/14:154; *pp*).¹⁴

At the same time, also this later communication falls into the same pitfall as many other policy discussions wanting to advance the link

¹⁴ Within the frame of the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD), the Government has also stressed the need for greater international coherence in the area and that it should be part of the post-2015 development agenda including follow up of the millennium goals and the creation of renewed global sustainable goals (Communication 2013/14:154).

between migration and development, without taking into account the need for more broad-reaching reforms in the migrants' home countries. As such it is an account of the problematic separation of migration as a policy area. Consequently, suggested policy actions risk becoming one-dimensional: if we can facilitate circular migration, development in the country of origin will automatically follow. Thus even coherent Swedish policies to create better conditions for circular migration (lower cost of remittances, permission of dual citizenships, validation of skills and support to solutions of long-term refugee situations) might be ineffective to progress development conditions in the country of origin. Most likely, policy coherence in migration and development would gain from a closer involvement with other policy areas within the framework of development cooperation on supporting institutional capacity in poor countries, for instance in areas such as anticorruption, democratic development and gender equality.

Although the Swedish PGD thus lacks in pointing to all the inter-linkages with wide-grasping policy areas, it does portray a growing insight (more of a common understanding) in the interactional nature of the migration – development nexus. This understanding could prove vital in the current refugee situation, both in the context of incentives for flight and consequences of reception. Generally, however, it seems easier to integrate migration issues into development policies than the other way around, perhaps because there is less risk for conflicts of interests in Sweden when elaborating important aspects of development policy. Still, in this context there are strong linkages between development policy and other policy areas. To what extent coherence for development motives will impact the debate and policy action remains to be seen.

Higher education and research

Access to knowledge is a key factor in handling global challenges and combat poverty. In the original Swedish PGD bill there is continuous reference to the importance of education, at all levels, both as a right by itself and as a means for development. In its section on education policy specifically, the bill emphasizes the need for scientific exchanges and exchange programs for students, as well as increased openness for foreign students in Sweden. Apart from the rights perspective and the developmental aspects, this is also seen as a way to

promote democratic values (Proposition 2002/03:122: 47). However, recent communications on the PGD are silent on these measures. For example, education (or higher education or for that matter research) is not one of the global challenges highlighted in the 2008 launch of the policy. In the 2014 communication, education is only mentioned in the context of migration: the right to schooling for children in Sweden without residence permits, and the work on Swedish validation of foreign degrees (Communication 2013/14:154).

As in the case of migration and development, two partly contradictory understandings, in this case of *cooperation* and *competition*, may help to explain the dwindling coherence ambitions in the area of higher education and research. The cooperative view builds on the idea of universities as public goods, and includes partnerships, exchanges, and knowledge transfers, also with partners in low-income countries. The competitive view, on the other hand, sees higher education and research as merchandise on the global knowledge market, where universities sell education services abroad (Altbach, 2008; Kezar et al, 2015).

Nourished by cuts in public funding, stronger policy statements on the knowledge economy (implying among other things the global hunt for the “best brains”), and the growing presence of for-profit private institutions, the competitive rationale seems to have gradually been gaining ground. More than ever, universities have become tied up by economic rationales in their intake of students and involvement with international research partners.

While recent PGD communications are silent on the potentials of higher education and research for development objectives, the education and research policies presented in the same period seem to gradually lean more towards the competitive logic of internationalization, although the process is not straight-forward.

The importance of internationalization for global positioning, attained through an increased presence of international students, teachers, PhD graduate students, and researchers, appears also in bills on research throughout the period following the PGD launch (Proposition 2004/05:162; 2008/09:175). Still, a whole chapter is devoted to coherence for global sustainability in the first bill on research policy adjacent to the introduction of the PGD (Proposition 2004/05:80), and there are links to development in relation to identified strategic scientific area concentrations in the following bill

(Proposition 2008/09:50). However, in the latest and current research bill (Proposition 2012/13:30) reference to the PGD is totally absent. In its place, there is accentuation of the competitive logic of international positioning, expressed in statements on the importance to concentrate international research collaborations to economically advanced regions and countries.

The gradual PGD erosion can be illustrated also in the case of higher education. The bill on higher education presented soon after the 2003 bill on PGD explicitly refers to development objectives: “In higher education, this means that development policy priorities could be reflected in the universities’ collaborations, exchanges and recruitment of foreign students.” (Proposition 2004/05: 162:46). This may be contrasted with the introduction of fees for international students coming from countries outside the European Economic Community (EEC) in 2011 (Proposition 2009/10:65).

The basic argument in favor of fees was the need to compete with educational quality rather than free education (Ds 2011:3). The Government recognized the high number of foreign students at Swedish universities and their importance to internationalization, but concluded that the students’ incentive for choosing Sweden was mainly the absence of fees, not the quality of the education, which was understood as a devaluation of the international quality of Swedish higher education. Moreover, there was emphasis on the difficulty to justify that tax revenues were used to finance a growing number of students from non-EEC countries. The collaborative logic of internationalization in earlier bills is absent, and there are no references to the PGD. Aid money was brought in as a way to fund scholarship programs for students facing new fees.

As expected, the number of international students from outside the EEC fell dramatically after the introduction of the fees in 2012. Students from Africa and Asia dropped by approximately 70 percent, and despite a separate scholarship program targeting Swedish long-term development collaboration countries, the number of students from these specific countries dropped by nearly 90 percentages (*Universitetskanslerämbetet*, 2013). Swedish internationalization has by the introduction of fees lost the greater part of representation from the African continent.

The example from the higher education policy field illustrates a gradual down prioritization of the PGD, but also suggests how the

basic idea of coherence and shared responsibility is compromised. It displays the cognitional difficulty in creating an understanding of the basic idea of PGD and seeing links between separate policy areas outside of development cooperation.

The absence of fees was an example of how the policy in parts was to materialize. In line with development objectives, students from developing countries were able to get a free higher education in Sweden, subsidized within the policy area of education. Still, this contribution to global development of free higher education was never brought up in the Government's results communications on the PGD. Conceivably the neglect of this "result" of PGD efforts in the reporting might have helped to kick out any PGD considerations when considering fees for higher education, along with the increased momentum for the competitive view. Now we are in a situation at Swedish universities arguably regressive to the idea of PGD and possibly also counterproductive to the internationalization of Swedish higher education.

On the other hand, the previous situation, where universities were funding international students free of charge, could also be seen as a concealed expansion of the Swedish aid budget. Aid (through scholarships) has now been assigned this task explicitly, for those students from low-income countries still interested in getting a higher education in Sweden.

Undoubtedly, higher education and research harbors important developmental dimensions aligned with the idea of the PGD. But when a country starts to lag behind in international science indices and university rankings, policy forces start to emphasize more competitive strategies, and become more selective in collaborations. The example shows how easy it is to compromise a collaborative logic if this is not politically and operationally safeguarded.

These two examples show that coherent policies for development are dependent on a common understanding of the issues at stake and how they relate to development objectives. While such understanding seems to have evolved towards more joint and deeper insight into the complex relationships between migration and development efforts, policies on higher education and research seems increasingly less occupied with the sector's role from a development perspective. To what extent the absence of this area among challenges identified in the Government's PGD reporting has caused this "cognitive decline" is of

course not clear; there are many parallel processes behind changing modes and views in society. But it is likely that the ambition to focus attention on some global challenges has a cost of dwindling attention or importance in other areas, eventually leading to incoherent policies.

6 Concluding discussion

The Swedish Policy for Global Development (PGD) has been in operation for more than twelve years and has recently become more prominent through the re-launch by the current Government. In this concluding section, we pull the strings together in a discussion on the PGD work seen as a process, and the sustainability of the policy. But we begin the ending with some reflections on the role of aid in policy coherence for development.

Aid as a catalyst for coherence?

Development cooperation, aid, has so far appeared both as an actor, promoting and fostering various policy coherence perspectives in our account above, and also as the (expected) provider of financial resources for many coherence activities in the Swedish policy sphere.

In the spirit of the PGD, development policy could be seen as one among others, but given its specific mission: to improve the living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression, it is inevitably central to the PGD. The long-standing international engagement of Swedish aid is a valuable asset for the progression of the PGD. Still, PGD is primarily not about what is achieved by Swedish development cooperation, but what is achieved in other policy areas. From this perspective, the reliance on aid as a funder and promoter of policy coherence may be problematic: relying on aid to do the job may pacify other policy areas' development efforts.

The Government's own view of what role aid should play is found in some general descriptions in the early proposition and results communications. Perhaps the most universal account on the role of aid appears in the 2005 communication: "development cooperation should serve as an effective complement to and reinforcement of efforts for an equal and sustainable global development within the framework of other policies. This must be done in harmony with development cooperation objectives and principles" (*Communication* 2004/05:161:37).¹⁵ Similar phrasings on the catalytic and bridging

¹⁵ In contrast to the other results communications, the statement is followed by a list of measures in which development cooperation is given a more specified role.

function of aid, to support other policy areas and help developing countries benefit from the outcome of the policy, appear in other results communications.

Central for reaching this aspiration, according to the Government, is knowledge transfer through “effective dialogue”, or in our framework: cognition. But the relationship appears unilateral: aid is to influence other policies, not the other way around. There are general statements on the importance to step up the work on aid, through harmonization with other donors, simplified procedures, and more thorough monitoring. As the most natural manifestation of the PGD, aid seems to have been given a kind of coherence immunity as regards influence from other policy areas.

The case of Sida, the main implementing agency of Swedish aid, is an illustration. In the Government’s instruction to Sida, there are no explicit operational accounts on how the agency should work with the PGD, only a general statement that the agency should support activities in line with the objective for development cooperation as part of the fulfilment of the PGD (Regulation 2010:1080). Moreover, there are no operational instructions in the annual appropriation letters to the agency. Only three of these (2004, 2011 and 2015) contain instructions for reporting on Sida interaction with other agencies within the framework of the PGD. No references to the PGD are found in any of the other appropriation letters.

Still, aid has contributed substantially to the results communications, admittedly on somewhat unclear basis as to whether reported activities stem from interaction with other agencies or are more of in-house products. As a response to criticism of how aid was managed, raised by the OECD/DAC peer review of Sweden, the Government in 2013 presented a new aid policy framework, aimed to set out the overall direction of Swedish aid. Here, the Government states the importance of aid policy consistent with active policy coherence for development. However, the document does not bring any clarity as to how aid should work with the PGD in relation to other policy areas in a more operational mode, only that: ”The aid policy framework is focused on the contribution of aid towards the objective of the Policy for Global Development” (Communication 2013/14:131:13).

Could this lack of clarity be improved by increased steering/coordination, through more specified instructions?

Generally, there are pros and cons with adding specifics in policy instructions. In the PGD context, with a multifaceted and constantly changing international environment, operational specifics could hamper flexibility and creativity or at worst lock aid into processes counterproductive to the idea of the PGD. Further, if the policy area would be subject to more detailed instructions as compared to others, and still be seen as a policy area among others, there is a risk of further cementing its supervising role and ownership of the PGD. Imbalanced instructions across policy areas may also lead to other areas disregarding (i.e. “not see”) their own strengths in relation to the PGD, but only those aligned with the aid agenda. On the other hand, PGD is not a self-propelled policy. From the account of a decade of relative absence of operational guidance and instructions, we can conclude that PGD as a concept does not possess inbuilt functions of progression.

If the PGD is more viewed as a learning process, this might be an entry point for a more operational role of aid. There is knowledge and experience in the aid domain of importance for awareness of the grounding principles of PGD among other policy areas. It may not only be insights in terms of development challenges and global poverty issues, but also, perhaps more importantly, ways to improve other policy areas’ understanding of the implications of their own policy activities from a PGD perspective, and ways to identify where there is leverage in interacting with other policy areas. It can also be the opposite: to highlight activities incompatible with development objectives.

In our framework, this process might partly happen through delegation of aid activities to other policy areas. The learning exercise might inspire more international work and gradual transformation of these tasks into the core business for a particular policy area or agency. Also, since resources always are scarce, motivation improves if there is aid money to fund coherence activities, and if coherence then improves, this in turn might inspire more coherence.

Yet, spending (aid) is always a question of opportunity costs. Is money spent on coherence activities more effective for development objectives than regular development cooperation interventions? In the extreme, there might be policy areas to fund, which are much more efficient for development purposes than the traditional development cooperation, which would motivate more aid money spent in other policy areas than traditional aid.

This relates to how this spending is viewed: as aid or as domestic investments? We argued in connection to scholarships provided to student fees, that the earlier situation, without fees, could be seen as a (concealed) transfer to the aid budget from the budget for higher education. On the other hand, the current situation (scholarships) may be seen as a (concealed) transfer in the reverse. But perhaps, if development were viewed as a common objective, it would be less relevant to distinguish exactly which policy sphere benefits from what activities, so long as they are deemed strategically beneficial and a long-term investment.

The PGD as a process

Our examination of the Swedish PGD has shown that the general call for global responsibility meets with many challenges in its implementation. We have discussed dimensions of motivation, coordination, and cognition as well as voluntary engagement for global responsibility. Assessments of the PGD specifically, and PCD in general, report on short-comings of the coherence work, advocating stronger political commitment, improved steering, and more resources allocated, in order to enhance effective policy coherence for development.

Our framework gives some clues as to why coherence work fails or, at least, does not seem to live up to expectations: If people lack a common understanding of what a coherent policy for development means, they will not properly coordinate and will not be motivated to promote relevant positions in national and international forums. If the work is poorly organized, a common understanding has little room to develop and motivation fails. And, if agents lack incentives to coordinate activities, potentially good arguments for coherence are scarcely communicated and agreed. In reverse, if agreeing on the ingredients and the importance of a coherent policy framework, agents are more motivated to organize the work for its successful implementation. The cognitive element, the understanding of what coherence for development means for a specific policy area, is important and often a result of how policy work is coordinated and motivated.

Thus, a coherence policy with a clear and well-defined objective, but with inexplicit instructions on implementation such as the

Swedish PGD, the way the policy is communicated and monitored over time is decisive for creating an understanding of meanings, roles and obligations among different policy areas and actors. We have examined how the policy has been monitored and mediated over time in the Government's results communications.

Our findings suggest a discrepancy between substance and stated ambitions to measure and assess results. In our screening of Swedish results of the PGD, such as they are reported in the Government's results communications, we counted many achievements, but few concrete results. Results based management (RBM) hence does not seem to be an applicable way of managing and reporting the performance of the policy. The RBM approach tends to assume that the Government as a whole shares the same interests, but politics is usually more influential than policy and there will always be conflicting interests. On a basic level, RBM also assumes that changes can be predicted, controlled and reduced to a single overarching problem. In addition, it's difficult to attribute results to the application of the policy, since many changes normally lay outside the control of the Government. The application of RBM thus also reduces flexibility.

The goal with policy coherence for development, in concrete policy areas, is obviously policies coherent with development objectives, i.e. outcomes. But the outcomes may be difficult to frame in a strict reporting format. Policy coherence for development might therefore better be seen as a process. In this process, the communications, although vague on results, and constantly changing what is reported on and how, still may enhance the understanding of policy coherence for development. Our examples of migration and development, and of higher education and research, showed the centrality of a continuous dialogue among different stake-holders and policy areas involved, to maintain dialogue and approach a common understanding for each issue at stake, in order to promote policy coherence for development. A process-oriented approach means a continuous negotiation about inclusion of developmental concerns in various policy areas. These negotiations involve elements of motivation, coordination, and cognition.

Sustaining a development policy

With the adoption of the Agenda 2030 and the sustainable development goals (SDGs) the relevance of policy coherence for development is greater than ever. But it is a demanding task to pursue policy coherence for development within such a comprehensive global agenda, involving all sectors in the society. There is need for sustained political commitment, but conflicting interests and diverging priorities may step in the way. There is need for conscious coordination, but instructions are often inexplicit, while the decision process is complex. And there is need for a continuous dialogue on what the policy implies, but such dialogue does not always materialize. These dimensions influence actors involved, who more or less voluntarily make efforts, in their specific field, to promote the policy.

Recognizing these challenges and backed by the findings of this study we make the following recommendations:

- *Clear and strong political leadership.* A visionary policy, such as the Swedish PGD needs political backing from the highest level. This suggests that responsibilities for the implementation of the policy need to be formalized in instructions and objective functions for different agencies and ministries (policy areas). In order to raise awareness and strengthen the understanding of the policy, the Government could develop an instrument assessing “commitment to development” for each domestic policy sphere with respect to identified global challenges. In addition, it might be efficient to clarify even further the conflicting interests, conflicting norms, and at times lacking commitment to global development priorities, to pave the way for more explicit political stands on policy coherence for development.
- *Increased resources for implementation.* There is need to explicitly allocate more resources for PGD work. Although there is a voluntary element in play in coherence work, and although we argue there is a value in delegating aid money to other policy areas, this is not sufficient, if agents are neither assigned the task nor rewarded for it. In addition, to establish an understanding and motivation within all policy areas to work in a coherent manner in accordance with the policy, additional resources need to be allocated to build coordinating functions at a central level and within each policy area. Establishing such functions is crucial for implementing and monitoring the policy successfully. In light of

the newly developed action plans for each policy area, having this type of capacity will prove to be of fundamental importance. The action plans are indeed a step in the right direction, but the difficulty lies not in producing them, but to implement them.

- *Place the policy at a more central organizational position.* To signal a renewal of relevance of the policy and put the role of development aid into perspective, the Government could consider moving the coordination of the policy to a more central position in the Government, since the policy needs political commitment from the highest political level.
- *Acknowledge the importance of continuous analysis.* The multidimensionality of the policy and the continuously changing environment in which it is set to navigate, requires inbuilt functions for analysis and knowledge development, both for strengthening the policy and to increase awareness around it. Part of the explanation why the policy has eroded over time is possibly the gradual reduction of specific resources for analysis and learning. This calls for a revitalization of the need to conduct continuous analysis stated in the initial PGD proposition.
- *Reporting of the policy's achievement must be more process- and dialogue oriented.* Linked to the need for continuous analysis is the importance of establishing accurate and realistic methods for monitoring the policy. Strict result-based management seems not to be a functioning method of reporting considering the nature of the policy. To safeguard visibility and motivation, there is still need for some type of regular reporting of how the policy evolves over time. The Government should consider a more process-oriented approach for reporting, highlighting both good examples and examples of friction between policy areas in need of more intense policy dialogue.
- *The implementation of the PGD must be aligned with other cross-over and integrative policy initiatives.* The comprehensive and whole-of-government approach of the PGD needs to relate to other existing mainstreaming and integrative policy measures in the Government, for example the integrating approach to gender and climate. If these initiatives are not integrated in the PGD there is a potential risk of creating parallel processes and ineffective use of resources.

Policy Coherence for Development is potentially a powerful tool for sustainable development and poverty alleviation. In times of increasing global challenges and with the adoption of the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, there is little to suggest that the importance of PCD will decline. As a result of the multidimensionality of current policy making we know that policy coherence for development can occur coincidentally, as when a certain policy area's activities unintentionally generates positive development effects. Yet by the same token the outcome of intrinsic tensions between different policy areas could work diametrically to international development objectives and commitments. This is why coherence for development at an institutional level entails deliberate and concerted political commitment and governance.

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