

Guidelines for Sida's Exchange Programme

June 2001



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION AGENCY

Department for Cooperation with NGOs and
Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Management – SEKA
Department for Personnel and Organisation Development – PEO

Marie-Louise Bruzelius

Tel: +46 (0)8 698 51 71
Fax: +46 (0)8 698 56 13
E-mail: marie-louise.bruzelius@sida.se

FOREWORD

In the year 2000, Sida's Division for Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations, SEKA/EO, was given the task of studying and testing possibilities and methods for widening participation in international exchange activities. Sida's study "Exchanges in international development cooperation - a method for internationalisation" was submitted in August 2000.

Sida has now produced "Guidelines for Exchange Programmes with Grants from Sida". The guidelines invite Sida's frame organisations as well as the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and the National Board of Youth Affairs to channel grants to groups and organisations in their respective networks. The programme shall start in the autumn of 2001. Priority shall be given to new groups and individuals in addition to those that already participate actively in Swedish development cooperation.

At Sida the Division for Cooperation with NGOs and the International Recruitment and Training Division shall coordinate the programme.

Stockholm, June 2001.



Magnus Lindell
Department for Cooperation with
NGOs, Humanitarian Assistance and
Conflict Management, SEKA
NGO Division



Irene Rodefors-Zellinger
Department for Personnel and
Organisation Development, PEO
International Recruitment and
Training Division

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1. Introduction

In Sweden there is an active interest in international development cooperation, which contributes internationalising the country. By exposing Swedish groups and individuals to other cultures, and encouraging them to place their own experience in relation to other international knowledge and perspectives, the exchange of experience between Sweden and developing countries (according to DAC's definition) will be strengthened.

With the aid of a three-year pilot project, Sida intends to give *new* groups in Swedish society the opportunity to discover developing countries. This shall be done on the basis of equality and the focus shall be on exchanges of experience and reciprocity.

Sida's exchange programme will be tested during the period 2002 - 2004 and then evaluated. The exchange programme during the pilot project period will be open to the so-called frame organisations, as well as the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and the National Board for Youth Affairs.

At Sida the Department for Cooperation with NGOs and Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Management, SEKA, and the Department for Personnel and Organisation Development, PEO, will share the responsibility for the exchange programme.

2. Overall objectives and expected results

In the long term the exchange programme is expected to result in:

- democratic development through a strong civil society
- mutual benefits and greater knowledge and understanding of the situation in the partner countries and in Sweden
- living contacts and relations between civil society in Sweden and civil society in the partner countries.

The anticipated concrete results of the pilot project are:

- an increase in contacts between Sweden and developing countries
- an increase in the interest and commitment of new organisations and groups in Swedish international development cooperation in addition to those that are active today.

3. Methods

Sida's exchange programme offers grants for reciprocal exchanges between Swedish occupational groups or interest groups and their counterparts in developing countries. Reciprocity means that one or more representatives of a Swedish group,

and one or more representatives of a group in a developing country, work together for a period of at least two weeks in Sweden and a further two weeks in the developing country concerned. The entire exchange (both journeys) must be made and completed within a period of twelve (12) months.

The exchange shall be mutually planned, implemented and evaluated. The groups shall formulate a problem which clearly relates to their activities, and this problem is then discussed during the exchange. The results of the discussions on the problem during the exchange then constitute the basis of the reports of the representatives to their own groups.

The *Swedish* group applies for an exchange grant from the *exchange administrator* (i.e. the Swedish Association of Local Authorities, the National Board for Youth Affairs or a frame organisation) and makes a formal report on conclusion of the exchange. The application shall clearly state the name of the sister group in the developing country with whom the Swedish group is making the application, the names of the two individuals, one from each group, that constitute the *exchange pair*, and the reasons why these specific persons have been selected to represent each group.

Quality assurance is the responsibility of the exchange administrator. This organisation will ensure that the exchange follows these guidelines.

4. Target groups

It is Sida's intention to reach new groups in society with the aid of the grant. Priority will be given to groups that lack previous experience of journeys to developing countries or an active interest and commitment in international development cooperation.

In this context a group means an existing, organised group or organisation in Sweden that plans, implements and evaluates an exchange together with a *sister group* in a developing country.

The exchange pair forms the administrative unit for the grant. The pair consists of a representative of the Swedish group and a representative of the sister group in the partner country. An exchange between two groups can consist of several pairs. However, an application for a standard grant must be made for each exchange pair (two persons - one standard grant).

Only persons over the age of 18 years and permanently resident in Sweden can, together with their counterpart from the sister group in the partner country, participate in the exchange pair and receive a grant.

5. Sida's grants

Sida's grants for exchanges are channelled via the exchange administrators, i.e. the Swedish Association of Local Authorities, the National Board for Youth Affairs and the

frame organisations wishing to participate. In other words, groups in Sweden that wish to apply for an exchange grant do not contact Sida but an exchange administrator.

5.1 Standard grants

The main feature of the standard grant is that it is the same amount for all and that it is only intended to contribute towards the costs of the initiative, i.e. it shall not cover all costs.

Standard exchange grants

A standard grant is payable for the exchange pair (two persons) who fulfil Sida's criteria and any possible additional criteria specified by the exchange administrator. The standard grant is a grant for at least two weeks in Sweden and at least two weeks in the partner country. It corresponds to one (1) basic amount¹.

The standard grant is intended to cover the journeys that shall be made and to provide a certain amount of support for lodging and travel during the visit in each country. Any costs incurred over and above the grant shall be met by the groups.

Preparatory grants

Applications may be made for preparatory grants, corresponding to 0.8 of the basic amount, to make possible a preparatory journey in each direction for joint planning purposes prior to a major exchange programme (i.e. a programme that includes at least four exchange pairs).

In this way the parties involved will be given the opportunity to make thorough plans for the exchange programme, both in Sweden and the partner country. The preparations will be an investment to safeguard the quality of the exchange programme.

A preparatory journey can also have the result that a decision is made not to start an exchange, for example if it is shown that the requisite conditions for making an exchange do not exist.

The preparatory grant can also be payable to an exchange administrator if this organisation, together with an organisation in the partner country, is considered to be the best suited to work with the preparations.

5.2 Criteria - Conditions

Each exchange initiative must fulfil the following criteria:

¹ The basic amount is an amount linked to the price index. In 2001 it is SEK 36,900.

- The exchange shall have a formulated aim which is placed in relation to the overall objectives of the exchange programme.
- New groups shall be given priority and the individuals that represent the group in the exchange pair shall be new persons.
- The Swedish group and the group in the partner country shall have well established relations with each other.
- Reciprocity shall be clearly presented in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the exchange.
- There shall be a clear connection between the groups or a profile that they share - for example they can be occupational groups or interest groups.
- The persons in the exchange pair shall be representative of the majority of the members of the groups. Representativeness shall be assessed on, for example, the basis of insight into and proximity to the activity, sex and age.
- A clear and specifically formulated question or problem shall form the basis of the discussions and the visits.
- A plan for financing and how the contribution that shall be made by the groups shall be shared between the group in Sweden and the sister group in the developing country shall be presented.
- A detailed programme for at least two weeks in Sweden and two weeks in the partner country shall be presented. The programme shall also include time for a joint evaluation and report on the exchange, all within the course of twelve months.

6. The undertakings of the exchange administrator

The exchange administrator shall make an annual application to Sida for an estimated number of standard grants and has the responsibility for the implementation and the qualitative follow-up of the exchange. It also provides information, makes necessary checks, assumes responsibility for administration and makes reports to Sida on the basis of the criteria and guidelines laid down by Sida for the grants.

Central assessment criteria are the degree of reciprocity and the background to the exchange, i.e. the problem or question which the groups have in common.

It is the exchange administrator's responsibility to assess whether groups applying for grants have the capacity to jointly administer and report on the grant in a satisfactory way. Grants may only be disbursed to Swedish groups, which also have the primary financial responsibility.

For every approved exchange pair, the exchange administrator shall have supporting documentation which, whenever necessary, can be requested by Sida. This documentation shall contain a presentation of the exchange based on the criteria laid down by Sida and the formulated objective of the exchange.

It will always be necessary for the groups to make a certain contribution towards the exchanges since the standard grant cannot cover all costs. How the groups involved

solve this problem is the responsibility of the exchange administrator. Sida encourages all involved to be creative where their own contributions are concerned.

Over the year the exchange administrators shall aspire to have an even number of women and men in the exchange programmes.

In all its external information the exchange administrator shall state that the exchange programme is taking place with the aid of grants from Sida.

Reporting

The exchange administrator makes a report each year to Sida. It is the responsibility of the exchange administrator to collect the information from the groups and organisations concerned.

The report that the exchange administrator submits each year to Sida shall present, in aggregate form:

- the organisations and groups that have been involved in the exchanges
- a breakdown of participants in the exchanges by women and men
- a breakdown of participants by age
- the developing countries in which the exchanges have taken place
- the questions and the problems discussed in the exchanges during the year, and a short report on their relevance
- qualitative reflections and experience gained during the year
- financial report on funds granted,

The reports shall also contain indicators for internationalisation of the group/organisation. The presentation of regular indicators make it possible to see the long-term effects of the grants.

The indicators that shall be presented are:

- already existing international contacts
- further planned international contacts
- international priorities in activities

Primarily it is the exchange groups or pairs that provide the documentation required for the reports of the exchange administrators. Time and resources shall therefore be specifically allocated in each exchange for joint reflections and reports from both participants in the exchange pair.

The report to the exchange administrator shall be very brief and be made in the language used in the exchange. The exchange administrator's annual report to Sida shall be made in Swedish or English.



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

S-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden

Tel: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Fax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64

Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>