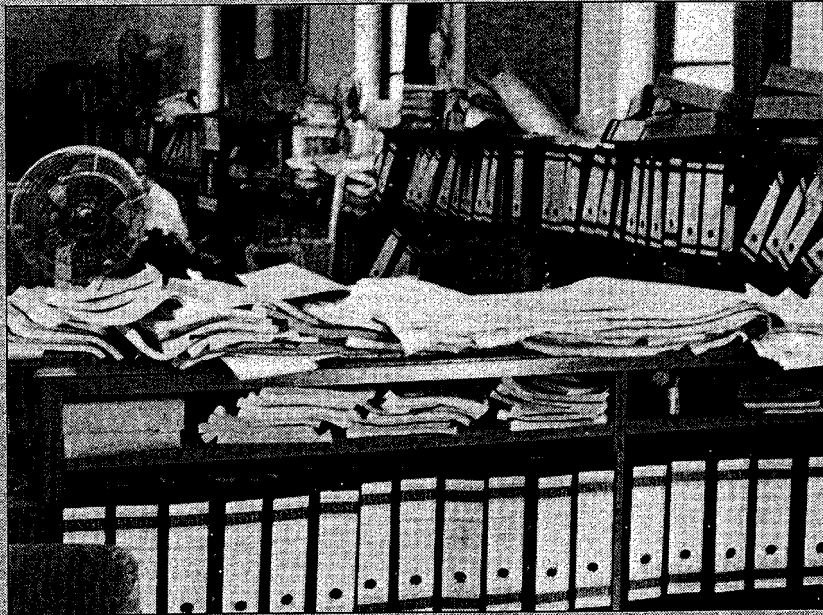# Making Government Work

Guidelines and Framework for SIDA Support to the Development of
Public Administration

SIDA Education Division
Public Administration Section

SIDA

SIDA   *   Education Division

Public Administration Development Section

MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK

Guidelines and Framework

for SIDA Support to the Development of

Public Administration

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PREFACE

This work represents a presentation and a summary of SIDA Education Division's approach to cooperating with programme country governments in the development of their central administrative systems and functions. It is based on ten years of sometimes hard-won experience in developing and executing SIDA's programmes of support to public administration, mostly within government institutions in Southern Africa.

After the first five years of experience SIDA decided it was necessary for us to take a hard look at what had been done and put together a strategy paper on support to public administration development. The paper should present a coherent analysis of third world public administration, particularly those areas within which the Education Division had worked most, and indicate the development approaches which had been most successful. The Education Division organized two seminars in Sweden, supported by a small group of expert practitioners, in order to discuss the question.

Thereafter the first draft of this paper was written and taken out for discussion with experienced African public administrators and SIDA country officers at a seminar in Maputo. This was followed by a further seminar with the institutions most often engaged by SIDA to work as consultants in public administration programmes. These groups analysed the correspondence between the paper and their experience and pronounced it in general to be satisfactory. They made a number of suggestions on improvement, many of which have been incorporated in this subsequently revised version.

During the period in which the work was done, the world's political and economic configuration changed suddenly and drastically. In this revised version those changes have been taken into account as far as possible. However, the rapidity and unexpectedness of the change served to confirm to us that the most important ingredients in support to public administration development are contextualization and flexibility. It also confirmed to us that a paper of this nature is never finished — it represents a partial understanding of its time and has constantly to be revised, updated, and improved.

The paper is divided into two parts. The first part condenses out the policy approaches SIDA intends to apply. The second part contains the analyses made and provides the explanation for the approaches adopted. It is necessary to understanding the first part, as well as more interesting!

The paper seeks perhaps to meet all too many objectives, and one of the primary criticisms it received was precisely that. It seeks to cover a number of complex areas of public administration and present approaches to supporting their improvement; some areas are thus covered superficially, while others are not covered at all. It seeks to record for SIDA itself an important learning process, and at the same time be an input to other SIDA depart-

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ments on methods to be followed in similar circumstances. It is hoped that it will serve as a constructive input into a continued dialogue with other aid agencies, who daily meet within third world institutions and discover that they have all agreed to provide assistance in the same field, all using different approaches. It seeks to provide SIDA's cooperation partners and consultants with a map of the terrain as seen from the SIDA perspective: a map clear enough to be helpful, not so general that the woods are only faint patches of green, nor so detailed that only a confusion of trees is to be seen!

Many would doubtless prefer that the map showed in more detail just that road which they are interested in following, with attention to all the curves and surfaces and narrow places. For many reasons that is not yet possible. We ourselves are aware that this map is like those of the early 19th Century: getting towards the right outlines, but with lots of errors on detail, missing nomenclature, and large white spaces. We will have to keep working on filling in the spaces, correcting and improving the detail, and developing larger-scale charts. It would be easier if the terrain itself did not keep changing!

The way forward for our work will include further and more careful analyses of institutional cooperation, development of better analytical instruments and methods for surveying change in public administration, and research into the culture and functioning of organizations.

The importance of developing public administrative capacity is being more and more clearly understood. One result is that SIDA's Public Administration Section has now been upgraded to the status of a Division and will expand its activities to new countries and new areas of cooperation. In consequence, the work begun here will also need to be expanded and diversified. We look forward to the experience with considerable excitement!

Hallgerd Dyrssen
Head of SIDA's
Public Administration Section

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this document is to lay out in synthetic form SIDA's policy guidelines on principles and methods of support to the development of public administration, and to give an indication of the rationales underlying the choice of policy.

The guidelines, presented in Part I of the document, are derived from the descriptive and analytical framework presented in Part II of the document, which is based on SIDA experience and on various commissioned reports, seminars and discussions on the issue of public administration development (see Appendix 2).

The guidelines are intended to orient SIDA's concerned departments, SIDA-financed consultants, and cooperating institutions in SIDA programme countries as to SIDA's position on the principles and practices it intends to apply in the process of providing support to the development of public administration.

More particularly, as is further discussed below, these guidelines concern those programmes which SIDA specifically classifies as "public administration sector support"; though they should also have relevance to the SIDA support to developing aspects of public administration which is provided in the context of most of its other programmes. These guidelines do not pretend to be entirely comprehensive, and serve more as a general guide than as an operational handbook to programme execution. They do not necessarily bind SIDA as regards its policy and practices in the future. They are based on the principle that support must be tailored to the specific context addressed, and the context of both public administration and of international cooperation is constantly changing.

Part II of the document, the framework, is based on the analysis of public administrations in the African context. Its conclusions are not necessarily applicable to the experience of countries outside Africa. The framework is one form of theoretical approach to understanding the realities of African public administration and it does not necessarily represent SIDA's official viewpoints or otherwise bind SIDA.

The process of developing this paper has been a rewarding experience for all those at SIDA involved in it. The paper has been read and commented by dozens of SIDA officials, colleagues and friends in a number of countries, and consultants working on public administration development. As far as possible we have taken heed of their comments, and we would like to thank them for their insightful contributions. However none of them can be held responsible for any error or omission in this paper.

PART I

Guidelines for SIDA Support to the Development of Public Administration

1. OBJECTIVES AND METHODS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

1.1 Principles and objectives regarding support to public administration development

In spite of the recent reduction in the size and responsibilities of the public sector in the countries of the developing world, in general it is true to say that over the period from the beginning of the 1960's the public sector in these countries has become much larger and more complex, and it continues to retain much of the wide range of social, cultural, economic, political, judicial and security functions it assumed as decolonization took place. The way it undertakes these functions is a complicated synthesis of earlier inherited models and the ruling government's polity and policies, in the specific context of economic decline and lack of resources of all kinds.

Thus, Swedish cooperation with another country's government, destined to the development and improvement of its administrative capacity, will often have a political and problematic quality. Furthermore, such support needs always and without fail to be *contextually sensitive*, that is, it cannot proceed on the assumption of ready formulas and models for easy transfer. In a very real way, the public administration is the principal and most important instrument for the implementation and materialization of the ruling government's political programme in all spheres of individual and public life, and support to public administration development entails the shaping of that instrument to fulfill more efficiently and effectively its assigned functions as they were intended.

In the constant process of dialogue that such an area of cooperation necessarily entails, the Swedish partner will make reference to its own major guiding principles for support to any programme in any country. In the first instance, the Swedish parliament has agreed to cooperate bilaterally with the governments of a number of countries (currently eighteen countries, referred to as "programme countries"), on the understanding that there exists a basis of mutual trust for partnership in development. Normally, Swedish "public administration sector support" is only available to these programme countries, in areas agreed upon after the country has requested such support.

The Swedish parliament has also laid down the following principles as regards support to programme countries in all sectors, including that of public administration. Support may be offered in contexts where:

— it contributes to economic growth;
— it develops economic and social equality;
— it furthers the democratization of society;
— it strengthens political and economic independence;
— it assists in environmental protection.

In relation to these general objectives for Swedish cooperation programmes, these broad guidelines for support to the development of public administration have been derived. Such support to the development of administrative capacity in the public sector is clearly justifiable, as a government:

— which functions more efficiently and effectively will be able to save resources and use them better to generate new resources;
— which reforms and improves its procedures will be able to implement its policies for economic and social equality and resource generation and distribution more effectively;
— which works more fairly and accountably and is more prepared to devolve authority will be more open to popular participation and democratic procedures;
— which is organized and effective and enjoys public support will be stronger and more stable, thus contributing signally to the country's economic and social independence;
— which is well-organized and conscious of environmental issues will be a leading force in protecting the environment.

Effectively, support to building the capacity of public sector institutions should play an important role in achieving such results, which represent the general objectives for public administration development support. Such support will therefore be concentrated towards public administration development activities in "programme" countries which aim at:

— democratizing the structures and procedures of government;
— increasing the accessibility and accountability of the public sector to the people;
— ensuring that government services reach out more broadly, more equitably, and more openly, to increase the well-being and participation of the people;
— improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government programmes, systems and activities.

In the final analysis, SIDA support to public administration development aims at enabling governments to reform, improve, and perfect their existing systems, instruments and structures of government in order to execute their policies and programmes more democratically and effectively.

SIDA agrees to enter into cooperation programmes in the area of public administration development on the basis of a mutual understanding of these

general objectives, and is concerned to see that the effect of its support is to come closer to, rather than further away from, their attainment.

1.2 Some SIDA operational definitions as to public administration development

The process of public administration development is an almost inevitable component, or outcome, of any public programme. Logically, therefore, Swedish cooperation in almost any governmental programme entails also an element of support to public administration development. It is therefore necessary at this early stage to make some clear definitions as to what is considered for the purposes of this paper to be specifically a programme of public administration development, or "public administration sector support", and to indicate some further restrictions to which Sweden and SIDA are subject in terms of their own resources and capacities.

Within the broad range of systems and organizations which characterize a public administration, a differentiation can be made between those systems and organizations which provide a specific service, produce a specific product, or serve a specific end, and those which plan, provide and administer the means for reaching those objectives. Typically, the former take the form of *line ministries* and their subordinate bodies: Ministries and Departments of Health, Education, Defense, Industry, Agriculture, and so on.

Typically, the latter take the form of *function ministries* which not only have subordinate bodies but also link in to departments of the line ministries and their subordinates: Ministries and Departments of Finance, Trade, Planning, Public Administration, and Local Government, along with the related government systems of state banking, national statistics, physical planning, labour administration, et al. All these systems provide and regulate the fabric, organization and resources of the public sector and enable the ruling government to exercise power, accumulate and distribute resources, provide goods and services, maintain law and order, and implement its political programme.

For SIDA purposes, therefore, "support to public administration development" or "public administration sector support" refers exclusively to support to the development of these *enabling systems*, and a programme of cooperation in the field will typically be negotiated with one or more *function ministries*.

Thus, for example, a SIDA programme of "support to public administration development" will usually not be available to a "line" ministry *unless* this activity constitutes a sub-component of a general SIDA programme of support to the improvement of systems of national administration as a whole. In general, also, "support to public administration development" will

not be directed towards parastatal companies involved in production and marketing.

In its quality of interaction point between citizen and the state, local government has been given priority status by SIDA for development support. At this point, the operations of production, distribution, taxation, popular participation, service provision, administration and regulation, necessarily become tightly interwoven. For this reason, SIDA support to public administration development at the local level, and in particular, local government development, may often involve an approach that is wider than the "enabling systems approach" referred to above. However, the emphasis of a local government support programme will normally be put on actions designed to enable the local government to perform its functions, rather than directly on those functions themselves.

It is of course the case that other departments of SIDA cooperating with "line ministries" or parastatals in administrative development projects may take note of the relevant provisions of this paper. In particular, it is important that other departments take heed of the systems affected by their specific projects as regards their extension throughout the state as a whole, and coordinate and harmonize with other system development activities.

The evaluation of public administration performance is mostly concerned with judgements on the public sector's efficiency and effectiveness. It must be stressed that these concepts are both interlinked and value-laden, but for the purposes of this paper, *efficiency* is considered to be a measure of to what extent results have been achieved with the minimum necessary expenditure of time, energy and resources; while *effectiveness* is considered to be a measure of to what extent the desired objectives or results have been achieved. As regards the provision of a public *service*, its point is its effects, results and outcomes, and its providers, within the limits created by resource constraints, should be aiming at the best (most effective) possible provision of the services in question. In particular, it is worth remembering that achieving a given goal under circumstances where democracy and accountability are practiced is usually more expensive than is its achievement by other means. That is, democracy and accountability are rather inefficient as measured on a scale of costs, but are nonetheless much more desirable.

1.3 Functional areas given priority by SIDA

SIDA has limited resources and personnel for public administration development programmes — as is the case, of course, for any other of its programmes. As a result, SIDA as far as possible employs the principle of concentration of resources, to avoid spreading them so thin that they have no discernible effect, and to prevent SIDA's own administrative capacity becoming overburdened. Thus, the fact that SIDA considers "support to

public administration development" to embrace potentially a wide number of systems in the public sector does not mean that SIDA can in any one country undertake to be involved in support to all such systems. In each country context, the concerned government should thus identify its priorities and decide where to concentrate SIDA support.

SIDA has developed a good deal of experience in support to particular systems and areas, deriving also from its identification in practice of the most common and most priority needs and weaknesses in administration. This also means that SIDA has developed closer contacts with a range of tested and experienced institutions and consultants in these areas. Thus SIDA prioritizes the following more specific areas within the field of "systems development" for support, and is reluctant to take on projects outside them:

— financial management, including auditing and taxation systems, state bank organization and modernization, and public procurement;
— base services supporting planning work, in particular statistics and physical planning services;
— public organization and management development;
— development of relevant administrative training capacity; and
— local government organization.

SIDA gives particular weight to a combination of training and consultancy in each of these areas, accompanied where necessary by support to improving infrastructures and equipment.

1.4 The issue of contextualization

The emphasis of this paper is above all that of *contextualization*: each country presents a specific real socio-cultural, political-economic conjuncture in time, and above all support to public administration must be sensitive to that reality. Most of SIDA's programmes and accumulated experiences with support to public administration development are based in the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, and most of the reflections contained in this document are derived from the study and consideration of specific African countries and their experiences and needs. While the paper itself tends to generalize to Africa, its recommendations and conclusions will need to be reconsidered in the specific country context of each new programme. Thus, while this paper may offer inspiration, it is not necessarily relevant to the realities of public administration in Central American or Asian countries, where SIDA's experience is limited.

As an important aspect of the principle of contextualization, understanding and respect for countries' political, social and administrative cul-

ture are essential to the undertaking of public administration development programmes. Cultural stress easily arises in the context of administrative modernization, as this impacts directly on people's political life, relations and values. Government leaders tend to propose modernizing administrative reforms which are based in the primacy of a set of values such as punctuality, individual initiative, prior loyalty to the employing organization, promotion by merit, efficiency, and individual responsibility. These values may conflict with other widely-held values in the society, such as prior loyalty to the family, collective execution, centralization of decision-making authority in the eldest, and so on.

Administration, and its reform and development, are also inevitably concerned with the relations of power in a country. Changes in administration are changes in the exercise of power, and reform measures are often intended to reduce one fraction's powers in relation to another's. Thus administrative reform projects are usually conflictual, and in analysing their content, it is essential to understand precisely who benefits and who loses by their implementation.

Cultural and political conflicts may thus often lie behind apparently "ineffective" management, that is, that the management being done prioritizes other ends than the alleged one. SIDA, for example, proposes for programmes of public administration development the objectives of improved government efficiency and effectiveness. These concepts can be defined as:

— efficiency: getting the thing done right;
— effectiveness: getting the right thing done.

The word "right" in these phrases immediately points up the underlying value dimension involved. Evaluations of public administration tend to measure efficiency and effectiveness in terms of cost-benefit criteria, and quantify costs and benefits in ways which ignore other possible values and benefits.

Such conflicts are inherent to the process of administrative modernization, but they can be aggravated by external involvement through support programmes. On the one hand, the cooperation partners may not observe the conflicts or understand the issues involved. They may, unwittingly or deliberately, take sides. On the other, the cooperators bring their own values, priorities, and issues into the arena. Foreign value systems will thus inevitably mark programmes of external support, but Swedish partners must be adequately prepared so that they understand the context of the programme and the issues and values involved.

It follows logically from the consideration of the overriding objectives

for Swedish support to developing countries and of the specific objectives of Swedish support to public administration development, that such support is concerned with the strengthening of government capacity to administer its own normal programme effectively. In general, therefore, it is a principle of Swedish support that its administration be integrated into the ordinary structures, procedures and routines of the government in question. Separate project administration systems should not be built, and aid-funded activities should not be detached from the normal systems of the recipient country.

Indeed, in line with its analysis of the effects that foreign aid has had on recipient countries, SIDA is particularly concerned at the present to ensure that the responsibility for planning, managing and administering the support it provides should firmly rest with the recipient government. All too much of the responsibility of Third World governments for policy-making and implementation is being taken over by international agencies, and SIDA is determined that its support should work in the opposite direction. In this context, SIDA will work to ensure that its support to public administration in fact develops the recipient's capacity to cope to an ever-increasing extent on the basis of its own resources with the planning and administration of activities under its sphere of responsibility (including the SIDA-supported public administration development programme itself). Its support should lead to sustainable results, and not be focussed on providing foreign manpower to carry out short-term implementation activities.

1.5 SIDA work methods in supporting the development of public administration

The process of cooperation for the development of public administration capacity is a complex one, which overwhelmingly involves the mutual exchange of knowledge and skills. The word *mutual* needs to be stressed in the light of the discussion of culture and politics above. In order for their skills and knowledge to become relevant and useful to their partners in cooperation, SIDA-contracted administrators will have to ensure that they learn from their counterparts, valorize existing achievements, and make their knowledge applicable within the given total context. Fruitful cooperation cannot proceed on the assumption of ready formulas, inputs and models for easy transfer. The support that Sweden can provide is that of facilitation of the attainment of the counterpart government's aims and objectives. Cooperating Swedish (or other) institutions can most usefully act in the role of catalysers and supporters of change, in the context of a process controlled by the counterpart institution in the country concerned.

SIDA's preferred approach to the process of public administration development is that of *institution-building*. In relation to a government system to be developed, a set of identified problems to be resolved or

changes to be made, SIDA will usually recommend that the cooperation programme concentrate on building and developing the capacity of the institution which is responsible for taking care of the given system or activity.

As regards system development, this will mean that both the system and its "caretaker" institution will be the focus of cooperation, which often necessarily also involves other national and local bodies. Even so, the approach will be to assist the "caretaker" to develop and administer the system, not to take over the developing and administering of the system.

In a situation where a request is received for assistance with an activity or problem which is specific to the institution, SIDA's emphasis on institution-building may often mean developing a joint programme which has wider impact than just in the specific problem area.

In this light, a government concerned with improving its public administration with assistance from SIDA should first identify its priorities for administrative development and select a particular system or subsystem, and its related responsible institution, as the focus for the cooperation programme.

SIDA itself, in relation to its objectives, including the specific goal of ensuring adequate contextualization, will upon receiving the cooperation request, ask to be accompanied and assisted in undertaking an analysis of the concerned public sector or sub-sector as a whole, as a necessary preliminary step to conclusively defining the cooperation programme. It regards a careful and thorough process of context analysis and project planning as being an essential stage in setting up a cooperation programme, without which the chances of misdirected and damaging inputs being made are very high. SIDA is interested in this analysis being carried out with the participation of researchers from the country itself, and is also willing to make use of other research and analysis of relevance which has already been carried out, in order not to duplicate efforts and waste government time. The analysis procedure is further examined in Appendix 1.

Specific short-term objectives should be defined within a framework of long-term and more strategic objectives. This means that SIDA together with the partner government will as clearly as possible stipulate those concrete results which should arise from the institution-building cooperation over a fixed period of time. This will avoid the programme side-tracking from its essential features, prevent it from spreading itself out endlessly in time, and permit the activities to be evaluated with some precision.

Nonetheless, within the perspective of institution-building, SIDA is concerned to lay the ground for a process of long-term cooperation, where the partner government can count on a support perspective of five years or more, and where the programme will operate with a two- to three-year rolling

cooperation plan. This is because the process of developing institutional capacity is necessarily lengthy, the more so because the foreign cooperators themselves need time to understand the context adequately.

SIDA experience indicates that a useful principle for such cooperation programmes is that they should be organized along the lines of *institutional cooperation*. This involves matching or "twinning" the national institution with a foreign partner institution, where the two institutions have a similar area of responsibility, comparable corporate skills, and thus a compatible working experience. In the area of support to local government development, this matching may even take the form of "twinning" cities or local authorities. SIDA then assigns to the cooperating institutions broad contractual and implementative responsibility. This form of cooperation allows for the coherent stepwise development of the programme as well as for the most suitable and flexible combination of long-term personnel, short-term consultancies, study visits, short and long-duration training, and provision of necessary equipment. It is important to emphasize in regard to such programmes, nonetheless, that the recipient institution should ensure that personnel sent out by the "sister" institution be provided with direct counterparts, to permit the organized creation of a mutual learning environment.

In terms of its policy of successively transferring responsibility for programmes to recipient countries, SIDA will discuss with the national institution it agrees to support as to the division of responsibilities between SIDA, the institution, and the proposed "sister" organization. Where it seems feasible, the administration of the mutually agreed and defined programme will be handed over to the recipient national institution in its entirety, including the responsibility for identifying and tendering to contract suitable support organizations. In this case, SIDA may assist in identifying suitable organizations, and will take the responsibility of following up the programme regularly in order to assess its functioning and its attainment of the objectives agreed between the recipient and SIDA.

Where this approach does not seem to be feasible (for instance because the recipient institution is unfamiliar or unequipped to deal with the administrative and contracting procedures involved), SIDA will as a first step in implementing the agreed programme of cooperation, seek to engage suitably qualified Swedish organizations and institutions. Where such are not forthcoming, or where there is a motivated government request, or where the circumstances otherwise so incline, SIDA may also look further abroad for suitable cooperation partner institutions. One clear instance is the case of language difficulties; another, that of Swedish institutions' capacities becoming inadequate in circumstances where similar programmes are demanded by an increasing number of countries.

The engagement of partner institutions will generally be done by public

competitive tender, except where special overriding considerations point out a single organization as being by definition the most suitable partner. SIDA will include in the programme various language teaching and other training programmes for the identified Swedish (or other) cooperating institutions and consultants, to prepare and to contextualize the intended participants in the needs and realities of the partner country. Training will include seminars, preparatory visits, or periods of approbatory employment. SIDA regards it as being essential that the external personnel involved in cooperation programmes be fully prepared for their tasks so that they are able to give their best to the programme.

SIDA is also considering a programme to train and prepare potential consultants and institutions in advance, to broaden the future base of recruitment.

In planning a programme, SIDA regards it as sensible not only to allow for a long-term perspective, but also to start up the cooperation in a slow and careful manner. This allows the new cooperating partners time to prepare for each other, learn to know each other, and establish their mutual compatibility, as well as to identify possible errors in project planning and direction, before large investments have been made.

SIDA itself will retain a steady contact base with ongoing programmes of institutional cooperation through the annual or biennial holding of sector reviews in the partner country, where the progress of the agreement will be evaluated. After a lengthy period of operation of a programme, SIDA may also request the partner government to permit an independent outside evaluation.

In the light of what has been said above, it is important once again to refer to the issue of context. The procedures and methods illustrated above refer to public administration sector support in what may be called a "normal" situation. In specific contexts where it is evident that a country badly needs immediate help in a crisis situation or to a failing institution, SIDA may be prepared to provide rapid assistance which is fundamentally aimed at providing consultants to carry out the necessary measures/directly by themselves. This contradicts most of the principles laid out above, and is not SIDA's preferred method of work, but it may be necessary in some situations.

As the basis of public administration development cooperation consists largely in a continuous process of learning and specialization, it is usually a feature of such programmes that a number of scholarships will be included. In principle, SIDA is concerned that the studies undertaken be directly linked to the candidate's job situation, and is more interested in supporting the creation of relevant courses and study programmes at the national level than in financing numbers of long-term degree studies abroad. However, in

this regard, one of SIDA's major contributions to building national government capacity can be that of financing studies abroad for people who will become public administration trainers and be able to spread their learning on a wider scale at home.

2. SIDA POLICY GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC AREAS
2.1 Supporting the state

Any analysis of African countries in the circumstances of the world today indicates that their governments are operating under severe outside pressures, problematic legitimacy constraints, considerable political stress, and a desperate shortage of resources. With few exceptions, governments rule over societies shaken by increasing insecurity and endemic poverty. There are common reasons for this, as well as reasons specific to each country. Common to all are the swelling debt burden, the increased dependence on the world market and on foreign aid and loans, the burgeoning of the population, the impoverishment of the soil and exhaustion of other natural resources, and unfavourable changes in environmental conditions. In many countries, the government itself bears some responsibility for many of these problems, inter alia through its pursuit of imprudent price, wage, lending, and investment policies.

The analysis SIDA has made of these circumstances has led to the conclusion that the role of government has become even more vital and central than before. In each case, there may well be argument over what the government should or should not be involved in, with corresponding room for change, but in general, the only organization in any condition to meet the crisis, to take measures to support the poorest and most stricken sectors of the population, to coordinate development efforts, to negotiate with the outside world, and to maintain a degree of direction in the political and economic life of the country, is the legitimate government of the country.

In this context, SIDA regards the process of support to the development of public sector administrative capacity and the reform of public administration as being not only well motivated, but indeed crucial.

Under current conditions, however, reform activities need to be applied with even more context sensitivity and work towards a clear future goal, and they have to be undertaken at a pace and on a scale which ensure that they do not undermine or overthrow more than they build and develop. SIDA support should be negotiated in such a way that it enjoys broad legitimacy in the recipient government; and it should be provided in such a way that it does not create new forms of dependency or overload the recipient government.

Through its principles and experiences, SIDA has developed the following policy guidelines for support to administrative development in a number of specific areas. These areas are those for which SIDA feels it is best able to organize competent support. In identifying these specific areas, it may be noted that all of them are more or less tightly interconnected: for example, state finance policies, other macroeconomic policies, and person-

nel and labour policies are interdependent. In this very real sense, the public sector is a single "support sector", even though it is divided up among distinct specialized institutions. Accordingly, SIDA may find it acceptable to support several programmes in different parts of the public sector, and request the recipient government to coordinate the management of the various programmes.

The following sections summarize the essence of these sub- sectoral policy guidelines; the underlying argumentation which supports these recommendations is to be found in Part II.

2.2 SIDA Policy on support to the planning and management of public finances

Government finance policy constitutes its strategy for the allocation of material resources and of labour within the economy. It directs or conditions the processes of accumulation and of transformation of the economy. The effective capacity of a government to determine its own financial policy is a clear indicator of its real independence. For development to take place in accordance with the government's political programme, it is imperative that the state consolidates its capacity to formulate and pursue coherent financial policies.

Economic crisis in African countries has led to a large amount of attention being paid recently to economic restructuring through changes in finance policy and tightening of financial management. These measures have put ever more pressure on already fraught governments, and have often overtaken their capacity to follow and control what is going on. They have in some cases also had alarming effects on social services and on the fabric of the public service. In this regard, SIDA has been studying ways to apply economic adjustment measures which would have less damaging effects in these areas, as well as new strategies for reducing the poorest countries' debt burden. Against this background, support to improvement of financial policy-making and management has become increasingly important. SIDA therefore regards financial management as one of its priority areas for support.

SIDA assistance to government financial management, within the limits to which it is subject, will be advised by the following policy guidelines:

- SIDA support to financial administration is in the first place geared towards enabling assisted governments within their programmes to make best possible use of their resources for promoting economic growth, national independence, and effective public services, while improving accountability to the public and increasing democratic participation in governance.

- SIDA in principle takes a positive stance towards requests from programme countries for support to their financial administration, particularly in the context of managing economic reforms and coping with economic crisis.
- SIDA is concerned that its support to financial administration should be based on the development of the capacities of national financial organizations and administrators to analyse, understand, and thence manage the country's finances autonomously, both under normal circumstances and in situations of crisis and rapid change. Central to this is assisting financial managers to understand financial policies in their macro-economic context.
- SIDA will finance appropriate training programmes, study visits and scholarships, to enable the partner government to build up its own long-term financial management competence.
- SIDA support to financial administration and related economic administration will prioritize:

— assistance to the improvement of the state system of procurement, procurement via import, and import operations management;
— assistance to the development of systems to monitor and coordinate international cooperation aid; and
— assistance to the decentralization and democratization of financial administration, in particular as a key to the real development of effective local government (see 2.5. below).

- In the context of the need to implement reforms or adjustments in the economy, SIDA is prepared to assist partner governments in developing the capacity to formulate and implement effective and sensitive policies in which the medium and long-term economic effects of measures proposed to be applied are complemented by appropriate social policies protecting the interests of the poorest and most exposed groups in society. In this context, SIDA is prepared to support a process of policy dialogue, where concerned governments are able to maintain contact with institutions and experts with experience with the processes and outcomes of other structural adjustment programmes.
- In supporting financial administration, SIDA will promote increased coordination among organizations in the financial system, such as Ministries of Finance, Planning, Cooperation, Labour, Public Administration, and Trade.
- SIDA is in principle prepared to assist in the modernization, rationalization and reorganization of central state banks to augment their efficiency and income-generating capacity, on the basis of at least

medium-term institutional cooperation.

- SIDA is prepared to assist with the computerization of Finance Ministries and central banks where it is shown by feasibility analysis that this will contribute significantly to the efficiency and effectiveness of these organs in the areas which it is proposed to computerize.

2.3 Policy on support to government planning and monitoring activities

The effectiveness of government policies and programmes, as well as of planning for future development, is extremely conditioned by the quality and coverage of the information which the government has at its disposal, as well as by the capacity to analyse and use such information. Involved in the process of collecting and using information are both the systems and means of collection and communication applied, as well as the analysis of the information received and its posterior circulation and use by the various concerned elements in society.

Access to information is also an important element in the process of democratic participation and government accountability to the public.

In this context, SIDA will apply the following criteria:

- Through institutional cooperation, SIDA is prepared to assist in the development of competent national statistical services, from local level up to central offices.
- As an essential part of this process, SIDA will finance and promote the creation of accompanying services dedicated to the circulation, dissemination, and publicizing of statistical and other information in accessible form.
- In consultation with authorities involved in administrative development and local government implantation, SIDA may be prepared to assist in the building up of communication links between local governments and the central administration.
- Although it is an area where SIDA has relatively little experience, SIDA is prepared to consider requests for support in relation to medium-term development planning, preferably in the context of greater integration of the concerned "function" ministries, notably the Ministries of Finance, Cooperation, and Planning.
- In relation to planning of the physical infrastructure of a country, SIDA is prepared to assist in the development of publicly accessible and accountable physical planning services. In principle, SIDA regards it as being important that physical planning be a consultative exercise with the public affected, and in particular, gives greater priority to the development of physical planning skills as a component of local government services.

2.4 Policy on administrative development and reform

Financial administration constitutes only one of the major systems of administration and management in a government. The systems for the deployment, administration, and organization of the human resources of the state are equally important. In Africa, the shortage of resources and the problems of communication mean that the personnel of the state is often heavily centralized, imperfectly trained and integrated, underpaid, and inefficient, while management itself fails to unify and organize the available staff into the effective attainment of the government's goals. The whole area of state organization, personnel policy, and management, is one which is important to support, develop, and reform.

As a general principle, but specially in the current circumstances of rapid change in African political economy, it is considered important to ensure that reform is undertaken in incremental steps with adequate consolidation time, rather than any attempts being made to effectuate rapid global change of the entire administration and its methods and systems.

Management training has in practice been one of the the principal tools applied to bringing about improvement and reform, often at high cost and with little real effect. Many problems are not problems that can be resolved by training alone. Growing experience indicates that the success of reform activities is determined by the political legitimacy of the reform process, as well as by the reform implementation taking the form of a combination of ongoing action research, different modes of relevant training, and organization consultancy.

When assessing proposed administrative reform programmes, the following guidelines will be applied:

- SIDA considers in principle that a constant and steady process of administrative modernization, development, and reform is important to support, should it respect and be designed to reach the following goals:

  — to make government less bureaucratic and more accessible and accountable;
  — to make government less centralized and more participatory;
  — to make government more efficient and effective in the implementation of its programme.

- SIDA will assist the carrying out of public sector reviews, through which the performance of the public sector is evaluated and appropriate reform programmes developed, and will give support to the regular repetition or institutionalization of review procedures.
- SIDA will be concerned to have evidence that the reform programme

is properly contextualized in national reality, takes heed of national culture and available resources, and is conceded a wide base of legitimacy by the public.

- SIDA is prepared to provide assistance to the development of public administration policy in such areas as the structure of government, the development of local government, taxation policy, et al., through financing a process of policy dialogue.
- SIDA looks favourably upon reform programmes which include a broad revision, improvement, and flexibilization of personnel policy and personnel management and administration in all its aspects, in the light of the problems discussed above.
- SIDA is particularly aware of the problem of brain drain from the public sector and will support actions to reverse it. However, in the light of not increasing government dependency on external agencies, SIDA will not in its programmes give support to financing civil servants' salaries, nor employ them in parallel to or outside of the civil service, except in those cases where it is government policy to allow civil servants to be employed as independent consultants as part of their government service contract.
- SIDA will give priority to improvement and reform processes aimed at specially important sectors of the administration, or at sectors which display damaging weaknesses in the context of the whole administration. In particular, SIDA will support activities designed to improve public sector management capacity, at local as well as at central levels.
- SIDA will in most cases look for a combination of management reform, public consultation, improvement of routines and communication, reduction of compartmentalization, delegation of authority, active organizational consultancy, context-related training, and constant monitoring procedures, as the best approach to reform work.
- SIDA will be prepared to support training programmes designed to contribute to administrative improvement or reform, and will evaluate the proposals according to the criteria that:

— they are contextualized in the national (and local) reality and in the wider objectives of the reform;
— they are relevant, adult learner centred, oriented to problem-solving, and applied to work-place realities and needs;
— they give grounds to conclude that the appropriate trainees will be selected and that effective follow-up procedures will be undertaken.

- In supporting training, SIDA will give priority to programmes which promise the development of skills in public sector management, at central and/or local level.
- SIDA will promote a process of government capacitation to undertake its own administrative review, reform and training programmes, specifically by financing the training of organization consultants and administration trainers, and the developing of consultancy/training institutions.
- In developing training institutions and infrastructure, it is crucial that a proposed institution be closely supported at high levels, and be able to maintain its relevance, mediatory capacity, and operative legitimacy vis a vis the public service.
- SIDA encourages the creation of trainer-consultants whose job description combines work in the administration, organizational consultancy, and training.
- Given the general lack of knowledge about organizational culture and management constraints in developing countries, SIDA is prepared to finance research into public sector management and public administration, especially in connection with sector analyses, review commission work, and SIDA-funded reform projects.
- It should be noted that SIDA strongly prefers to work with a single central government agency or coordinatory board as cooperation and dialogue partner, who will take responsibility both for the setting of priorities between the various proposed sub-programmes, and for the global coordination, monitoring and control of the administrative development sub-programmes supported by SIDA.

2.5 SIDA policy on decentralization and local government

The term decentralization describes a process whereby the organizational forms for the exercise of political power are changed spatially. Decentralization involves the relations of power between central and local institutions. It is not necessarily desirable or undesirable; it may take many different forms and respond to diverse motivations.

The devolution of powers to local government constitutes one of the strongest forms of decentralization, and can be an important step to increasing popular representation in government as well as government accountability to those most directly affected by its acts. It can also be the case that a well-functioning local government can contribute signally to the efficiency and effectiveness of the process of government as a whole. Local government can be built up most effectively by local consideration of what issues it is important to administer locally, and the effective transfer of the necessary

functions, powers and resources to take over those issues.

In relation to support to government decentralization and the development of local government, SIDA will be guided by the following considerations:

- SIDA, noting that decentralization per se is not necessarily desirable, considers that appropriate decentralization of government can be an important step towards fuller democratic participation and government effectiveness.
- In principle, therefore, SIDA will provide support to programmes which enhance citizen participation in the making and implementation of decisions on programmes of local relevance, and increase the degree of representative and accountable government. In analysing programmes involving forms of decentralization, SIDA will prioritize these outcomes over specific institutional arrangements.
- In particular, SIDA will support programmes for the development and improvement of representative, democratic, and accountable local government.
- Depending on the characteristics and history of each country, those in power may consider it desirable to build up tiers of government in greater or lesser numbers, and at substantially different levels. SIDA will be concerned to analyse whether development of government at levels away from the centre:

— in fact makes government more accessible and responsive;
— significantly increases government effectiveness.

- SIDA is studying the possibility of specifically supporting the development of urban government, perhaps principally through cooperation projects within city twinning programmes, as it is evident that urbanization is a phenomenon taking place at an ever-increasing rate, and with ever more problematic consequences, in even the poorest of countries. In terms of SIDA's general objectives, support to improving urban government and urban services is of great contemporary importance in promoting economic growth, reaching the poorest sectors of the population, and also protecting the environment.
- SIDA is prepared to support the regionalization of government, the development of government structures at district level, and/or the strengthening of village-level government, on the basis of these considerations. Urban government development may also be supported, in the context of a general local government reform, or in the context

of promoting regional development. It is the case that cities and towns are interlinked with (and often dependent on) the surrounding rural economy, and can be the key to rural development in their vicinity.

- SIDA is prepared to support a process of policy dialogue and generalizable pilot activities to develop government policies in relation to the organization of local government.

- Given that effective local government requires access to and control over resources, SIDA will evaluate programmes envisaging the development of local government in terms of their degree of effective transfer to local agencies, of human, financial, and material resources, as well as their degree of transfer of decision-making power over them.

- SIDA will preferentially support programmes which begin by analysis of local needs and capacities, and transfer in stages corresponding concrete government powers, functions, responsibilities and resources to locally-accountable public bodies. In this regard, SIDA considers it important that a general decentralizing reform be preceded by a series of representative and generalizable pilot programmes. To gain sustainability and legitimacy, local government needs to function effectively.

- SIDA support to creating sustainable local government can take the form of helping to remove obstacles to its functioning, inter alia through providing basic equipment and accommodation and assisting with training of local decision-makers and functionaries.

- SIDA will promote programmes designed to institutionalize local government accountability through public dissemination of information about activities under local responsibility and increased local participation in making and implementing decisions. It will also promote the development of activities which stimulate local mobilization and participation in decision-making, election of representatives, and implementation of concrete programmes.

- Taking into account that there are different ways of institutionalizing democracy in government, SIDA will support local administrative development where the forms chosen presage a process of evolution towards democracy and accountability. The possibility of support to more "traditional" structures of local government will rest upon this criterion.

- SIDA technical assistance to local government development will preferably take institutional cooperation forms. One model is that of twinning between cities or districts. Another is that of institutional support to the central authority charged with the implementation of

local government development programmes. In the latter case, SIDA will devote attention to whether supporting such a central authority in fact works for or against strengthening local governments.

- SIDA support to the development of local government and administration will concentrate on the development of general governing and administrative capacity, notably as regards financial administration, as well as the development of the skills of local government officers and technicians. At local levels, distinctions between the sectors are often blurred, and the main function of effective local government is to undertake concrete programmes with local contribution, in the areas of health, education, transport and so on. For SIDA's part, therefore, support to technical skills training constitutes a fundamental component of local government development.

- Among such technical skills, SIDA will be prepared to support the development of physical planning services in the context of local government development, as a means of increasing local government influence over local projects, in the spirit of creating a consultative and enabling local service for the public, and on condition that it be publicly accessible and accountable.

2.6 SIDA policy on promotion of women in the public sector

It is one of SIDA's guiding principles that greater social equity, including between men and women, should be an outcome of Swedish assistance. Women should be encouraged and assisted to attend courses, to apply for promotion, and to engage themselves fully in reform programmes, as well as to make use of fora for public sector accountability to press for correct and equal treatment by government structures.

- In the process of coming to agreement on a cooperation programme, SIDA will be concerned to include among its objectives and contents the ways in which the programme should incorporate women, affect women, and promote the equality of women in society.

- SIDA will insist in the course of the development of public administration cooperation programmes that governments make serious efforts to include, promote, and reward women. In evaluating the outcomes of programmes, SIDA will specifically study their impact on women and include the findings among the criteria for continuation of support.

- SIDA is positive to financing programmes for the training and promotion of women in the public sector, especially as managers, as well as the provision of special facilities for women in training institutions.

2.7 *SIDA policy on public administration cooperation between countries at regional level.*

Regional programmes are useful as a lead in exchanging experiences and creating bases for subsequent national programmes along the same lines. In this way, they can exercise a catalytic effect in promoting the improvement or reform of public administration in the countries involved. In certain fields, notably those of policy development, increased regional cohesion, and specialist training, programmes arranged on a regional basis may also offer a number of benefits. They can provide a base for training and professional exchange in the context of similar services in several countries (such as statistics or auditing), and where the numbers to be trained in each participating country are very low.

Regional work can be developed on the basis of a single central institution or on the basis of a network of institutions through the region which complement or overlap each other. The former model is only likely to be acceptable if the institution has grown on a regional basis and has worked in such a way that it has conquered a position of respect and prestige through providing services which are recognized by the region as being relevant and sensitive to each country's needs. The latter model involves regional programmes becoming a sharing of tasks on the basis of each institution achieving a suitable level of competence, and the programme developing on a collective basis. A hybrid model is also possible, where one "central" institution contributes to building up other institutions elsewhere in the region, in the process gradually effecting a transition to a network model.

SIDA is thus guided by the following criteria in relation to proposed regional cooperation projects in the field of public administration development:

- Though it is not much interested in supporting regional programmes, SIDA is prepared to consider supporting the development of regional cooperation projects in public administration, on the following basis:

  - the contemplated region should possess enough linkages and similarities for the project to allow meaningful exchanges, in preference in the context of an already-existing umbrella organization for regional collaboration; that is, the region should be "naturally" formed and self- sustaining as such;
  - the project should be based on concrete needs identified in all the participating countries;
  - the project should indicate how its execution would benefit the participating countries, administratively, socially and economically;
  - the project should have a long-term character, and tend to increase the degree of cooperation between the countries and institutions involved;

— it is a recommendation for such a project that it saves money or provides otherwise unavailable services for the participating countries.

- SIDA will expect one of the participating countries to take the role of project executor. The same country will usually begin by making available the necessary basic infrastructural facilities for the proposed activities (lodging, classrooms, etc.), though SIDA prefers that this role be gradually spread among the countries if they so desire.
- SIDA will be concerned to finance concrete activities, (usually in the areas of training, research, consultancy, and reform planning) and is not interested in developing "regional" infrastructure, such as training institutes, boarding colleges, and the like. SIDA prefers that the "regional" approach should strengthen institutions and service provision in all the participating countries, rather than trying to create any single "lead" institution.
- SIDA is also favourable to supporting regional networking and professional exchange.

3. THE ROLE OF SIDA AND INSTITUTIONAL CONSULTANTS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

SIDA by its nature is not an executing body in the process of support to public administration. SIDA assumes the role of negotiating support programmes in the first instance, and this involves the responsibility of ensuring that the agreed programme is formed in such a way that:

— it is properly negotiated with and anchored in the recipient government;
— it is credible as to its practicability, relevance, and contextual insertion;
— its objectives and plan are competently, coherently, and clearly laid out and agreed upon between SIDA and the recipient;
— its objectives are satisfactory to SIDA and the Swedish Government and people, in accordance with the principles laid out in this paper.

The methods which SIDA applies to meet these responsibilities — sector analysis, project preparation, sector review, and project evaluation — are outlined in Appendix 1.

Thereafter, SIDA assumes the role of adviser, in some cases of contractor of consultancy services on behalf of the recipient government, and of programme monitor and evaluator. It is in the first case SIDA's duty to see that the programme complies with its general and specific objectives. SIDA also has an important role in ensuring that proposed changes do not contradict the spirit of the principles and objectives initially laid out for the programme; that is, SIDA regards each programme as being formed on the basis of a mutual agreement, for changes to which it must give its approval.

The actual execution of programmes is thus laid upon the recipient government acting with the support of (a) consultancy organization(s). As already stated, SIDA sees this collaboration preferentially in the form of the government receiving assistance which enables it to execute the programme largely by itself (with the possible exception of crisis situations).

The form of this collaboration is laid out in the initial agreement, and as far as SIDA is concerned it best takes the form of institutional cooperation as previously defined. Such cooperation may well be complemented by other specific consultancy inputs, for example, where the government requests short-term counterparts for the process of policy dialogue.

The role of the institutional consultant is thus to ensure that its collaboration enables the government to execute the programme during its operation, and to continue to execute the programme afterwards; given that in most cases the "programme" involves developing systems and procedures of government which are continuous whether SIDA supports them or not. Where the consultant assumes a directly operative executive role, this is still in the spirit of ensuring that the methods of executing the work done are transferred to the government institution. This implies that within the pro-

cess of institutional cooperation, it is still essential to apply the counterpart system.

The consultant ideally needs to be involved in the initial planning of the programme, and should be involved in the "rolling" on-going planning of the programme as it unfolds. The consultant also needs to be fully cognizant of the outcomes of the initial studies which are done to ground the programme in its context and assess the forms of its feasibility.

The personnel provided on a short and long-term basis to the programme need to be fully prepared to take their part, both through training before entering the programme and through a process of "nonformal" training on the job, provided by the recipient institution and its personnel, notably the assigned counterpart(s). SIDA is prepared to finance the initial training, though an institutional consultant is responsible for seeing that its personnel in fact receive the quality, kind, and quantity of training that is necessary.

An institutional consultant is given an important "monopoly" in a tutelage situation, and is thus responsible for ensuring:

— that its personnel are fully competent;
— that it takes care to identify and respect the recipient institution's organizational culture, reputation, statute, and decision-making;
— that it observes closely and defends both the general and the specific objectives of the programme;
— that it facilitates the achievement of the objectives of the programme and ensures the sustainability of its support after the programme ends.

Involved in this responsibility is the duty to make sure that the advice it gives is fully grounded in the country and institutional context and is professionally competent. In particular, the mechanistic transfer of structures, values, techniques, procedures, and ideas from the consultant institution to the recipient is not a suitable method of work to adopt.

The consultant institution thus has first and foremost a duty to learn from the recipient institution, and to take on a sharing pedagogical role firmly based in this learning.

The various procedures contemplated in the contract signed with the consultant, as regards reporting, training and placement of personnel, purchase and installation of equipment, and so on, are intended to provide a formal framework for the realization of these responsibilities in practice.

SIDA and the recipient government have thus a powerful responsibility to choose a suitable consultant institution in the first place, as far as possible ensuring mutual compatibility, and to follow up, accompany, direct and control its work in the direction of the achievement of the aims of the programme.

Given that the work done under the programme has two complementary objectives — to build up and perfect some system of government, and to strengthen the recipient institution's capacity to develop, operate and manage that system — it is also the case that the system will have impact on the work of other government organizations. This implies that the programme must be broadly anchored politically in the recipient government, and that the recipient institution must on this basis organize and facilitate the extension of the work into other government institutions: which in any case should be its normal responsibility in terms of its role as "caretaker" of that system. In this regard, the consultant institution, to the extent that it also works with other institutions, must be prepared also to learn about them and treat them with proper respect.

The process of institution-building in the final analysis involves capacitating its personnel. SIDA thus regards it as essential to the achievement of the aims of cooperation programmes that the recipient government and institution as far as is possible avoid transferring personnel, and in particular counterpart personnel, to other, unrelated, stations.

Where applicable, SIDA regards it as beneficial to both consultant and government institutions that they also engage national consultants in the carrying out of the programme.

PART II

Framework for Support to Public Administration in the African Context

4. BACKGROUND: AFRICAN STATES IN DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Summary

Any analysis of African countries in the circumstances of the world today indicates that their governments are operating under severe outside pressures, problematic legitimacy constraints, considerable political stress, and a desperate shortage of resources. With few exceptions, governments rule over societies which are shaken by increasing insecurity and endemic poverty. There are common reasons for this, as well as reasons specific to each country. Common to all are the swelling debt burden, the increased dependence on the world market and on foreign aid and loans, the burgeoning of the population, the increasing impoverishment of the soil and exhaustion of other natural resources, and unfavourable changes in environmental conditions. In many countries, the government itself bears some responsibility for many of these problems, inter alia through its pursuit of imprudent price, wage, and investment policies.

The analysis made of these circumstances has led to the conclusion that it has become even more vital than before that the government plays its role democratically and effectively. In each case, there may well be argument over what the government should or should not be involved in, with corresponding room for change, but in general, the only organization in any condition to meet the crisis, to take measures to support the poorest and most stricken sectors of the population, to coordinate development efforts, to negotiate with the outside world, and to maintain a degree of direction in the political and economic life of the country, is the legitimate government of the country.

In this context, the process of support to the development of public sector administrative capacity and the reform of public administration is not only well motivated, but indeed crucial.

4.2 The central role of the state

In most African states, the organs of state have played an active role in most spheres of society. In many countries, this presence extended into the officializing of many activities which in other societies are undertaken by non-governmental entities. The state has usually been closely involved in the detailed running of many sectors of the economy, undertakes a complex directive role in development planning and its execution, and is the major investor, consumer and employer in the country. Planning and decision-making are usually extremely centralized. Political life has usually been characterized — in those countries with which SIDA cooperates — by the central and fairly stable monopoly role of the political party which led the way to Independence. This monopoly role is exercised either in the form of a

single-party state or a multi-party state in which the leading party is very dominant.

The process of economic decline through the 1980's and the application of the remedies of structural adjustment have greatly reduced the legitimacy of the state and to some extent constricted and changed its role. Changes in Eastern Europe as well as the state's loss of legitimacy are opening the doors in many previously one-party states for the introduction of multi-party systems. Most states that tried to apply a socialist development model, after being badly damaged by destabilization, have now postponed or abandoned the attempt and set about creating a "free market" economy. However, the inherent weaknesses in the private sector in Africa mean that the state still retains a very central role. Where it has been unable to maintain that role, the result has been that substantial parts of the economy and the social sectors have been neglected or abandoned, or turned into aid projects, rather than being taken over by new national actors.

4.3 The colonial roots of the state

Most African states that SIDA works with have a relatively recent history of decolonization, Ethiopia excepted. As colonies, they were subject to Britain, to South Africa, or to Portugal; many of them were also subject to South African economic presence and political influence. Colonial government was foreign, and its emphasis was on control, so the forms it took were authoritarian, highly centralized, and resistant to citizen participation. Indeed, most of the colonies contained a dual administration, one for the colonists and one for the Africans. Much of the governing machinery was created to ensure the regulation of the economy.

Both British and Portuguese colonial government incorporated in its lowest tiers, the remnants of pre-colonial governing authority, whose real power it had first been necessary to break for colonization to take place. The extreme expression of this model was set up by South Africa in Namibia. Thus in most cases, the included elements of traditional government had little legitimacy or power, and had to participate in the processes of colonial control: collection of taxes, maintenance of order, and control of labour. Their incorporation into colonial governance largely removed their previous forms of popular accountability.

The relics of precolonial government and the dual colonial administration constituted the models of governmental experience available to the independence movements. And in most cases, very few nationals had had any experience in working at the top levels of colonial government structures.

In the economic sphere, the dominant sectors were mostly in the hands of settlers or foreign companies. Colonial government undertook the protec-

tion and service of these sectors. Foreign interest was mainly in raw materials for metropole industries, and there was thus some development of mining and large-scale plantation agriculture in Africa, but very little large-scale industry, and thus little experience of management of complex large-scale production processes. Small family production was maintained, and oriented by administrative control towards export crops as well as food for the towns and for subsistence. This form of economic organization firmly linked the so-called "traditional" and "modern" sectors into one another, making them interdependent. There has been some argument recently about "the uncaptured peasantry" and "the suspended state", but it is the contention of this paper that in general the peasantry in African countries is dependent on marketing its production in order to meet its basic and social needs, as regards inter alia food, clothing, lighting, hygiene, health care, means of production, and education. It is affected by government policies and to a large extent integrated into the economy.

4.4 Decolonization and Independence

The forms of decolonization varied quite substantially from country to country, from the peaceful transition of the Protectorates, to the broad front political struggle in many British colonies, to the armed struggle in Rhodesia, South West Africa and the Portuguese colonies. These different processes divided African states into those which chose a socialist development strategy, and those which more closely held to their capitalist economic inheritance. However, in both cases the movement or party which gained independence had the character of a broad front whose main uniting factor and political programme were precisely the achieving of independence. Once that was achieved, there was often less unity on goals to be reached and means for doing so. Even where the party had clear goals, conflict often broke out, and the tensions created by colonial inclusion of various peoples within artificial boundaries broke loose in struggles for local autonomy or even secession. From the beginning, therefore, African governments took on the centralizing role of guardian of order and national unity.

The new governments acceding to power desired and required popular support to retain their position. They had to respond to the pent-up demands arising from years of colonization: citizen participation in political life, improved social services, more and better education, an end to taxation and forced labour, better wages, more food, a raised standard of living. This level of demand had various consequences, among them that the public administration expanded very rapidly, in functions, cost, and personnel, and that considerable economic outlay went into providing social services, wage and food subsidies, and the like.

The colonial administration was taken over as being the principal

available instrument of governance and development. The independence party's leadership tried to reform or renew the system of government on the basis of the colonial skeleton, replacing or moving personnel, and making organizational adjustments, but not doing much to change its modus operandi, relations and attitudes. Many leading figures had been trained in Western universities, while the organs of state were still staffed by functionaries from the colonial era, and these were reluctant to see the system radically transformed. Even the socialist movements, which attempted to implement major transformations, had little success in institutionalizing an efficient non-bureaucratic state, partly for similar reasons.

The expectations of both the new government and much of its citizenry were that it would take a leading role, not only in providing services, but in national development in all spheres, and therefore, in national accumulation and investment. The economic role it inherited from the colonial government was rapidly extended by the process of decolonization, during which the already weak local private sector shrank further.

Although strong pressures are now put on government to promote the private sector, strong pressures are also at work to limit its scope. Local investors and the local private sector have a weak capital base and their production — even of foodstuffs — is uncompetitive against foreign products, which soon leads them to pressure the government to protect and subsidize them, and negotiate on their behalf. Foreign investment can be politically complex and economically unbalancing, leading governments to step in to control and monitor it, and keep track of profits and wages. And besides these problems of private investment, there are important areas where it is difficult to find suitable private investors, which draws the government in to organize and administer parts of the economy directly. The government plays these roles by developing a large sector for economic administration. Thus government in post-colonial Africa began with a central role in the economy and in the provision of services, maintains it now (if precariously), and in spite of contrary pressures is likely to retain it in the future.

4.5 The conflicts and contradictions of independence

In brief, therefore, African governments inherited an unsuitable governing model, faced divisive pressures, were subject to enormous demands for services and consumption, and whether they wanted it or not, took over a large portion of the economy. They tried to implement a strategy for accumulation, investment and development in the context of a raw-material export economy, falling world terms of trade, world recession, and damaging climatic changes. They made mistakes, lost money, and received bad advice from outside. Many of them, however, made large transformations, and

managed to build a unifying national consciousness. These successes need to be counterposed to the theory of the "parasitic state", which proposes the state to be an imposition on society, overstaffed by idle and overpaid bureaucrats, which wastefully consumes the country's economy and contributes nothing to development.

However, government policies and programmes to accumulate wealth often enter into tension with policies and programmes to maintain popular support. African governments started from, and generally remain in, a weak position economically; they inherited economies which virtually by definition were not anywhere near autonomous, and are dependent on the external world to maintain the cycle of imports and exports underpinning them. Thus, to maintain an operational position in relation to international trade, the world market, and foreign investment, they may have to take measures which are unacceptable to their constituency. The current process of economic structural adjustment provides good examples of such measures.

In the face of shortage of resources, popular demand for leadership and services, and dissatisfaction over declining living standards, African governments have tended to centralize strongly, perpetuating the colonial structure of government. The process of delimitation of the colonies has left behind a number of political problems of tribalism, regionalism and separatism, which governments also tend to combat by centralization of authority. To these centralizing factors must be added a few more. The import-export economy tends to be based on a few export products, which centralizes the management of trade. Development planning and government interventions in the economy are also centralizing factors, which are much supplemented by the centralizing influence of foreign assistance, something which almost all agencies wish to negotiate and control with central government structures. There is also a generalized belief that governance and development require high levels of expertise, which leads to its concentration at central levels and a corresponding lack at local level.

In spite of all these centralizing forces, the government's political need to maintain legitimacy in order to retain power at times leads to sudden moves towards decentralization, often in the context of crises in governance. Indeed, at the present time a new concern with decentralization is easily identifiable, driven both by the extent of the crisis and by aid agencies. It is the case, nevertheless, that traditional and inherited models, and current economic and political pressures, tend strongly towards maintaining centralization and severely reduce the durability of decentralizing moves.

Most African governments are hard put either to assume their central role in an effective way, or to manage a process of reform and change. Their context of operation is characterized by widespread poverty and lack of human, financial and often natural resources, as well as environmental and

climatic problems, lack of transport and communication, explosive expansion of a few cities, and rapid population growth combined with declining production and living standards. Many are experiencing turbulent cultural and political change. Almost all the countries are subject to a high level of economic dependence. They are under great outside pressure to keep paying off their large debts, and great inside pressure to maintain a reasonable level of prices, wages and services. They are expected to resolve problems whose causes lie outside the country and out of their control. Improvements in economic output are swallowed up in debt servicing. Governments are also faced with a number of internal problems related to their personnel, in particular because the economic recession has reduced the buying power of wages, and led to staff layoffs as well as staff loss to other sectors.

It must be placed as one of the principal contradictions of development assistance that international agencies have a negative effect on the functioning, stability and morale of recipient governments. On one hand, the process of cooperation ties up the most efficient officials in aid procedures. Indeed, agencies sometimes employ such officials to serve them directly, and pay them much higher salaries, thus weakening government structures, distorting the wage market, and reducing the loyalty of citizens to their government. On the other hand, the agencies' project focus significantly distorts the balance of government action and also the country's economy. Also, often a government finds it easier to request, and an agency easier to provide, new equipment instead of repairing the old, or to start new projects instead of consolidating and maintaining existing ones.

African states move into the 1990's, therefore, on a crisis footing, economically, politically and ideologically. The strongest political and economic forces pull towards reducing the role, influence, resources and size of government. Ideologically, the forms of existence of the state are in question, even if few credible alternatives are available. Existing trends threaten a worst-case scenario where the economic sectors are mostly run by private (and mostly foreign) interests, the social sectors are partly privatized with the public remnants propped up by foreign aid agencies, the public sector income is mostly used for paying off the national debt, and state policies are principally decided by the world market and international agencies. Government would become weak with very little power to make or implement decisions. Political direction would be thrust into the hands of a centralized and technocratic managerial elite. There would be little scope for independence, democracy, and economic growth. This would not mean, however, that conflicting national interests would cease to assert themselves. Instability and unrest would be legion under these conditions.

The conclusion of the above is that African governments have great need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their administrations, by

reducing costs, and improving resource use, management capacity, working conditions, and outputs. They have great need to increase and strengthen their capacity for autonomous policy-making, analysis and management in relation to the unexpected processes of change in course, with which they have no previous experience. They need to develop policies which protect and give some hope for the future of their countries. They need to rebuild their popularity and legitimacy, through increasing their citizens' participation, decision-making and understanding in relation to the changes taking place, as well as through protecting their most needy citizens. They need more effective use of local initiative and resources to be made, to increase standards of living and growth possibilities.

It is against this background that the possible contribution of Swedish aid to the development of public administration in African countries should be seen.

Under current conditions reform activities need to be applied with even more context sensitivity and work towards a clear future goal, at a pace and on a scale which ensure that they do not undermine or overthrow more than they build and develop. Swedish support should be negotiated in such a way that it enjoys broad legitimacy in the recipient country; and it should be provided in such a way that it does not create new forms of dependency or overload the recipient government.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

The central administration usually represents the major instrument for the concretization and implementation of a government's political programme. In the context of this paper, support to the public administration is defined as support to the enabling systems or "function" ministries within the total range of government agencies. Such support, provided in a way which is primarily designed to increase the administration's own capacity to implement government programmes accountably, democratically, efficiently and effectively, will contribute signally to the attainment of greater equality and democracy, better economic growth, and more robust independence.

In the following sections, the nature and problems of various such "function" sectors are discussed, and proposals on policy toward them are presented in this light. This section is devoted to the more directly "economic" sectors and systems: the Ministry of Finance and its subordinate systems (budgetting, accounting, auditing), the central state bank, the structures which administer international cooperation, the Ministry of Trade, and the development planning machinery.

5.1 The role of government finance policies

Finance policy constitutes the government strategy for the allocation of material resources and of labour within an economy, and hence relates directly to the economy's dynamics of change. Government finance policy directs or conditions the processes of accumulation and of transformation of the economy. It is one of the major determinants and instruments of government development planning. Finance policy is never neutral: it opens up or closes down avenues of development for various social groups within the economy and society. Finance policy is thus an expression of the general political aims of the ruling government and the success of its results is reflected in the degree of achievement of those aims. The effective capacity of a government to determine its own financial policy is thus a clear indicator of its real independence. For development to take place in accordance with the government's political programme, it is imperative that the state maintains and improves its capacity to formulate and pursue coherent financial, economic and social policies.

Economic crisis in African countries has led to a large amount of attention being paid recently to economic restructuring through changes in finance policy and tightening of financial management. These measures have put ever more pressure on already fraught governments, and have often overtaken their capacity to follow and control what is going on. They have in some cases also had alarming effects on social services and on the fabric of the public service. In general, the application of large-scale changes in

finance policy leads to changes in policy in other sectors and to widespread changes in the structure of society. For instance, most adjustment programmes have sought to benefit agricultural producers at the cost of urban consumers, and to reduce government staff, consumption and expenditure considerably.

5.2 Mechanisms of finance policy implementation

There are both direct and indirect financial mechanisms for the state to accumulate savings from national production and reinvest them in the realization of its programme. The state budget is the principal means of direct financing for a government, which is directly financed by various forms of taxation on income, profits, and consumption, as well as by the profits from state enterprises. It can also be financed in the form of government loans, bonds and other mechanisms (such as the inflationary printing of paper money). The state then uses the resources reflected in the state budget to carry out its programme, by investments, provision of services, payment of salaries, subsidization of foodstuffs, etc. There exist various methods of budgetting and of executing and controlling the budget which give emphasis to different government aims: some methods focus on the control of expenditure, others on the objectives of the expenditure.

The state may also indirectly influence the economy through regulating the conditions of operation for private finance, such as by controlling interest rates, intervening in the stock market, imposing credit ceilings and import controls, deciding on the exchange rate with other countries' currencies, and so on. This intervention, while benefitting some groups and negatively affecting others, may also constitute another source of income for the state.

Typically, centrally-planned economies, which have a high degree of state ownership and intervention in the economy, rely more heavily on direct mechanisms of financing, involving a high degee of centralization of state funds in the budget (state bureaucratic finance). The state bank centralizes state income and acts as controller of the plan. Market-oriented countries have more elaborate structures of financial intermediation, involving a wide range of private financial institutions which the government influences by measures of financial intervention. In general, therefore, the pieces which make up the finance sector are similar across countries, but they can be combined into a coherent structure in different ways, and may vary considerably in role, mode of operation, and complexity.

The present collapse of state socialism observable in Africa and elsewhere is leading to deregulation of national economies and alteration and reduction of the state economic planning system. This implies that many countries are now seeking to develop alternative financial structures and

alternative means of economic planning and intervention.

Most governments have entrusted the main execution of finance policy to a central Ministry of Finance and to the central state bank. However, other ministries are often created which intervene in financial policy, notably those of Cooperation and of Planning. It is SIDA's experience that the creation of separate Ministries of Finance, Cooperation, and Planning has been a fateful step on the part of many governments, promoting extra bureaucracy and expense, power-struggles and lack of coordination within the government machinery, and loss of state control over the economy. It has also been noted, however, that the colonial Finance Department on which the new Ministry is based was formed with the principal task of book-keeping, and that its staff was not originally envisaged as having any role in the formulation of policy or the understanding of macro-economic processes. If the Finance Ministry is to make and execute macro-economic policy, which has increasingly become its role especially in the context of structural adjustment programmes, then often a considerable amount of training and development work needs to be provided to that ministry to permit it to play its new roles in ways which are sensitive, informed, and protective of national interests.

5.3 State banking and international markets

In both market and plan economies, the state bank system plays an important role in the implementation and control of finance policies. As also most African countries are dependent on the flow of exports and imports for the maintenance of their economies, and thus foreign exchange is of overriding importance, foreign exchange management is a vital aspect of economic policy today. State banks are thus in great need of modernization and increased efficiency, in particular as regards their link into the international circuits of currency flows, primary product marketing, trade, debt quotation, and stock marketing. The personnel staffing the banks need development of their powers of analysis and bargaining, in order to prevent losses and make profits on changes in currency and interest rates, devaluations et al. Competent bank management can rapidly save a country millions of dollars. There is thus logically a strong demand for computerization of bank operations to give them rapid access to the information needed for their various activities as well as to augment their income-generating capacities.

In relation to the international goods market, technical competence can also save large amounts of money. It is well worth while for a country to invest in developing professional capacity to obtain best value on imports and seek best market conditions for exports, as well as to manage import and export operations as a whole (insurance, shipping, storage, delivery, and so on).

5.4 African economic problems and economic adjustment

It is the case that most African countries' economies today are in an unhealthy state. This derives from a combination of government-accessible factors, and external factors over which these governments have no control. The latter factors include world market prices, international currency fluctuations, lending interest rates, and climatic conditions. Uncontrolled population growth has been given a large share of the blame; but it seems that the very circumstances of underdevelopment constitute a major cause for rapid population growth.

Certainly, given the unhealthy state of African countries' economies, it is essential that they be restructured in ways which better adequate the means available to the ends desired. It is clear that production needs to be stimulated as much as possible, and unnecessary expenses reduced. It is evidently important to assist African governments to take the best possible hold on those factors over which they do have some possibilities of control, such as negotiating the lowest possible interest rates on loans, the lowest prices on imports, and the best prices for exports. Fiscal and monetary policies which curb inflation and unnecessary state expenditure are possible avenues for reform. Forms of financial management that increase savings in politically acceptable ways are also important: in the first place, greater administrative efficiency, better debt management, reduction of unnecessary expenditure. However, these measures have all to be seen in the context of the problems which are not under government control.

Indeed, even government-accessible factors are only relatively so, depending on the ability of the government to carry through its measures and control the results while maintaining its credibility and base of support. Effectively, adjustment measures need to be context-sensitive. The adjustment of an economy has to take into account not only the present situation but also what the intended results are to be. Economies are multi-variate and complex systems which take time to adjust.

Structural adjustment has usually been led by external advisers in a situation of severe crisis over debt repayment. The rescheduling of debt and the provision of wide and often less-controlled credit and aid has been a result of, and conditional upon, the alteration of finance policy, notably:

— braking the money supply;
— devaluing the currency in successive stages to its real value, thus raising the cost of imports and lowering the price on exports;
— reducing net state expenditure to under a stipulated ceiling, usually in the form of a broad budget cut, inter alia by:

— removing state subsidies to production and consumption;
— reducing state employment;
— reducing real wages paid by the state;

— increasing the savings/investment proportion of the budget;
— increasing the efficiency of financial management;
— deregulating international trade and the internal market, so that "prices come to serve as the primary guide to resource allocation";
— increasing state income/reducing state losses on state activities and services, inter alia by:

  — charging fees on social services;
  — privatizing social services;
  — increasing productivity in state companies;
  — "reducing redundant labour and rewarding productive labour";
  — selling state companies to the private sector;
  — increasing tax receipts.

These measures are almost all based on changes in finance policy, and are designed to permit debt interest repayment, reduce state economic influence, and give more scope to free market forces. One immediate result is that prices and unemployment rise simultaneously, and civil servants are laid off or take up other employment. Some economic indicators improve: usually production rises, and export-based production increases turnover. The implementation of the financial measures is compensated by a relaxation internationally on loans and credits, and by a large influx of aid.

This process raises numerous problems. In the first place, it is hard to see whether the financial measures or the influx of trade and aid are responsible for improvements in global economic indicators. Secondly, the measures may affect government legitimacy and create instability. Third, it seems probable that the process increases the international debt. Fourth, it increases economic inequality in society and on the short-term, may worsen the lot of the poor, especially in the cities. Fifth, the removal of government controls from prices, wages, imports, and other important areas of the economy, may have detrimental effects on the social sectors, and on redistributive policies.

In the process of restructuring a country's economy, the state's role in the economy may be substantially redefined, and it is necessary therefore to strengthen its capacity to manage the economy. The processes of adjustment are very complex, and impose great strain on the state's financial managers.

It seems correct to state that countries with severe economic problems do need assistance. However, most loans and aid are tied in one way or another, which reduces very much any government's chances of pursuing a

coherent and balanced financial policy. Also, each creditor or donor agency has its own rules on how funds are to be administered and reported, which ties up the recipient government at a time when it most needs its capable personnel to take care of priorities. Aid to financial administration, and aid in general, needs to be directed to avoid becoming more a part of the problem than of the solution.

In this regard, SIDA and others have been studying ways to apply economic adjustment measures which would have less damaging effects in negatively affected areas, as well as new strategies for reducing the poorest countries' debt burden. Against this background, support to improvement of financial policy-making and management has become increasingly important.

5.5 Computerization of public administrations

In the context of financial management, the inclusion of computerization in development projects is common. Indeed, in many other areas of public administration governments look to computerization as being a suitable way to modernize.

In the sphere of public finances, it is now virtually essential to computerize the principal financial systems and operations. Computerizing offers a way to control and to project increasiingly complex systems in a short space of time. In the international conjuncture, lack of capacity to react rapidly and on time can mean serious losses in trading, exchange rate policy, debt management, and other international economic relations.

The process of computerization necessarily implies large costs and lengthy implementation periods, which should not be forgotten. The hardware and software has to be chosen to be compatible with other existing systems in the country and outside with which it is necessary or advantageous to link up; it has to be suitable to the job on hand. In the current situation of rapid systems development, it is important that the systems chosen are open to easy extension and upgrading. In many cases, it would be easier to support computerization projects if the government had a computer policy or set of guidelines.

Computerization requires extensive staff training. This has possible negative aspects, such as interference in the daily functioning of the organization, as well as making the staff so trained more attractive to possible outside employers. It is also so, however, that a process of computerization can be a lead in reforming and rationalizing the structures and methods of the organ affected.

It has, however, at times been the case that computerization has been regarded as an end in itself, and not as a means to an end; so that routines have been transformed at high cost in circumstances where the more old-

fashioned methods would have served as well or better. It is also the case that computerizing is complex in the African context because of problems of lack of trained operators, climatic extremes, and deficient maintenance infrastructure. At times computerizing has thus reduced efficiency notably.

It seems important that one aspect of any computerization project should be to ensure the effective creation of back-up systems and the maintenance of equivalent manual systems which can be used in the event of computer failure.

5.6 Conclusions on support to the planning and management of public finances

Sweden, and SIDA, have developed some useful experience in the area of state financial management, and have a competent if rather small base of organizations and experts with experience of developing countries. The Swedish economy is a mixed economy, involving both state and private economic sectors, with the government playing an important supervisory role over the private sector and personal accumulation of power and wealth. Sweden thus may have something to offer to governments over both market-oriented and centrally-planned economies.

Economic crisis in African countries has led to a large amount of attention being paid recently to economic restructuring through changes in finance policy and tightening of financial management. Financial management should therefore be a priority area for support.

Assistance to government financial management should thus be advised by the following policy guidelines:

– Support to financial administration should in the first place be geared towards enabling assisted governments within their programmes to make best possible use of their resources for promoting economic growth, national independence, and effective public services, while improving accountability to the public and increasing democratic participation in governance.

– In principle, a positive stance should be taken towards requests from programme countries for support to their financial administration, particularly in the context of managing economic reforms and coping with economic crisis.

– Support to financial administration should be based on the development of the capacities of national financial organizations and administrators to analyse, understand, and thence manage the country's finances autonomously, both under normal circumstances and in situations of crisis and rapid change.

– Appropriate training programmes, study visits and scholarships

should be financed, to enable the counterpart government to build up its own long-term financial management competence.

— Support to financial administration and related economic administration should prioritize:

  — assistance to the upgrading of central bank administrative routines, competence and capacity, especially in the field of foreign exchange management;
  — assistance to the upgrading of Finance Ministry capacities to administer the systems of budgeting and budget control, accounting, auditing, and taxation;
  — in these two contexts, assistance to the collection and analysis of statistics on economic performance and national accounting;
  — assistance to the improvement of the state system of procurement, procurement via import, and import operations management;
  — assistance to the development of systems to monitor and coordinate international aid; and
  — assistance to the decentralization and democratization of financial administration, in particular as a key to the development of effective local government (see 7. below).

— In the context of the need to implement reforms or adjustments in the economy, counterpart governments should be assisted in developing their capacity to formulate and implement effective and politically sensitive policies in which the medium and long-term economic effects of measures proposed to be applied are complemented by appropriate social policies protecting the interests of the poorest and most exposed groups in society. In this context, a process of policy dialogue should be supported, where concerned governments are able to maintain contact with institutions and experts with experience with the processes and outcomes of other structural adjustment programmes.

— In supporting financial administration, support should be given to promoting increased coordination or integration among organizations in the financial system, such as the Central Bank and Ministries of Planning, Cooperation, and Trade.

— Support should in principle be given to the modernization, rationalization and reorganization of central banks in order to augment their efficiency and income-generating capacity, on the basis of at least medium-term institutional cooperation.

— Support should be given to the computerization of Finance Ministries, central banks, and other central state systems if it is shown by feasibility analysis that this would contribute significantly to the efficiency and effectiveness of these organs in the areas which it is proposed to computerize.

5.7 Aspects of planning

Planning is necessary for the achievement of lasting state-led structural transformations in economy and society. Development planning can give a long-term coherence to policy-making and development strategy, and can serve as a powerful means for the coordination of available resources. Planning is also important where development policy involves substantial mutually-supportive investments or substantial redistribution of resources between regions and social classes. Financial planning, a necessary component of development planning, allocates and controls government resources and indicates the priorities for government action. Ultimately, the plan and the state budget should be mutually inclusive.

African countries have applied different levels, weights, and time-scales of planning. In the market-oriented economies, planning was more indicative, and served as a guide to the government on its own activities and possible incomes. In the centrally-planned economies, the annual or five-year state plan was usually for obligatory fulfillment, and constituted the main instrument for management of all sectors, state as well as private. In practice, most African governments were heavily involved in most sectors of the society, and assumed their own wide involvement in planning future development, so that in the case of both "market" and "command" economies, they undertook detailed one-year and longer-term (3, 5 or 10-year) planning.

In consequence, most African states have a development planning body. The purpose of such a Planning Department, or Commission, or Ministry, and its territorial and/or ministry-based subordinates (where they exist), is to look at alternatives and thence to plan the government's allocation and use of resources, and estimate the returns and reinvestments likely to arise therefrom. Often such Planning Commissions have the related function of negotiating and/or controlling international aid.

Planning is subject to a number of well-known failures. In the first place, the future is not (yet) foreseeable, and all variables are not controllable. Plans often reflect present political desires which are incompatible with available resources or become changed by events, in which case the plan is never implemented, abandoned, or not fulfilled. Plans are often insufficiently coordinated with other important government sectors, notably with the Ministry of Finance. Central plans are often desktop constructions which ignore the real state of affairs at the base. In this regard, there is often a lack of democratic consultation at local level (see also 7. *Local Government*), as well as a lack of reliable, up-to-date and easily accessible statistics in many fields. Personnel often lack the necessary capacity to analyse and use the information they receive to make the plans reliable. As a result, central

planning can lead to mistaken and costly investments, misallocations, and shortages, as well as distance the state from its citizens.

In the current processes of structural adjustment, re-establishment of market economies, and creation of multi-party systems, the functions of planning are suffering a number of curious transformations. Firstly, central planning is increasingly becoming narrow financial planning (rather than development planning), based on the indicators of structural adjustment policy. Secondly, the existing Planning Commissions are becoming reduced in status and staffing, while the Ministries of Finance are increasingly taking over the role of economic planning. This tends towards the greater integration of planning and budgeting, which is desirable; but often Ministry of Finance personnel is more oriented towards book-keeping and budget ceiling maintence than towards coherent planning in terms of real national priorities. The third aspect is that international agencies are increasingly intervening in the planning function, notably in the form of prescribing the content of financial planning. Fourthly, a range of state planning functions is disappearing, on the theory that the areas in question will be taken care of by the market.

In practice, therefore, the traditional long-term national development plan is disappearing from the scene, and the attempts at detailed steering of resources characteristic of so-called "command economies" have ceased. This has not meant the end of long-term "central planning" at all; this has in many cases increased substantially, though in the form of monetary and financial planning. Thus, from a situation of ambitious development planning which disregarded the need for prudence in the use of financial resources, African countries are going over to prudent financial planning which disregards the issue of development. It is evident that the problem of dissociation between the direction to follow and the means to do so continues.

It may be added that many of the problems that affected the practice of development planning are just as applicable to narrow financial planning. Financial planning is just as reliant on access to relevant, sufficient and correct information. The need for government accountability to the public in relation to its financial planning is as great as the need for accountability over its development planning, and perhaps is as little satisfied.

5.8 Physical planning

Physical planning, or the planning and control of land use, is conventionally concerned with identifying and safeguarding public and long-term interests in land and living space, as well as with intervening in land use conflicts. Physical planning can be an important component of development planning, and, like economic planning, is never neutral: it is an instrument

for allocating resources to the benefit of some and the detriment of others. Thus, as with other areas of state economic activity, it is important for democracy that the process be open to public access and influence.

An important approach to physical planning is thus to use it as a technique or means for protecting the rights of the public and for enabling local communities to manage their own projects and affairs (see 7. *Local Government*).

5.9 Creating a base for government planning activities

The effectiveness of government policies and programmes, as well as of planning for future development, is extremely conditioned by the quality and coverage of the information which the government has at its disposal, as well as by the capacity to analyse and use such information. Involved in the process of collecting and using information are both the systems and means of collection and communication applied, as well as the analysis of the information received and its posterior circulation and use by the various concerned elements in society.

Access to information is also an important element in the process of democratic participation and government accountability to the public.

In this context, the following criteria are recommended:

- Through institutional cooperation, assistance should be given to the development of competent national statistical services, from local level up to central offices.
- As an essential part of this process, support and encouragement should be given to the creation of accompanying services dedicated to the circulation, dissemination, and publicizing of statistical and other information in accessible form.
- Consideration should be given to requests for support in relation to medium-term development planning, preferably in the context of greater integration of the concerned "function" ministries, notably the Ministries of Finance, Cooperation, and Planning.
- In relation to planning of the physical infrastructure of a country, assistance should be provided to the development of publicly accessible and accountable physical planning services. In principle, physical planning should take the form of a process of consultation with the public affected, and in particular, priority should be given to the development of physical planning skills as a component of local government services.

6. ADMINISTRATION CAPACITATION, REFORM AND ORGANIZATION

Financial administration constitutes only one of the major systems of administration and management in a government. The systems for the administration, allocation, and organization of the human resources of the state are equally important. In structural terms, such systems usually fall under the aegis of a central Ministry of the Public Service, though a Public Service Commission representing various bodies may be appointed to make proposals on global policy and to settle personnel disputes. Such bodies usually have two major responsibilities in regard to the administration as a whole: the organization and regulation of the administrative structure, procedures, routines, and communication flows of government organs; and the management of civil service personnel policy. Both of these are clearly important to the smooth functioning of government. In Sweden, for example, an efficient and effective authority is defined as one which best fulfils the objectives of government policy with the most economic use of resources, under circumstances which satisfy staff needs for a good work environment, job satisfaction, and personal development.

6.1 Problems in the organization of the state

It is generally agreed that a well-organized authority is more likely to be efficient than one which is less organized. Being "organized" entails many factors. In brief, organization arises where the chains of command, the organ's work objectives, and the methods of work — procedures and routines — are all clear and perceived as legitimate; where the personnel involved is satisfied, motivated, and capacitated to do the work demanded; where the communication links internally and with the external environment function well; and where management is able to unify the personnel into tackling its tasks in a way perceived by them as being effective. Into these parameters interfere a number of variables, especially in the African context.

a) *Shortage of resources:* Often carrying out a given task is impossible for an authority simply because it does not have the necessary financial, material, informational and human resources at its disposal. The reduction of African government budgets over the 1980's has meant that this problem has become steadily worse.

b) *Misuse of resources:* In cases where resources do exist, they are often inefficiently used. Often there is a lack of detailed planning and control of resource use. Unfortunately, there may also be a degree of corruption involved in resource misuse.

c) *Lack of communication:* A constant problem in the African context is that of faulty communication. This may take the simple material form of lack of telephones, posts, and transport, and it can arise through faulty

routines and procedures. It also takes the form of deliberate limitation of communication through government secretiveness, or through individual use of control over information to enhance power and prestige. There is a widespread attitude that it is best to keep quiet.

d) *Planning problems:* The rapid change processes in society often overtake planning and leave authorities either with an unworkable plan, or engaged in fulfilling a plan which is no longer compatible with the situation. Often administration is a continual process of crisis management to respond to immediate pressing problems, without a long-term perspective.

e) *Indefinition of objectives:* A lack of rigorous definition of the objectives to be attained, or difficulties in defining the objectives in policy areas such as social policy, leads to indefinition of priorities, misuse of resources, dispersion of efforts, and staff frustration. A sign of this is the way that inputs to programmes get stressed far more than outputs.

f) *Lack of training and experience:* The rather new African civil services are still to a varying extent subject to a lack of skilled and experienced staff. Many people are not adequately trained for their tasks. Some officials have been trained in different foreign countries and have different perceptions of objectives and method. Many lack experience of actually working in a planned, organized, dynamic and efficient organization. On top of this, many governments have needed to employ expatriates to make up for lack of expertise, which brings into the equation new sets of attitudes, values, and behaviours from outside.

g) *Conflicts of interest:* These occur in any civil service, and always occupy much of its time and resources. In newer civil services, however, in a context of lack of experience, training and resources, the management of such conflicts is often poor.

h) *Misuse of power:* A country's civil service is a relatively privileged organization which wields a lot of institutional and individual power. There is an aura of power to being an official which enters into relations with the public. Some civil servants and organizations may directly strive to build their own power base, rather than serving the public. The stress which is placed on inputs, rather than outputs, is an indicator that it is the inputs which contribute to building power, while the (lack of) outputs may threaten that power. The stress on control (which underlies many daunting bureaucratic procedures), rather than on results, is another reflex of the interest in exercise of power.

Also, in an administration dogged by low wages and shortages, it can be tempting for officials to bend rules to provide for their families. This also contributes to a government stress on control more than results.

j) *Duplication of functions:* Resulting from ongoing conflicts, indefinition of objectives and responsibilities, ineffective programme execution, and

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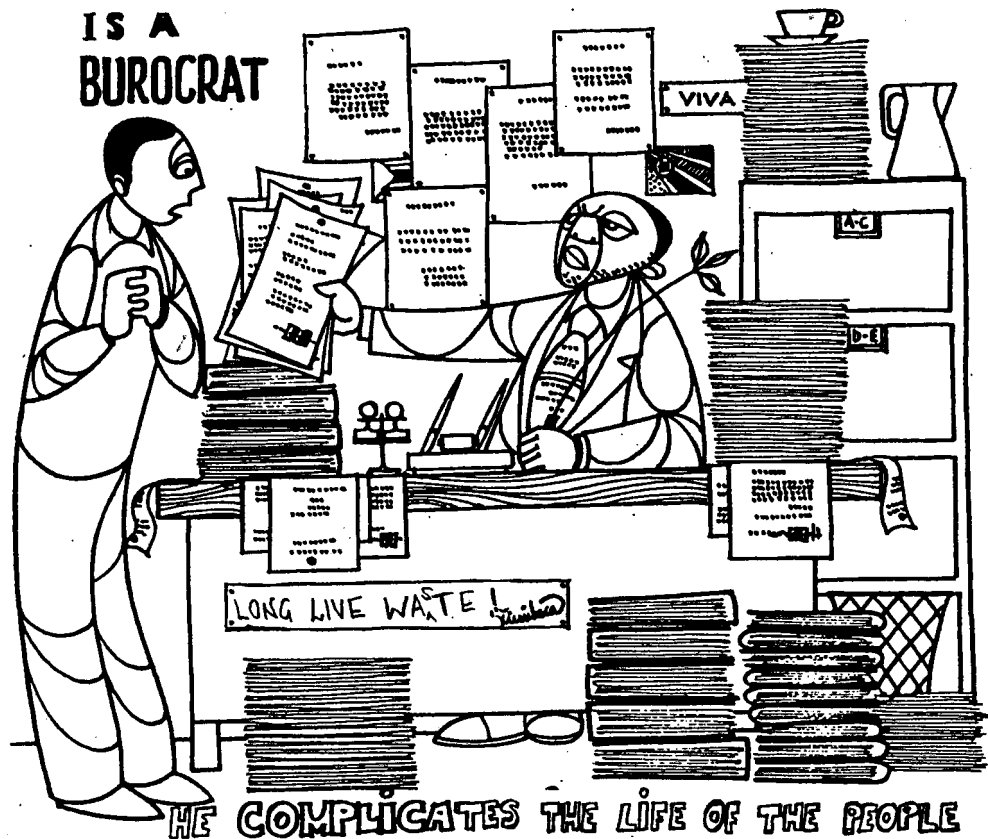
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faulty planning, various units may end up being attributed the same functions, or new units be created to fulfill functions which are already the task of existing ones. This wastes energy and resources and often increases conflict.

k) *Cultural contradictions:* As previously pointed out, the management methods expected by the top of government (and by aid agencies) in terms of a Western definition of efficiency and effectiveness and organizational culture, may not correspond to the cultural values of the society as a whole. Some studies point to avoidance of overt conflict, hesitation to take decisions, discomfort with situations demanding individual initiative, expectation of authoritarian management, prioritization of family interests over work, et al.

l) *Overcentralization:* In the colonial and traditional model of government, centralization was high, and in the context of rapid change, economic

dependency and aid, perceived disaggregatory forces, and lack of resources, the urges to extreme centralization have been strong. This clogs up the decision-making process and increases bureaucracy and inefficiency.

m) *Reform fetishism:* It is common for state malfunction to be attributed to two causes: lack of training, and inadequate organization. Both may well be the case; but also neither may be the case. The result of attributing problems to structural defects is often that the administration becomes subject to a constant process of restructuring, which gives the impression that something is being done, but it frequently only worsens the situation by splitting minimally functioning organs, mixing up personnel, and undoing existing routines and networks of informal contact. Training fetishism may have similar results, in that it removes people from doing their jobs, while the problem does not lie in their lack of training.

6.2 Problems of personnel policy

Personnel policy is of course intimately related to the organization of the state administration as a whole. One of the requisites for an administration to function effectively is that the personnel be satisfied and motivated. But today, perhaps one of the most complex and damaging set of problems with government functioning lies in the realm of personnel policy and the working life of civil servants.

a) *Recruitment:* The processes of recruitment to the civil service in African countries is often less controlled than is desirable. It is often stated that African civil services are "too large". This is a relative matter, as it would be hard for anyone to establish an "optimum" size! Indeed, often African civil services are plagued by a severe shortage of personnel in terms of state objectives: doctors, nurses, and teachers, for instance. The problem is more that central administration becomes swollen with people who for various reasons produce little; although this does not imply that local organs or base units are adequately staffed.

b) *Training:* (see also 6.4. below). In spite of great efforts in the field of training, there do seem to be shortages of welltrained people in African countries' administrations. This is due partly to poor recruitment policy, to low wages in the civil service (so highly-trained people go private), or to defects in education system planning and resources. Another problem is that the training itself is often overly academic and defective.

In any case, training as such is not necessarily a response even to problems which are largely due to lack of knowledge and experience. It is a common experience of trainers that the people coming to courses are not the right ones, or that the training given is not aligned to meet the problems being faced. Selection for training can be used as a reward rather than an objective response to needs. Ironically, managers may also select their least

dedicated and important staff for training because they are dispensible!

c) *Wages:* It is difficult to argue that today the wages in most echelons of African countries' civil services are excessive: rather the contrary, their purchasing power is below subsistence needs. This results in all sorts of strategies to supplement income, by individuals and by government departments. Many of these strategies involve organizing other routes to accessing government money; it is usually only the highest civil servants (i.e. not those that get laid off in rationalization programmes) who can accumulate enough capital and contacts to project themselves into being self-supporting private producers, or aid consultants. At lower echelons, the civil servant's family may well cultivate a field and keep some chickens, for subsistence purposes; but supplementary income is more readily to be found in travelling to get the allowances, or in subsidies for expenses in attending courses, or in doing private work with government stationery, equipment, and vehicles. All these various income-supplementing strategies are probably disordering to government functioning and accounting, while low wages contribute to low morale and flexible morals.

d) *Placement and transfer:* State policies and procedures for placement and transfer of officials often leave very much to be desired. It is common for people to be transferred around without due warning, due time to initiate a successor, or due facilities being available to house them on arrival. The lack of efficient people often means that those who are capable are constantly shifted around, creating instability in the administration. There is a tendency for trained people who are good at their job to be moved to other posts for which they have no training or technical know-how. Posts from which people have been transferred are often left vacant for long periods.

Often transfers are made in order to undo power blocs, prevent the growth of regional factions, and curb powerful individuals.

e) *Job security:* Job security varies between countries and levels in the administration. There is a growing tendency not to provide tenure but employ people on medium-term contract. The process of structural adjustment has introduced a high level of insecurity in civil services, where mass lay-offs are becoming common, with no alternative employment in sight. Disfunctional services are reformed by making macro-changes in administrative structures at short time-intervals, confusing those involved, and invalidating their hard-won practical knowledge. It may also be noted that under the present pressures of inflation and price instability, retirement benefits and pensions have lost value, which cannot serve as a source of great motivation for working civil servants.

6.3 Forms of reform of state organization

In the face of the challenge of a top-heavy administration, still influenced by colonial routines and behaviours, resistant to change and accountability, emphasizing control over performance, and permeated with endless causes for inefficiency, what is to be done?

It is most improbable that there is a single or a simple answer to the question. Major politico-administrative reforms are unlikely to be successful in achieving their objectives on the short-term. Reforms are always going to be in need of a considerable period of implantation; a wide range of reforms in many areas creates unpredicted interaction effects between sectors which may negate the reforms; and for reforms to be successful on the longer term, they must enjoy legitimacy with those affected by them - in the case of major reforms, therefore, with most of the society. Reforms have to take into account both the political dimension of administration and all its other complex dimensions, as well as fit local needs and capacities. In particular, it is difficult for externally-driven reforms to succeed; and it is also doubtful, from experiments with reform in Latin America in the early 1960's, that setting up small "reform departments" external to or adjacent to the agencies to be reformed is a viable reform strategy.

One macro-approach to reform is to try simply to privatize as much as possible of society and economy, and rely on market forces to cleave away the redundant public administration. It may be suitable in a given context to support a state's decision to privatize and to reduce personnel; but it seems unwise to adopt these strategies as inflexible rules of conduct to be applied anywhere on a wide scale. As was argued above in Chapter 4, numerous powerful forces are at work in society to maintain state influence over economy and society, while many social and economic goals require competent government involvement for their achievement. Broad and rapid destatization or privatization of government activities is likely to share the same defects of other global approaches to reform, especially as regards their being accorded legitimacy on a wide scale.

At the other end of the spectrum, some African political parties took a revolutionary socialist approach to the reform of government, economy and society. Very sweeping changes were implemented in a short space of time, with considerable popular support and involvement. But in these countries, the establishment of an efficient, effective, democratic, accountable, and unbureaucratic administration to maintain these reforms operational is far from having been achieved. In part the rapid sweeping nature of these reforms made it difficult to consolidate them; and now under present ideological and economic pressures many of the original reforms are being reversed and undone.

There is growing international and internal pressure on African governments to introduce multi-party democracy. It is even being claimed that a multi-party system is essential for economic development. Under this political, ideological and economic campaign, multi-party systems are currently being introduced in almost all countries. It may be noted that, whatever the possible democratic and economic benefits that may accrue, the short-term effect on the civil service is likely to be unsettling. It will take some time for the dust to settle to reveal the effects on the chains of political command and as regards the degree of separation of the political and administrative roles of government agencies and the individuals which staff them. Under these circumstances, there is likely to be a new wave of requests for assistance with large-scale structural reforms. In particular a new wave of conflict over the centralization/decentralization issue is likely to arise, arising from the relative geographical strengths of majority and minority parties.

These arguments do not imply that reforms are unmotivated or unnecessary. However, what is required for reforms to succeed is a coherent political and administrative strategy with broad public support, open communication and debate on their nature and effects, patient implantation procedures, and constant monitoring and context-based correction. Implicit in reforms of the public administration are reorganization of state structures, and therefore of the power relations in government and society; transformations in routines, procedures, methods of work, and therefore in attitudes; and consequently, extensive educational activities to capacitate everyone involved, including the broad public, for implementing the changes.

As a general principle, therefore, but specially in the current circumstances of rapid change in African political economy, it is considered important to ensure that reform is undertaken against a background of broad support and strong political will, in incremental steps with adequate consolidation time, rather than "commandist" attempts being made to effectuate rapid global change of the entire administration and its methods and systems.

It is also to be noted that the continuing economic crisis in most African countries, as well as the methods devised to combat it, has led to a concentration on financial management, thus in part even further reducing the status and resources assigned to personnel administration. In fact, the crisis of the state requires that far more, rather than far less, attention be given to reforming, developing, and improving personnel management and personnel administration in the public sector.

Care needs to be taken in the process that the forms of personnel administration adopted do not create structures and relationships in the administration which run counter to the objectives of democracy and accountability. Definitions as to personnel salaries, or promotion paths, for

instance, can have a fateful effect on the relationships between hierarchical levels, or on the functioning of local government.

6.4 Management and management training

Management, at all levels, is increasingly being seen around the world as a key determinant in development efforts. It is recognized generally as the major factor in organizational performance.

Therefore the training of managers is a critical issue in any effort to improve the performance of public sector organizations. But training is not the only, or necessarily the most appropriate, response to problems of performance in all situations; other organizational variables must be considered also.

This indicates that careful, sensitive analysis is essential before training is used to enhance individual and organizational performance.

Management practices, and organizational behaviour generally, can be understood only by reference to their context. Attempts to impose "universalistic" criteria will at best be incomplete and at worst disastrous.

Hence, imported Western concepts, practices and techniques of administration and management will either be at least partially transformed to fit the importing culture (values, customs, norms of behaviour) or rejected as incongruent.

There are two distinct, but interrelated cultural sources which go into making up organizational culture:

— the national culture which is the environment in which an organization functions (i.e. the technological, legal, social, political, economic, religious, traditional components); and
— the internal culture, or "climate" of the organization, (i.e. how decisions are made, how performance is judged, how influence is exercised, what is valued, what behaviours are acceptable, how control is exercised).

Organizational cultures can be classified as change-oriented or change-resistant. The limited evidence suggests that African public sector organizations (particularly civil services) tend to be change-resistant. They tend very often to be closed systems with a defensive outward behaviour, and the internal structure, rather than being purely pyramidic, tends to be horizontally disaggregated and vertically focussed towards two or three individuals in leadership positions who in the end make all the decisions. The efforts needed to develop a different management style in such a climate are evidently great, and need to be based in a clear understanding of the environment and the objectives within which management is to be exercised.

This factor is crucially important in relation to management training, and very careful analysis is necessary in order to provide an understanding of the organization's perception of change, and why it is resistant to it.

If change is genuinely desired and welcomed, properly managed training can have a powerful interventionist and facilitative effect. If change (and the inevitable accompanying conflicts of views and interests) is feared, training by itself will not achieve change, though it can be useful in reducing such fears.

Training can be seen as being used legitimately for two broad organizational purposes:

— to *maintain* the current activities and to upgrade performance in existing functions (i.e. systems, procedures, work methods;

— to assist in strategies intended to *change* important features of the organization (i.e. directions, policies, structure, organizational relationships, communication patterns, work methods, management style, decision-making practices, reward systems, performance appraisal).

Training is always a means to an end. Eventually it must be judged on its outcomes rather than its processes: though of course the nature of its processes has important effects on the outcomes. The prime outcome of training is individual learning of knowledge and skills and changing of attitudes, which can be translated into improved individual job performance and changed work relations, which in their turn can contribute to organizational openness, effectiveness and efficiency. However, this sequence is not automatic, and frequently breaks down if managerial support is not forthcoming before and after training. Various experiences show that the prior or posterior organization of trainees into mutual support groups can reinforce job performance and improve coordination and efficiency.

It follows that training activities and their consequences need to be legitimized and supported both at central levels and through the managers of sectors whose personnel is being trained. This also suggests that rigorous review and evaluation of the training is essential at all stages — individual learning, job performance, and organizational performance.

To the degree to which it is possible, regular on-the-job follow-up of training graduates, with a view to supporting their learning and its application in practice, is an important component of a training strategy. Ideally the trainers themselves carry out such follow-up activities, which also provides them with a constant organized contact with administrative reality.

To be maximally useful, training must address real learning needs, and promote concrete improvements or changes in the workplace. The strategy

of on-course development of individual projects for workplace improvement, to be applied after training with limited trainer support, is relevant in this context. The learners' lived encounter with more open and democratic relationships and attitudes during a training course may have more important effects for changing the atmosphere and relations at the workplace than do the rather elementary techniques and abstruse theories which constitute the open curriculum.

Whilst it is clear that competence requires the acquisition of knowledge and the application of practical skills, training objectives must be clear about the emphasis in any particular training programme. Training strategies must emphasize the need for consistency among training needs, objectives, content, methods, learning assessment, review and evaluation. Western learning theories and training strategies must be critically examined for relevance and applicability before being used.

Training needs to be seen in the context of the workplace. This implies also that not only the managers need training. A possible strategy in this context is vertical training involving various people working at different levels of the same sector.

There is a constant need for efforts to understand the working context of managers and other civil servants, primarily through action research and consultancy by training institutions.

The manager has an important potential educative role (so-called multiplication), especially as regards implementing changes in the workplace(s) he/she manages. Care needs to be taken, however, in assigning a teaching role to managers, in order to avoid burdening them beyond their level of competence and available time. Multiplication should not lead to dilution. In this context, follow-up by the trainers is also important.

Examples of successful formal training institutions in Africa indicate that the following characteristics are important:

- emphasis on participants as adult individuals;
- learner-centred educational approaches;
- emphasis on learned outcomes rather than teaching strategy;
- learning from fellow participants;
- learning from experience; and
- emphasis on action.

Training is not to be equated with formal, off-job courses. Other training activities may be seen as alternatives or as complementary (e.g. on-the-job coaching, learning from peers, structured experience).

The expected result of management training should not be measured only in relation to the training in itself, but also through the evaluation of its contribution to the development of the trainee and of its repercussions on

the organization where he/she works. This derives from the problem that the courses and practicals are often evaluated very positively by the participants, in terms of their apparent intrinsic quality, but in reality they have a low level of applicability.

In terms of the impact of this observation on the setting up of training programmes, such an evaluation process would demand a follow-up of the trainees, which can be done in various ways, covering some or all of the participants, through investigation, sampling, and so on.

Management training must be viewed in a long-term perspective, requiring a variety of complementary activities and persistence in pursuing desired outcomes.

There is general agreement that our knowledge of African organizations and their management is extremely limited, indicating a pressing need for basic research. The research needs to be carried out without projecting externally-derived categories and presuppositions onto the context under analysis. This work thus far rather demands an anthropological than an administrative approach, because it is necessary to identify the various aspects of "organization", not from the basis of their superficial resemblance to established Western practices, but rather integrated into their context, including also the symbolic meanings attached to these practices. It is necessary to understand the conceptions of work, of leisure, and indeed of the whole organization of collective life presented by these formulations.

This would increase the possibility of developing theories of organizational behaviour and management based on African experience.

6.5 Problems with training institutions

Deriving from SIDA's experiences, and from the above conclusions on management training, some implications arise for the institutional context of training strategy. Training as a context-based activity designed to maintain, improve, or change behaviour and attitudes is reliant on two principal influences:

— the legitimation of the training: in terms of acceptance by the trainees and the working collective that surrounds the trainee;
— the contextualization of the training: in terms of real needs, relevance, applicability, selection procedures, and follow-up.

These parameters are not necessarily uncontradictory. A major problem that arises in training legitimation is that of its material recognition, in terms of certificates, salary raises, and promotion. This is not only a problem of the egoism of the trainee: his/her colleagues and superiors may also only accept the training as legitimate if it carries these consequences. However,

most countries assign these consequences only to abstract *academic* contents and exam-approved qualifications. The result is plain: a constant tendency will be for courses to become more lengthy, more demanding in entrance qualifications, more bookish, more classroom and exam-oriented, and more irrelevant.

It may be noted that governments have it in their power to define the rules for public administrator training so that the contents and methods are relevant and the results recognized in terms of diplomas, salary and promotion. This is an important aspect of reform strategy that merits close government attention.

A related problem arises with training institutions. It is undoubtedly easier and more comfortable for a training institution to hire permanent teaching staff, teach in the classroom, set up pre-programmed course modules, hand over selection responsibility to interested government services and/or "the market", apply exams, and forget about follow-up, i.e. become a formal school of administration within the education system. The full-time staff is fully occupied in teaching, and never goes to see an administration again. Rapidly, the course offer becomes purely academic and out of touch with reforms and changes, the public administration authorities lose interest in promoting the institution, and civil servants only go because it provides access to the promotion ladder.

This damaging development has to be predicted and resisted. At the least, lecturers have to spend some time working in and on the administration, and part-time experienced civil servants have to be called in to teach. On-the-job follow-up has to be maintained, and selection should be purposive, not random. These considerations carry with them important institutional consequences. In terms of context and legitimacy, the training institution has to remain closely tied to the Ministry in charge of administrative reform and development, so that that Ministry involves the institution in ongoing programmes of reform, keeps the list of contents and priority areas and needs up to date, and intervenes directly in participant selection, recruitment of trainers, and follow-up. An independent school does not have the legitimacy to do these things.

In line with the positions expressed above, it seems important that trainees be *selected* to undergo necessary training. To some degree both the real training needs and the "trainability" of personnel (in terms of capability and motivation) has to be assessed in advance. Further, the process of selection can be important for advance anchoring in the workplace of the will to respect changed attitudes, to make use of learned skills and to accept the resulting changes.

This questions the idea that administrative training institutes should be made self-financing by fees paid for their services. It is hard to make selected

participants pay for themselves. Individual "market selection" for training may not guarantee that the people who most need training will come, either because they do not have the money, or because the cost is deterrent, or exceeds the perceived benefits. Where services have to pay for their staff training, they may be motivated to make a more careful selection; but especially in the current era of government cuts, they may "save on training" or be deterred from training anyone at all in spite of there being a need.

6.6 On-the-job training

The alternative to institutional training is effectively some form of on-the-job training. There has been implicit in the whole philosophy of technical assistance the idea that somehow technicians and counterparts would create their own dynamic learning environment and that knowledge and skills would naturally flow between them. If this does not occur, then the whole point of placing expatriate personnel and demanding counterparts is negated. But it is noteworthy also that the placing of nationals in administrative posts after training has only randomly resulted in the transfer of their skills to others.

In practice, this means that the process of on-the-job training has to be carefully planned and organized, given sufficient time space within the organization's daily activities, and conducted by people who know how to train. All parties involved in an on-the-job scheme have to plan on this basis. Given that on-the-job training is much more difficult to do than is often assumed, it is important to retain the institutional training option and to ensure that technicians engaged under the presumption that they will perform on-the-job training actually are trained and capable of doing so.

6.7 Conclusions on administrative development and reform

Sweden has a long history of developing a smoothly functioning and reasonably honest administration, and, through wide and growing exchange in administrative development programmes in developing countries, now possesses a relatively broad base of experienced personnel in a number of central state agencies who can contribute to reform work and training activities.

One of the most complex steps in government reform is the creation of local government with a high degree of autonomy. This aspect of administration and administrative reform is discussed separately in the next section, but should be kept in mind as part of the background to the following policy guidelines.

When assessing proposed administrative reform programmes, the following guidelines are recommended:

— In principle, it is important to support a constant and steady process of administrative modernization, development, and reform, as long as it respects and is designed to reach the following goals:

— to make government less bureaucratic and more accessible and accountable;
— to make government less centralized and more participatory;
— to make government more efficient and effective in the implementation of its programme.

— Assistance should be given to the carrying out of public sector reviews, through which the performance of the public sector is evaluated and appropriate reform programmes developed, as well as to the regular repetition or institutionalization of review procedures.
— It is important to ensure that the reform programme be properly contextualized in national reality, take heed of national culture and available resources, and be conceded a wide base of legitimacy by the public.
— Assistance should be provided to the development of public administration policy in such areas as the structure of government, the development of local government, macroeconomic policy, et al., through financing a process of policy dialogue.
— Priority should be given to supporting reform programmes which include a broad revision and improvement of personnel policy and personnel administration in all its aspects, in the light of the problems discussed above.
— Support should be given to devising and implementing programmes to reverse the drain of officials from the public sector. However, care should be taken to avoid increasing the dependence of government on external agencies, arising through such activities as direct financing of civil servants' salaries.
— Priority should be given to improvement and reform processes aimed at specially important sectors of the administration, or at sectors which display damaging weaknesses in the context of the whole administration. Particular attention should be paid to supporting activities designed to improve public sector management capacity, at central or local government level.
— A combination of management reform, improvement of routines and communication, public consultation, active organizational consultancy, context-related training, and constant monitoring procedures, constitute the best approach to reform work.
— Proposed training programmes designed to contribute to adminis-

trative improvement or reform should be evaluated according to the criteria that:

- they are contextualized in the national reality and in the wider objectives of the reform;
- they are relevant, adult learner centred, oriented to problem-solving, and applied to work-place realities and needs;
- they give grounds to conclude that the appropriate trainees will be selected and that effective follow-up procedures will be undertaken.

- In supporting training, priority should be assigned to programmes which promise the development of relevant skills in public sector management.
- It is important that support be provided to processes of government capacitation which enable it to undertake its own administrative review, reform and training programmes; in particular, through financing the training of organization consultants and administration trainers, and the developing of consultancy/training institutions.
- In developing training institutions and infrastructure, it is crucial that a proposed institution be closely supported at high levels, and be able to maintain its relevance, mediatory capacity, and operative legitimacy vis a vis the public service.
- Encouragement should be given to the creation of trainer-consultants whose job description combines work in the administration, organizational consultancy, and training.
- Given the general lack of knowledge about organizational culture and management constraints in developing countries, research should be financed into public sector management and public administration, especially in connection with sector analyses, review commission work, and reform projects.

7. DECENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The organizational and institutional forms adopted by a government to realize its aims and implement its policies, and the relationships among them, are to a large degree defined by the political, economic and historical societal context, as well as by the nature of government objectives. Numerous organizational forms may be instituted to achieve the diverse objectives expressed, and to implement and administer the actions involved in achieving them. In African countries, the organizational form usually encountered is that of a strong centralization of power in a series of weighty central apparatuses, which have as their means of local contact a number of subordinate territorial organs with responsibility to the centre, and strictly for policy implementation only. It is clear that many forces act together to maintain this centralization (see Chapter 4), while, in general, experiments in Africa at decentralization and creation of local powers have been short-lived and unsuccessful. Nonetheless, pressures constantly arise for more local say in government, from the people affected, from opposition parties, from central government itself, and from external agencies.

At the local level, where official activities and the public meet and interact daily, government operations in the spheres of production, maintenance, service provision, administration and control are tightly interwoven. At this level, some of the most serious problems of incapacity and ineffectiveness in government currently make themselves felt in most African countries; whereas it is at this level that the need to develop services, production, citizen participation, and official accountability is most acute. At this level, colonial practice in most cases delegitimized traditional systems of authority, post-colonial government tended to set up weak new governing structures (from which it recruited the most capable personnel to the centre), and the current economic squeeze has emaciated the remaining bodies. The effective construction of functioning local government thus poses itself as a priority problem in Africa today.

7.1 Rationales for decentralization

Several different rationales have been advanced to support decentralization. Among the goals most commonly sought are:

— improving administrative efficiency and rationalizing the allocation of scarce human and material resources;
— reducing bureaucracy and facilitating coordination among different agencies that share responsibility for particular projects;
— permitting more flexible and more experimental policy implementation;

- enhancing the capacity for local government;
- integrating remote rural areas into the national political system;
- promoting democracy through citizen participation;
- reducing inequality, especially between different regions of the country;
- extending the effective reach of central government; and
- enhancing the access of disadvantaged groups to the decision-making process.

Decentralization has to do with the location of political authority, and especially with efforts to relocate authority away from the national centre. Decentralization may also be understood in terms of accountability: in practice, to whom are those in power accountable? The public administration is charged with achieving eminently political objectives, and is not neutral in this regard. It incorporates into its structure numerous political positions and conflicts, over government aims, the priorities amongst the aims, and the methods of implementation of policies. Decentralization is one way of expressing and of resolving such conflicts.

Both the process and the form of decentralization are directly related to the distribution of power within the political system. Power is represented by the authority to control and make decisions over resources and their application. Decentralization thus involves the relations of power between central and local institutions; it addresses a political problem with an institutional solution. Decentralization or centralization are thus not necessarily desirable or undesirable in themselves. Various motivations may underlie decisions on the localization of authority: administrative, political, or ideological. These criteria may conflict; for instance, what is politically suitable may not be administratively efficient. A process of decentralization may reduce government accountability or make undemocratic policies function more effectively. Evaluating decentralization requires value judgements about what arrangement is most desirable in a particular situation at a particular time. There is necessarily a tension between centralized direction and local autonomy, and the appropriate balance can be determined only in terms of a specific concrete setting. It is important, nonetheless, for a degree of local autonomy to coexist alongside central direction.

7.2 Forms and processes of decentralization

Decentralization may take many different forms. Among the most important forms are:

- functional decentralization: the relocation of authority in terms of specific government functions;

- deconcentration: the relocation of national officials and agencies away from the national capital;
- delegation: the assignment of specific responsibilities to sub-national, governmental or non-governmental agencies, under some degree of continued central supervision;
- devolution: direct assignment of decision-making authority to sub-national agencies with little or no central supervision.

Privatization may also be a way of decentralizing government functions, to agencies which are not part of the public sector.

Decentralization often becomes material in sectoral form, that is, power is decentralized in relation to specific government functions, such as health care, agricultural services, etc. The process of functional decentralization raises the need to organize local government, and possibly other institutions, to oversee the integration and coordination of sectoral activities at the local level. The development of local government can be an important step to increasing popular representation in government and its decisions, and increasing the accountability of government to the people most directly affected by its decisions.

The process of decentralization is usually conceived from the centre, in response to pressures or problems. This in part explains the problems observed in Africa of the sustainability of the process. Since the central leadership — especially where its authority is being challenged or is insecure — is generally reluctant to relinquish control, centre-initiated approaches usually lead to weak forms of decentralization (deconcentration, or limited delegation of powers). The organizational chart is modified but real power, authority and control over resources are not relocated.

Effective functional decentralization requires identifying how to set up a given activity at local level in order to meet local needs and demands adequately, and thereafter what is necessary to complement that at central level, in terms of coordination, decisions, policies, and allocation of resources. Complementary actions may be needed to complete services which cannot be made available at local level, such as specialized hospitals or training colleges. Local autonomy will be increased to the extent by which local institutions are able to generate and control their own resources.

Generally, global policy-making power is retained at the centre, perhaps with some consultative limitations, while degrees of control over government functions, resources and decision- making in the policy context are decentralized.

The failure of many decentralization schemes to attain their objectives has been because:

- sustained transfer of adequate powers and resources was lacking;
- administrative, operational, personnel and resource limitations impeded accomplishment of the objectives;
- central supervision and interference prevented local initiative and responsibility;
- local elites hostile to national policies dominated the local institutions;
- decentralization was locally perceived as a way to prevent or to reduce, rather than to increase, local influence in decision-making or central government representativity or accountability.

The caveat that centralization or decentralization are not necessarily desirable or undesirable in themselves needs to be remembered. The character and functioning of the public administration, and the specific context of any proposal on decentralization, need to be carefully analysed in relation to government objectives and local needs and wants, before the desirability of the proposal can be acertained.

7.3 Local government

The term "local government" implies for SIDA that the institutional arrangements in question be based at the local level, be composed of people who live in that area, and represent, be responsible to and accountable to the people who live there. To be a "government", it should have control over its personnel and resources, ideally generate some of its own resources, and have a measure of decision-making power over local services and programmes.

The establishment of such local government is an important step towards the goal of building a democratic society. Such a goal is nonetheless difficult to attain. Strategically, the establishment of local government might be promoted by the execution of decentralization measures which fall short of establishing local government as such, but which confirm the viability and benefits of conducting a more decentralized policy: for instance, in increasing administrative effectiveness or in contributing to economic growth.

At which level a proposed local government system should be mounted is a complex political question, and one which also requires consideration of physical conditions and available resources. It should ideally work in an area which is sufficiently small for all the population to have easy access to it, while not too small to inviabilize it in terms of scope of its programme and availability of resources. The population represented should not be too large nor too small, for the same reasons. For reasons of distance and population size, a country's first administrative subdivision, often denominated "province" or "region", is not the most suitable base for the development of local

government. Politically and economically, also, the province is often large enough to represent a regional power base and a base for secessionist moves, so central government may under present circumstances be unwilling to promote provincial autonomy.

The provinces are usually composed of a few urban areas, notably the provincial capital, and a number of rural districts. The national capital city often has a higher administrative status than other cities.

Most African cities are of a small enough dimension to be managed by a single urban council, though the largest ones may need to be broken up into administrative tiers. Urban government is by its nature rather different to rural government, as it confronts different problems and conditions through population concentration. Evidently, it need worry little about rural extension services, but does need to take note of waste disposal, urban infrastructure and mass transport. However, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the urban and rural areas are economically interdependent, and that a well-functioning urban centre can serve as an economic motor for contiguous rural areas.

Urban government is a rather specialized administrative field. In addition, urban development is closely related to economic growth. Politically, for most Third World governments, the urban population represents the least controllable and most important constituency and forum for their policies: organized and effective political resistance in the cities is a rapid avenue to change of national government. For these reasons also it would seem appropriate for local government to be developed in the urban context.

The next level down in the administrative division of a country is often referred to as a district, which is usually predominantly rural. The rural districts are divided into three principal tiers of population: a market and administrative town which is usually the last level of the central administration and/or the seat of local government (the district capital); smaller agglomerations of population, which usually take the denomination of village; and dispersed population living in widely-separated (sometimes movable) homesteads. Some African peoples live only in village organization, others only in dispersed homesteads.

In general, it seems that the district level is the largest unit for effective exercise of participatory local government, in terms simply of access and communication. The district level combines the commercial and administrative (small urban) centre with the rural population's living patterns. The district in Africa is often, like the other territorial divisions, arbitrarily delineated. But still, it often has a fairly integrated population and economy. The district can form a manageable unit for planning, including much of the current needs for physical planning.

Some African governments have sought to create decision-making bo-

dies linked into the government structure at sub-district level, in particular, at village level. Where "tribal" administration is still operative as a recognized part of the country's official government structure, the base for its operation is usually the village; the more "modern" organs of government — autonomous from tribal administration's control — are based from one level higher up. Other countries have elected village councils, which are not supposed to be specifically "tribal", but rather, councils which take care of village development, village collective activities, and perhaps local taxation.

Given a degree of initiative and control over resources, village government can be an important level for popular participation in decision-making and for implementation of small development projects such as cottage industry, cooperative production, road-clearing, small irrigation, et al. In terms of the low level of communication from centre to base in many areas of Africa, it may serve as the most relevant and influential forum for making decisions of immediate impact on villagers' daily lives. However, it also represents a low level of aggregation to have any significant bargaining power with government at other levels; it can easily be steamrollered by other levels. It may also too easily fall into a conservative and autocratic model of tribal authority, even where it is elected and not intended to be tribal. In many African countries, the structures of family, clan, and even tribal authority, governance and decision-making are often still present and operating parallel to, instead of, or integrated into the "modern" structure of government. Indeed, "modern" local government may exercise much less real power than the parallel "traditional" government structures.

7.4 Local government finance and personnel

The two areas of greatest political friction in relation to developing local government are those of finance and personnel.

In most cases, there is a central Ministry responsible for developing local government. This usually holds the personnel function, but is also usually bereft of the finance function (which the Finance Ministry jealously guards). This division of power thoroughly promotes centralization.

Aid agencies naturally, and in terms of their mandate, cooperate with and through these Ministries in supporting local government. It should be pointed out, however, that this "avenue of access" further concentrates power at the centre.

For local government to function as such, it must have a fair degree of control over its resources, whatever their origin, and it is probable that it should have some hand in raising its own revenues through local fees, taxes, and other activities (some of the rationale for creating local government is, after all, that it will be able to mobilize additional resources more effective-

ly). However, the decentralization of financial authority to local level is what central governments have traditionally resisted the hardest, especially in a situation of financial constraint. Central resistance becomes especially strong if it is the case that political parties hostile to the central government are able to take power at local government level. Central government constantly expresses doubts over local capacity (and even honesty) to raise and administer money correctly. The other, more respectable, doubt which is raised is that if local authorities have the power to raise their own finances, regional equity can be affected, and duplications of resource allocation can take place.

In this context, it is important that a programme to create or strengthen local government ensures the training of local finance officers of quality, and that the auditing capacity of central government be strengthened. Indeed, local government requires competent central government in order to function well.

The personnel question is equally complex. Many central governments seek to avoid the creation of local power bases by retaining the right to employ, transfer and fire civil servants at all levels. It is also argued that regions with personnel problems will remain so if central government does not have the ability to transfer competent people into them from outside. It is true that where no controlling regulations exist, qualified people move away from "backward" areas of their own volition. However, it is also the case that governments themselves often undermine "backward" areas by transferring competent people away from them. A possible approach to the problem is for central government to fix the salary scales, providing monetary incentives to work at local level (thus counteracting the brain drain) and to work in more "backward" areas; while providing the local authorities with powers of decision over actual recruitment.

To this issue is added the issue of to what degree local personnel, especially in decision-making positions, should be elected or appointed to their posts. It is evidently difficult for all local officials to be elected from among the local people to all local posts. But usually the demarcation between election and appointment is altogether too limitative of local say in the representativity and accountability of personnel. Either almost all the available posts are filled by central appointment, or the elected posts are defined in such a way that their incumbents have very little governing power in practice.

In building representative, legitimate, and accountable local government, it is essential that key personnel be elected, and that the staffing function be to a considerable extent under the control of the same local government.

In effect, support to the development of local government needs to

involve support to the appropriate central ministries which is designed to assist them in transferring their powers to local authorities.

7.5 Local government and planning

There is no country in Africa where administration, production and communication are so advanced as to permit effective total central planning. Local production unpredicted in central plans is bound to continue to make up a sizable part of total production. However, local production is dependent on a number of vital planned inputs, mostly of a simple kind: hoes, seeds, fishing nets, consumer goods, fertilizers. Where planning is centrally dominated and there is no local autonomy, there is a general tendency to overlook the need for such inputs. One important role for local government is to represent its constituency in central planning, import requests, price negotiations, and so on. In development planning, the central authorities have to learn to listen to local agencies and rely on their capacity for coordination and initiative-taking. The planning process is too often the way in which local government becomes overridden and thus has its legitimacy and authority called into question among its constituents also.

Another area of planning — physical planning, or the planning of land use — is also an important area for local authorities to have a determining and representative voice.

Physical planning in the first place lays out in the form of laws, regulations, plans and maps, land use allocation and rights. It necessarily faces different levels of demand and complexity in urban, crowded rural, and sparsely-inhabited rural areas. Physical planning is eminently political, and benefits or even penalizes various groups in society over generations after decisions have been made. In one way, therefore, physical planning acts as a form of expert mediation in land rights disputes, ideally also taking into account the needs of future generations. It is a state-run activity, and tends to protect or benefit state interests first. The legitimacy of planners' decisions has been protected by increasingly centralizing and professionalizing the personnel and plans. This process also, of course, derives from the great complexity of urban physical planning, where land is used on several levels and all kinds of necessary safety regulations for buildings, location of industry, public transport conduits et al., have to be respected.

However, in the Third World context at least, this process of professionalization creates the danger that the voices of the people most affected by decisions will not be heard, or ignored in favour of "technically correct" arguments, and that the planners will explain their plans in technocratic language which confuses people and excludes popular contributions. In the African rural context, where land use rights consist in a tangle of customary rights, traditional commonhold, collective decisions on allocation, prece-

dent, class factors, unrespected colonial arbitrarities, possession of trees, et al., the physical planner who takes little note of such issues can do violence to local society. Indeed, in their day-to-day use of land the local people have come to know its characterisitics much better than an outside planner can do, and are thus professionally much better equipped to advise on such issues as the agricultural worth of land, or the placing of schools and other public and private buildings and structures.

It is evident that physical planning has much to do with the exercise or limitation of democracy in society. Planners' decisions on land use may bulldoze dwellings, reallocate land, place chemical factories next to urban slums, etc., or instead provide for slum sanitation, protect poor communities' communal land rights, and reserve land for playgrounds in cities, etc., thus either increasing social equity and raising the living standards of the poor, or condemning the poor to worse conditions than they already have. The importance of physical planning for economic growth and environmental protection are plain to see, and even national independence may be assisted by physical planning, as in the case of the Beira corridor in Mozambique.

One should therefore distinguish physical planning activities into three kinds, associated each to their respective methods of operation:

— national/regional strategic planning, where the outcome is intended to be a more general policy overview of land use on the broad plane; and where the appropriate methods involve the identification of priority areas, defence needs, and large land-use projects such as projected plantations, road and rail reserves, etc., to be followed by consultation with the communities affected;

— urban planning, where detailed and technically complex plans and regulations for urban land use and development need to be drawn up and legalized, taking into account existing allocations and arrangements as well as longer-term future requirements;
and where space must be created for explaining the impact of plans and for hearing complaints and counter-proposals — preferably under the aegis of urban local government structures;

— rural physical planning, which supports local communities and their representatives in meeting their needs, rather than controlling them, and enables individuals and groups to delineate their rights in relation to others, rather than imposing solutions on (or even for) them; where the methods used have to be consultative, enabling, and pedagogical — and preferably under the aegis of local government structures.

In short, if local government is to have any real power, representativity, and credibility, it must have a real voice in economic, social and physical planning.

7.6 Conclusions on decentralization and local government

Sweden has a high degree of decentralization of government to local authorities, and most of income from taxation is provided to local authorities for their use. The local authorities have their own non-governmental national representative "union" to promote and defend local interests at central level, as well as to serve as a consultant body for local administration and development. Sweden is divided administratively into three tiers, corresponding to central, provincial (county), and district (municipality) levels, each with elécted government and its own civil service. The district level takes care of most social programmes and detailed physical planning, while the province level exists more as a coordinating level for planning, health services, and big infrastructural projects to serve a number of districts — specialized hospitals, transport networks, and so on. Some cities and districts have their own international cooperation departments and projects.

SIDA has assisted people from central government, as well as from local authorities and their central "union", to make contacts with the developing countries and has promoted them as institutional partners in administrative development projects. There is thus a growing base of personnel with experience in the Third World for cooperation in local government development.

Thus, in relation to support to government decentralization and the development of local government, it is recommended that the following conclusions be considered:

— While it is to be noted that decentralization per se is not necessarily desirable, appropriate decentralization of government can be an important step towards fuller democratic participation; and can also promote administrative effectiveness and economic growth.
— In principle, therefore, support should be provided to programmes which enhance citizen participation in the making and implementation of decisions on programmes of local relevance, and increase the degree of representative and accountable government. The evaluation of proposed programmes involving forms of decentralization should judge whether these outcomes would be attained, rather than prioritizing specific structural or institutional arrangements.
— In particular, support should be provided to programmes for the development and improvement of representative, democratic, and accountable local government.

— Depending on the characteristics and history of each country, those in power may consider it desirable to build up tiers of government in greater or lesser numbers, and at substantially different levels. In deciding on whether to support the development of government at levels away from the centre, the following criteria should be decisive:

— that the programme in fact makes government more accessible and responsive;
— that the programme should significantly increase government effectiveness.

— The development of urban government should be supported, for example through city twinning programmes; given that Third World cities now represent a concentration of the poorest sectors of the population, a potential pole of economic growth, and an immediate threat to the environment.
— Support should be given to the regionalization of government, the development of government structures at district level, and/or the strengthening of village-level government, on the basis of these considerations. Urban government development should also be included in support provided in the context of a general local government reform, or in the context of promoting regional development.
— Support should be provided to the process of policy dialogue and to pilot activities to develop government policies in relation to the organization of local government. Pilot activities undertaken should offer the clear potential of being reproducible.
— Given that effective local government requires its access to and control over resources, the provision of support to programmes envisaging the development of local government should be evaluated in terms of their degree of effective transfer to local agencies, of human, financial, and material resources, as well as their degree of transfer of decision-making power over them.
— Support should preferentially be provided to programmes which begin by analysis of local needs and capacities, and transfer in stages the corresponding concrete government powers, functions, responsibilities and resources to locally-accountable public bodies. In this regard, a demand could be made that a general decentralizing reform be preceded by a series of representative pilot programmes.
— Effective support to creating sustainable local government could take the form of helping to remove obstacles to its functioning, inter alia through providing basic equipment and accommodation and assisting with training of local decision-makers and functionaries.

- Support could be given to programmes designed to institutionalize local government accountability through public dissemination of information about activities under local responsibility and increased local participation in making and implementing decisions. The development of activities which stimulate local mobilization and participation in decision-making, election of representatives, and implementation of concrete programmes, could also be promoted.
- Given that there are different ways of institutionalizing democracy in government, support to local administrative development should prioritize forms which presage a process of evolution towards democracy and accountability. The possibility of support to more "traditional" structures of local government should rest upon this criterion.
- Technical assistance to local government development should preferably take institutional cooperation forms. One model is that of twinning between cities or districts. Another is that of institutional support to the central authority charged with the implementation of local government development programmes. A third is that of institutional support to pilot programmes.
- Support to the development of local government and administration should concentrate on the development of general governing and administrative capacity, notably as regards financial administration, as well as the development of the skills of local government-employed technicians. At local levels, distinctions between the sectors are often blurred, and the main function of effective local government is to undertake concrete programmes with local contribution, in the areas of health, education, transport and so on. Thus support to technical skills training could constitute a fundamental component of local government development.
- Among such technical skills, support could be given to the development of physical planning services in the context of local government development, as a means of increasing local government influence over local projects; in the spirit of creating a consultative and enabling local service for the public, and on condition that it be publicly accessible and accountable.

8. THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Throughout the world it is evident that women play a secondary role in public administration, occupying fewer posts than men, earning lower salaries than men, and, in particular, rarely being promoted to occupy leadership and managerial posts. This is true also of Sweden. The situation in African countries in this regard is very unsatisfactory indeed. Often even the points at which women have come nearer to parity in other continents, such as education and health services, remain very much a male preserve in Africa.

This problem takes at least two forms. On the one hand, the composition of the civil service is mostly male, and almost no women attain positions of responsibility in elected, competed, or appointed posts. On the other, the public service is unresponsive to women's particular needs and conditions. Schools take in fewer girls and push them out sooner: as happens also to
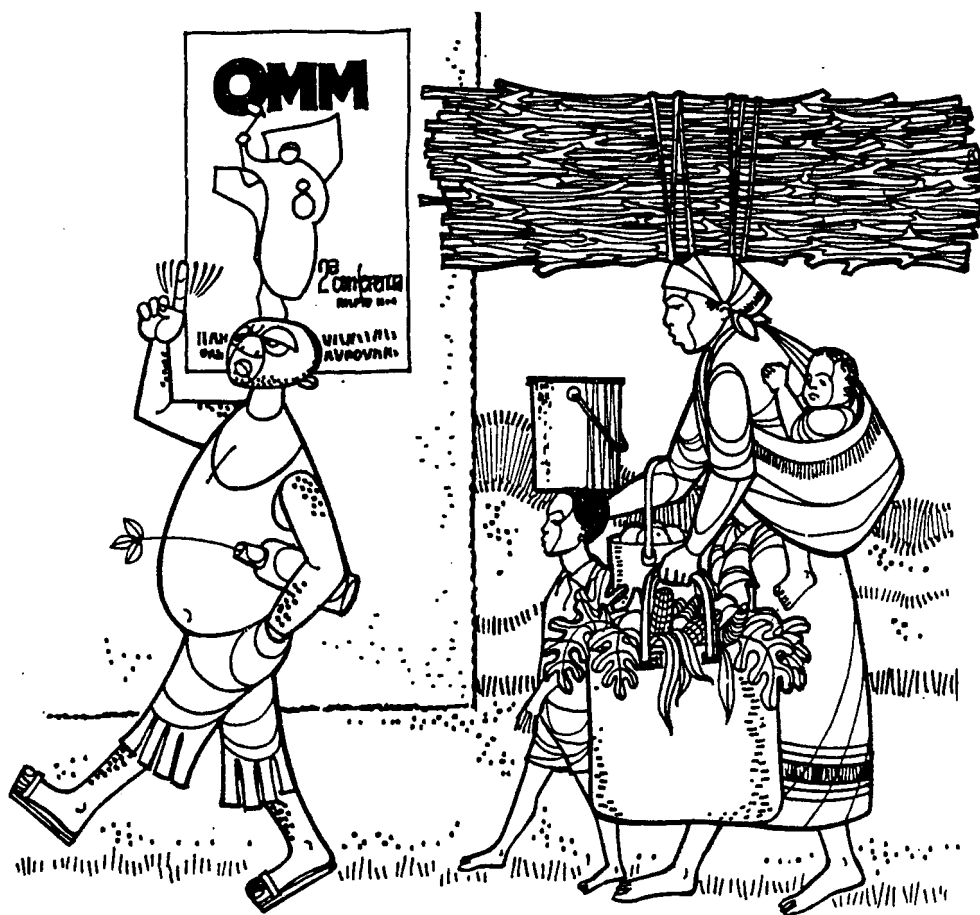
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women in schools of public administration. Administrative services often treat women badly. More women are illiterate than men, and the illiterate often receive short shrift at government desks. Planners consult men on land distribution and production, whereas women are the main tillers of African soil. Men employed in the public service (as others) often demand on marrying that their wives leave employment and stay at home. The list can be made a long one.

It is one of the guiding principles for Swedish aid that greater social equity, including between men and women, should be an outcome of Swedish assistance. Women should be encouraged to attend courses, to apply for promotion, and to engage themselves fully in reform programmes, as well as to make use of fora for public sector accountability to press for correct and equal treatment.

— In the course of the development of public administration cooperation programmes, pressure should be put on governments make serious efforts to include, positively discriminate in favour of, treat correctly, promote, and reward women. Similar pressure should be applied to consultancy organizations engaged in such programmes.
— Appropriate programmes of positive discrimination should be financed for the training and promotion of women in the public sector, especially as managers, as well as the provision of special facilities for women in training institutions.

9. REGIONAL PROGRAMMES BETWEEN COUNTRIES

In principle, SIDA has been prepared to support the development of so-called regional programmes on a rather restricted basis, mostly in the field of exchange of experience, research and training. The "region" in this case is defined as a set of reasonably similar countries, by way of their common historical, linguistic, and/or geographical affinity, or their common political decision to act as a region.

In the area of support to public administration development, where the stress in programmes is placed on contextualization, relevance, political sensitivity, cultural respect, et al., the regional approach to problems may seem somewhat unapplicable. However, the regional approach to public administration development being built up with SIDA support between the five Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP) is based on the interplay between mutual cooperation and national application. The regional programme allows for exchange of experiences, study visits, use of each others' technicians, and training activities. The training activities include a comparative dimension and are further contextualized by in-service follow-up in the participants' respective countries. The regional approach serves as a stimulus to participating governments to analyse their administrative development needs more closely, indicates possible practical ways of resolving problems which have been tried out elsewhere, and provides them with contacts with resource sources for the undertaking of specifically national programmes.

The regional frame also provides a cheaper, yet more rewarding forum for the training of specialists for whom each country has a limited need and little chance of being able to build an own national programme. For example, it can concentrate people for specialist training in specific administrative fields like debt management, auditing, and statistics, or group together prospective administration teachers for training in the pedagogy of specialized subjects, of whom one country may only need a handful.

Regional work can be developed on the basis of a single central institution or on the basis of a network of institutions through the region which complement or overlap each other. The former model is only likely to be acceptable if the institution has grown on a regional basis and has worked in such a way that it has managed to win itself a position of respect and prestige through providing services which are recognized by the region as being relevant and sensitive to each participating country's needs. This prestige needs to be sufficient to surmount the problems arising from national pride, coordination and communication difficulties, travel demands and the like. Evidently, also, the institution in question must offer services which the other countries' institutions are unable to equal. In the long term, this model

is likely to "dry up" and end.

The latter, network, model involves regional programmes becoming a sharing of tasks on the basis of each institution achieving a suitable level of competence, and the programme developing on a collective basis. In this case, it is important that the participating institutions and their respective governments are clear on the form and relevance of networking. A tendency in such cases will be for each institution to turn to meeting home-country needs whenever difficulties arise. International networking is by nature a complex process, and it can be a costly one.

A "hybrid" model is also possible, where one "central" or "lead" institution contributes to building up other institutions in the region, in the process gradually effecting a transition either to the network model, or to the gradual "nationalization" of the programme. This model would fit most closely to the reasons given above for supporting regional programmes.

In all cases, for regional programmes to survive, they have to have a good reason for existing, and a collective political will to keep them operating. When both these conditions exist, an external financier can contribute to their realization. It is possible for an external financier to keep a regional programme going for its own purposes, but without regionally-felt need and will, in the long run it is likely to be unsuccessful.

It is thus recommended that the following criteria be applied in relation to supporting regional cooperation projects in the field of public administration development:

— Support could be provided to the development of regional cooperation projects in public administration, on the following basis:

— the contemplated region should possess enough linkages and similarities for the project to allow meaningful exchanges; in preference in the context of an already-existing umbrella organization for regional collaboration, or of other institutional indicators demonstrating the existence of a regional political will;
— the project should be based on concrete needs identified in all the participating countries;
— the project should indicate how its execution would benefit all the participating countries, administratively, socially and economically;
— the project should have a long-term character, and tend to increase the degree of cooperation between the countries involved;
— it is a recommendation for such a project that it saves money or provides otherwise unavailable services for the participating countries.

— One of the participating countries should take on the role of project executor. The same country could initially make available the necessary basic infrastructural facilities for the proposed activities (lodg-

ing, classrooms, etc.), though the participating countries should be encouraged to share this role, stepwise if necessary.

— It is more effective to finance concrete activities, (usually in the areas of training, research, consultancy, exchange, and reform planning), rather than to invest in developing "regional" infrastructure, such as training institutes, boarding colleges, and the like. The "regional" approach should lead to strengthening institutions and service provision in all the participating countries, not to the creation of one single "lead" institution.

— Similar "soft" support can usefully be provided to the development of regional networking and professional exchange.

NOTES ON SIDA's PROCEDURES FOR SECTOR ANALYSIS, SECTOR REVIEW, PROJECT PREPARATION, AND PROJECT EVALUATION.

1 PROGRAMME IDENTIFICATION AND PROJECT PREPARATION

In the process of cooperation between SIDA and a partner country, SIDA is always concerned to ensure that the support it provides will be relevant, and effectively and efficiently used. The Swedish government and the Swedish public are concerned to know how the resources are being allocated and made use of, to what ends and with what effects. It may be noted that SIDA is a government agency which is publicly accountable and subject to Swedish law in all its activities, in particular, that everything it does, and all the related documentation, is considered official business and is open to public scrutiny. (This means also that only under very rare circumstances can any document be declared secret).

SIDA, on receiving a request for assistance, thus takes care to establish that the project is important and feasible, that the methods proposed for its execution are the most effective, and that there is no alternative project which needs to be undertaken first, or which is more important to finance. As has been a constant theme in this paper, SIDA is also concerned to analyse whether the project is in fact compatible with its principles for cooperation, and to discover how the project fits into the overall context of public administration in the applicant country. SIDA needs to know what the applicant government involvement is going to be, through which institutions, and has to know the context in order to debate out the nature of support, and the timetabling involved. This should be seen in the context that SIDA regards administrative development and reform as automatically being a long-term process which requires, for its success, that SIDA provides a guarantee of long-term support. Finally, SIDA needs to know whether it in fact is capable of finding the support requested, on the basis of a detailed understanding of the project context.

This implies that if SIDA in principle agrees to provide support on the long-term and for a large-scale programme, before finally agreeing to a programme, it will request to undertake a general analysis of the public sector, its nature, policies, needs, priorities, and problems, in conjunction with a government team. This is termed by SIDA preparation for "sector support" to the public sector (see section 2, below). For a specific project within the sector, or in the case of only agreeing to support a single restricted project, SIDA may undertake with the subsector concerned a joint feasibility study, or project appraisal, on the specific project. Where the feasibility of the project is evident, a SIDA-financed team will carry out a project preparation mission. The latter two types of preparatory work normally conclude

with the elaboration of a revised project proposal.

During the execution of the programme, SIDA will undertake regular contacts and budget follow-ups through its local office, as well as an annual sector review involving consultations with the recipient authority, to keep up to date with sector developments in general and with the success and further development of the programme in particular. The process of annual sector review allows for updating and revision of project direction and budgets, and prepares for prolongations or additions to programmes.

In relation to the programme, SIDA may also request to promote specific "problem analyses" on aspects of the public administration (see section 3, below). It may also assist in promoting national research on the programme field. At a suitable point in an extensive programme, it is SIDA's practice to engage an independent team of external programme evaluators, whose task is to look into the degree and efficiency of achievement of the programme's objectives. It is also possible that the Swedish government will request to do a cost-benefit audit on the programme as part of its auditing of SIDA.

2 METHODS OF SECTOR ANALYSIS

The task of making an analysis of the "functional" sectors designated by SIDA as eligible for public administration support is obviously a daunting one. These sectors have an operative presence in almost all organs of government at all administrative levels of the country.

The method used with some success thus far has been labelled "task development", a method of studying the whole by detailed consideration of one of its parts, or functions, or goals. It starts with a prior mapping of the outlines of the public service as a whole, and a more detailed mapping of a pre-selected specific aspect of government. It then proceeds through a selective survey of the whole aspect, from its origins on through a sample of government structures from central through to local level, and concludes with an analysis which identifies characteristic problems and possible methods of resolution. The initial mapping would chart the area and identify its components and idealised functioning. The selective survey would look into the real functioning of the aspect, as well as chart its relations and interactions with the rest of the system of administration.

For the first sector analysis, the financial function was chosen as the red thread to be mapped and then traced through a sample of the components of the political and administrative system. It is likely that similarly successful insights could be obtained from tracking the human resources function, or the realization of major goals of the state.

The inclusion of consultants with experience in the country and of members of the government analysed was nonetheless very important for the

understanding of the information received in its wider context. In a recent analysis, given the complexities revealed, the study team decided it would be precipitate, or cause precipitation, to make specific recommendations for reform actions. The information obtained on problems in the functioning of the examined public administration led to SIDA opting in consultation with the partner government for a long-term approach with initial focus on the capacitation of the administration reform agencies themselves, to be followed by a gradual process of improvement of communications and capacities at all levels. However, the government was faced by strong pressures to make rapid improvements. It should be cautioned, therefore, that where an administration enters into crisis, the government is unlikely to be able to take a cautious approach to reform. Also, that the parallel operation of several funding agencies in the public administration sector is likely to be disruptive if the government in question does not have a strong guiding policy line on its objectives and the methods of achieving them.

3 PROBLEM ANALYSIS

A similar approach of mapping and analysis was undertaken in a slightly different situation, where SIDA had been working over a long period with a government in public administration development, and wished in the context of recent large-scale changes in economic and financial policy to make a sector analysis:

- mapping the links between central and local government and the division of responsibilities between the public and private sector;
- taking a long-term view on future constraints and problems hampering the administration, in particular in relation to government personnel;
- looking into the comparative success of two cooperation projects undertaken in different ways;

with a view to enabling the government and SIDA to identify priorities, areas and methods of future long-term cooperation in the sector.

Here again the task was undertaken by consultants with long experience of the country together with a team of government officials. The task was multifaceted and thus the approach was more diffuse, though one part of the study used the "red thread" of government personnel policy as a basis for analysis. The team returned with numerous findings of interest for public administration development in general, as well as for SIDA policy and practice in general and in the particular programmes covered.

The aims of such analyses are always:

- to ensure that ongoing programmes are successfully and efficiently meeting their objectives;

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— to identify what other impacts they are having;

— to ensure that the programmes and their objectives and methods continue to be relevant;

— to identify priorities for future or continued cooperation.

Inter alia, SIDA hopes that the gathering and compilation of this kind of information will gradually reveal a series of simple indicators as to the "health" of an administration, which will enable early warning to be given of micro or macro-problems which are likely to arise. It may indicate whether problems in on-going programmes can be remedied, and also whether it is perhaps worthwhile carrying on with a programme as the best approach to a complex problem, even though it has apparently been unsuccessful.

SIDA is thus also looking into setting up small part-time teams of experts in public administration with the specific task of compiling and analysing information on public administration sectors to which help is regularly provided.

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The objective of this document is to lay out in synthetic form SIDA's
policy guidelines on principles and methods of support to the develop-
ment of public administration, and to give an indication of the ration-
ales underlying the choice of policy.

The guidelines, presented in Part I of the document, are intended to
orient SIDA's concerned departments, SIDA-financed consultants, and
cooperating institutions in SIDA programme countries as to SIDA's
position on the principles and practices it intends to apply in the
process of providing support to the development of public administra-
tion. They concern those programmes which SIDA specifically classifies
as "public administration sector support"; though they should also have
relevance to the SIDA support to developing aspects of public adminis-
tration which is provided in the context of most of its other pro-
grammes.

Part II of the document, the framework, presents an analysis of public
administration in the African context. The conclusions drawn from the
analysis provide the foundations for the guidelines decided upon. Num-
bers of researchers, consultants, and SIDA staff contributed to making
this analysis and to drawing conclusions as to how SIDA could best go
about assisting programme country governments in improving and
changing their public administration.