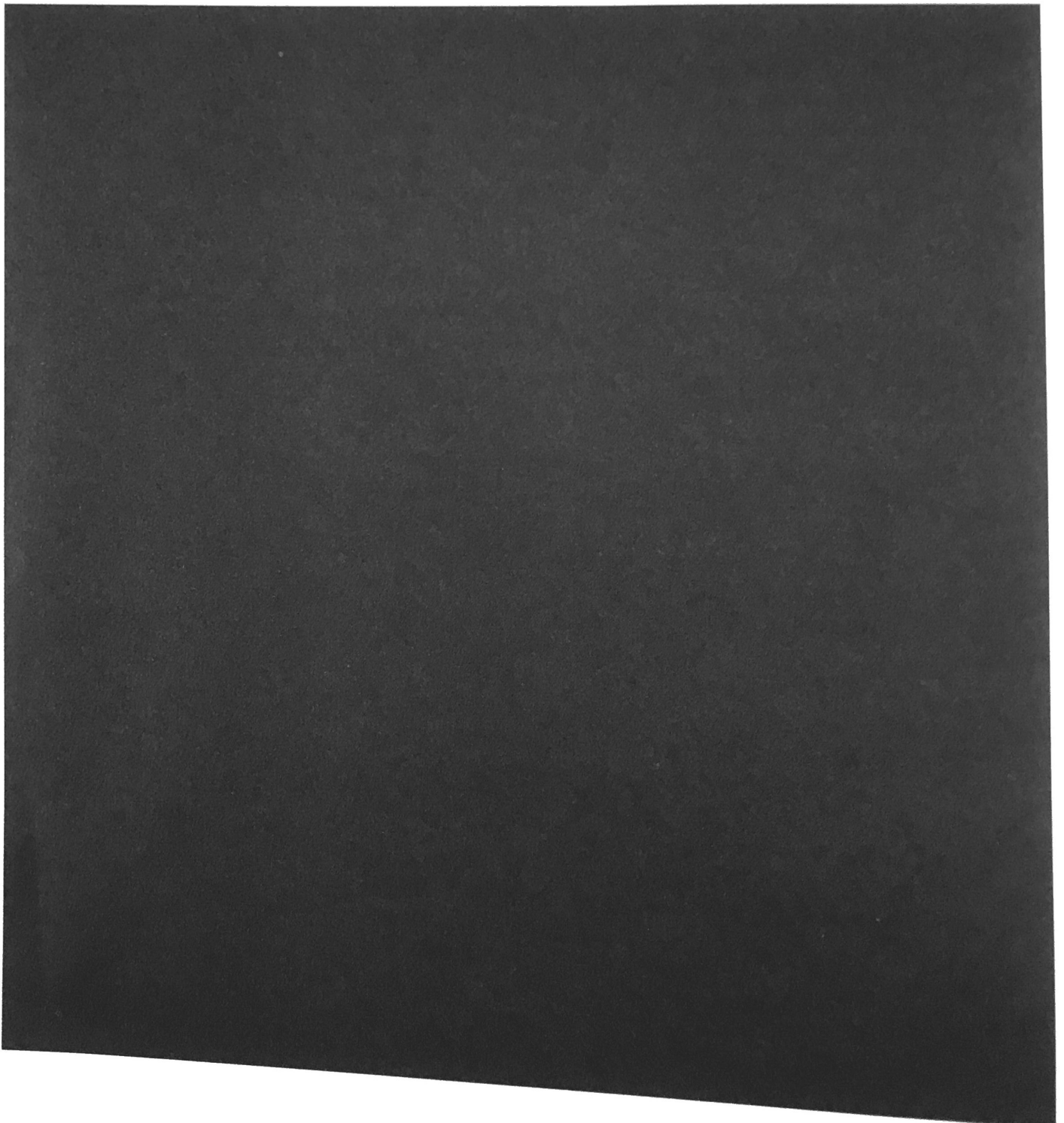




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Capacity Development  
– Working Paper No. 16

# Capacity development by strengthening systems of organisations and institutions



# Foreword

This paper has been written by Dr Lennart Gustafsson at the request of Sida, Methods Development Unit. It has the task of contributing to sustaining and improving of the quality of Sida's work with its development cooperation contributions. This Unit supports the line organisation in the development and application of approaches and methods used in Swedish development cooperation. The approaches and methods may refer, for example, to approaches for capacity development, the transition from a project approach to programme approach, the introduction of a rating system, or Sida's work of combating corruption.

The Unit is responsible for ensuring that Sida's methods handbook, "Sida at Work", is kept up-to-date and that Sida staff are kept fully informed of its contents. Thus, the handbook also constitutes a framework for the methods work of the Unit.

Contributing to learning and exchanges of experience is an important task. This series of "Working Papers" is a contribution to Sida's learning.

They are often produced as part of the work on a certain methods issue. This particular document is a tool that can be used for the understanding and analysis of complex systems of organisations.

It is primarily intended for the staff at Sida. It is also hoped that it will be useful for those who cooperate with Sida.

Sida uses the concept of capacity in order to describe the factors that need to exist – in the form of qualified and experienced persons, efficient organisations and legal frameworks – to enable development to take place.

Today, the basic pattern for support of this type is that an organisation in a partner country receives support from an organisation with similar tasks and duties in Sweden. Programmes of support can be directed towards organisations in the public sector, in civil society, or in the private sector. Sometimes this is referred to as "twinning". "Contract-financed technical cooperation" is based on the same idea.

However, in recent years Sida's support has increasingly focused on complex systems of organisations in partner countries, often in cooperation with other donors. This may be a question of a country wanting to transfer responsibilities from central government to local government, or it can be a question of providing support to a country's systems for healthcare, to its legal system or to broad reforms of its public administration.

# Capacity development

## by strengthening systems of organisations and institutions

### **Background and fundamental problem**

Institutional cooperation is an important feature of international development cooperation. It often has the form of “twinning”. The idea behind twinning is simple: two organisations with similar tasks and duties cooperate with each other. One of the organisations is more highly developed than the other. Even if, in this context, the acquisition of knowledge mainly has the result that the more highly developed twin contributes its experience to the less experienced twin, there are elements of mutuality – often in the form of a common perception of the role of the organisations in society: their “mission”. This common perception is often enough to permit a commonly accepted and mutually agreed definition to be made of the programme of cooperation between the twins.

However, certain development issues are so complex that, for cooperation to be successful, it is necessary that several organisations are involved and that changes must be made to several complex sets of rules. This situation requires an advanced analysis of the actors affected by the programme of development cooperation, as well as of the institutional framework (rules) that must be reviewed. There are no established ways of doing this and therefore a standard procedure or a model is required that can provide guidance for the analysis. This memorandum contains a proposal for a model of this type. It is intended to be an aid when a survey is to be made of a (potential) area of cooperation in order to define relevant actors in the programme of cooperation and relevant parts of the institutional framework that needs to be developed or subjected to fundamental change. Accordingly, the issue refers to ways in which it is possible, in international development cooperation, to direct and design contributions for capacity development that focus on capacity in a structure that includes more than one individual organisation or more than one set of rules.

The problem that is taken up in this memorandum is therefore the following. What factors should be identified and what type of reasoning should be used when “capacity” at the following system levels should be developed:

- system of organisations
- institutional framework (here: rules/norms)

The document provides a framework for a better understanding and identification of systems of this type and it draws attention to the importance of the institutional frameworks for development. It also points out the importance of the existence of a relationship between policies and the organisations that are expected to deliver services, for example healthcare or education, to citizens in a country.

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The model is for the analysis of activities in the public sector. However, the term "public sector" should be interpreted broadly and include all activities that are an expression of a political undertaking on behalf of the citizens, regardless of whether they are implemented by public sector organisations or financed in their entirety by public funds. Primarily therefore the focus of the model is on activities in the public sector that are typically financed by a public budget and implemented by public sector organisations in accordance with politically approved rules.

Two closely associated, but in principle different, issues are taken up, namely:

- how to determine (or define or delimit) the system that one wants to target the contributions to?
- how to devise the contribution in question, i.e. the programme of international development cooperation for capacity development of this system?

These issues will be treated together in this memorandum since it is difficult to treat them independently of each other.

### **Some initial determinants**

#### *Difference between the recipient system and cooperation system*

An analysis of conditions for capacity development in development cooperation must be based on an understanding of the distinction between two systems or structures that are both relevant in the formulation of the programme. One refers to the system of organisations or rules that are to be "developed", i.e. the "recipient". The other is the system for development cooperation as such, which includes factors such as financiers, suppliers and forms of cooperation/relations between the parties (sometimes referred to as the cooperation framework.)

The situation in the first system and the goals that are to be achieved in this system (i.e. the results of cooperation) should naturally determine the formulation of the cooperation system, even if practice often shows that the reverse order is used. The standpoints, positions and approaches of other donors, not least the multinational donors, are of importance for the possibilities available to a bilateral donor to formulate the forms of cooperation in each individual case. Circumstances of this type can lead to departures from what could be perceived as an "optimal" contribution in the case in point.

#### *The political logic in public activities*

A model for capacity development in the public sector must be based on a conception of what is typical for production in the public sector or activities that are decided on or financed publicly. The following simple notion forms the basis of the reasoning in this memorandum:

- Public sector activity is based on a politically approved policy that is codified in an institutional framework (rules in the form of laws, ordinances or regulations).
- Through the rules, assignments are given to public sector actors or private sector actors that are charged with the responsibility for the implementation of the rules.

- This assignment often involves a “delivery” to the citizens. This usually means that the public sector provides services or products to individual citizens or groups of citizens. (In this memorandum, the term “citizens” refers to persons who live or reside in a community, regardless of whether or not they are formally citizens of the country in question, and who come into contact with the organisations in society as clients, patients, customers, students or the equivalent.

The design of the chain: “Policy >institutional framework> assignment> actor(s) (organisation/s)> delivery> citizens” differs in different public sector activities. The chain can be simple or complex. Not least the process that leads to a policy being approved can vary in complexity, due to the fact that conflicts in respect of goals and conflicts of interest are expressed with varying degrees of strength in different social sectors. To be able to participate in developing capacity in a system, the partners in cooperation should – as far as possible – have an insight into these chains. Otherwise there is a risk that the contributions will be aimed incorrectly, i.e. sub-optimised.

In general it can be said that all work performed by the public sector should have, as its point of departure, the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law and efficiency, and that this must characterise the organisation of the policy-delivery chains.

Democracy requires that the public administration discharges its duties in accordance with the decisions of the bodies that are constitutionally authorised to make decisions.

Demands in respect of rule of law require that public bodies make materially correct decisions based on current legislation and other regulations and that individuals have the possibility to have their cases tried by a court of law. This also requires that political decisions protect the conditions of particularly vulnerable groups or groups that, it is known from experience, are disadvantaged where the distribution of influence or resources is concerned. This includes rules that counteract discrimination.

Demands in respect of democracy and the rule of law often draw attention to rules that lay down certain standards for basic public services, for example education and care. To a certain extent these rules are based on international rules in respect of human rights, often approved by the UN or its specialist agencies.

Demands in respect of efficiency have the effect that the public administration shall achieve the intended results and the goals that have been laid down by the Government and Parliament, and that this shall be done in a cost-efficient manner.

#### *The policy/delivery chains vary in complexity.*

The degree of complexity of the organisational system that has been established to be responsible for the different links in these chains exerts an influence on the cooperation system. We distinguish here between three typical cases:

1. The chain is fairly simply identified and the implementing organisational structure consists of few organisations with a clear division of responsibilities.

2. The chain has many identifiable actors responsible for different parts of the chain. The implementing organisational structure is complex but stable. There is social consensus on the division of roles in the sector in question.

3. The chain is complex. The policy area in question does not have clear borderlines but can rather be regarded as a social problem in which politically approved reforms are considered necessary. Since it is difficult to obtain a clear overview of the chain, or since the chain is incompletely defined, it is not possible to determine a clear implementing organisational structure. The division of responsibilities between the actors involved is diffuse since the assignments are unclear in relation to the social problems.

The different situations refer to the conditions in a national public system. However, they also affect the design of forms of cooperation

Case 1 above refers to a programme of cooperation for the development of an individual organisation or a few closely related organisations with a clear relationship to each other. This is a typical situation for twinning cooperation.

Case 2 refers to cooperation in a situation in which society has built up a multi-faceted social organisation to be responsible for a certain undertaking for the citizens. The organisational structure may need to be strengthened financially and/or its capacity may need to be developed, but there is no need for a fundamental restructuring process. Programmes of cooperation can be directed towards several parties in the partner country.

Case 3 refers to cooperation in a situation in which the highest political bodies face urgent reforms in which it is necessary to change both institutional and organisational systems. There is no clear idea about the focus of the changes and the parties that can be affected by the changes. An important initial component in the programme of cooperation is to define the correct partner in cooperation or group of partners in cooperation.

There is a detailed discussion of the special features in the different cases below. However, firstly it should be noted that different situations and different systems affect the power to make change – the power to decide on changes and the focus of the changes – in different ways. For each capacity development contribution it is important to identify the actors that actually exert an influence on the systems that are to be changed. It is not a matter of course that the power to make changes to the system or to produce ideas on how the system should be changed lies with those operating the system. It can actually be difficult to make a simple identification of the actor or actors that are responsible for changes to the system.

The actual process of further developing or re-creating policies in a sector is often extremely complicated. In most areas there is an ongoing process with exchanges of ideas and conflicts of interest in which different actors interact or handle conflicts. This process leads to new, more or less stable, points of balance. In some cases they are codified into the formalised, institutional frameworks. In other cases the old norms are applied informally, more or less in conflict with the new formal rules.

Accordingly, the constitutionally defined "powers that be" for an area of operations in the public sector can often be under the influence of, or dependent on, other actors whose legitimacy is unclear but which nonetheless exert a considerable influence. Donors can be actors in a grey zone of this type, and also often with differing interests and conceptions of what is the "right" policy for the partner country.

[The following text is extremely faint and largely illegible due to low contrast and scan quality. It appears to be a continuation of the document's content, possibly a list of references or a detailed analysis.]



# Case 1:

## Twinning in social sectors with low levels of organisational or institutional complexity

Twinning means that an organisation in a partner country is matched with the corresponding organisation in Sweden (or another country).

There are underlying assumptions on conditions for twinning. One is that both organisations have the same or similar duties in their respective countries. The policy/production chains are in general the same.

The cooperating organisations have the task of administering a social undertaking in their countries. There are common professional norms or other similarities in the skills required of the personnel who perform the work. The definition of goals in the programme of cooperation is thus fairly simple. The goal can be to upgrade a ministry of finance into an “efficient, modern ministry of finance”, in which the criteria for this state of affairs can be sought in the work of the organisation in the donor country or in internationally accepted conceptions. In other words, the problems that are to be solved in the programme of cooperation are linked to the organisation: its management, internal division of responsibilities, professional expertise, resources, status etc. It therefore follows that, if the organisation is developed, it will be better at performing a social undertaking whose importance is more or less taken for given. The organisation is assumed to have a clear relationship with a politically approved, civically important task – the better the organisation is able to work, the better society will be able to achieve important goals for the citizens.

### **“Families” with similar tasks**

However, sometimes the complexity is somewhat greater. The Swedish organisation and its international partner can, to a certain extent, have different missions. The tasks are allocated to different organisations in partly different ways in the two countries but, all in all, there is a great degree of similarity between the tasks that are to be performed in each “organisational system”. For example, the production of statistics can be more or less decentralised in different countries but, where the conception of the overall mission of the national production of statistics is concerned, there is often considerable consensus over national borders.

In both these cases it is possible for the point of departure to be in a fairly easily identified organisation or organisation structure when approving a programme of development cooperation with a focus on

capacity development. Its assignments, which are known and approved in its national social context, provide guidance for the selection of the partner organisation(s). The analysis of the development needs of the recipient organisation or the organisation system governs the character of the contributions and the design of the programme of cooperation. The focus can be restricted and regularly reshaped in a dialogue between the twins or “members of the family”, and within the framework of a common understanding of the social mission of the actors involved (both in Sweden and the partner country). Professional solidarity is probably an important factor in the (mutual) understanding of the character of cooperation (“we customs officers”, “we tax administrators”, “we judges” etc.)

Accordingly, to sum up it is important that twinning cooperation fits the context in which the social organisation for the activity in question has a stable structure, with well defined, well defined or easily definable, if changeable, political goals, from which assignments are derived to be performed by different actors in the public or private sector (government agencies, municipalities, enterprises, societies). In other words it is when these chains are stable and not too complex that twinning is a suitable form of cooperation.

### **Alternatives to genuine twinning**

“Genuine twinning” means that organisations with similar tasks in their national administrations cooperate with each other. (It can of course also be a case of non-public organisations with a “publicly sanctioned” social mission, for example trade unions or other non-profit making organisations). The international partner can, however, often be a consulting firm or an NGO instead of a national administration or corresponding organisation. In such cases the “quasi” twin often resorts to obtaining professional skills with a background in the professional sphere in question by borrowing personnel or by making formalised cooperation arrangements with agencies working in the field.

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# Case 2:

## Capacity development of complex operational systems

If, in a comparison between the cooperating countries, the chains are incongruent, or if they are complex in the partner country, or if they are not clearly defined, other forms of cooperation appear to be superior to twinning cooperation.

The fundamental difference between cases in which capacity development is directed towards an individual organisation and cases in which it is directed towards systems of organisations is that in the former case the point of departure can be the mission (assignment, goals) of the organisation, while in the latter case the analysis must be started in the social mission that is to be strengthened and whose complexity is so great that it has not been possible to allocate the responsibility for it to one organisation alone.

### **The difference between “improved operation” and “reform”**

The conditions for cooperation for capacity development in multi-organisational systems vary depending on whether the programme of cooperation refers to the “operation” of a social mission, for example an education system or a legal system, or whether it refers to a “reform”, i.e. finding solutions to a (new) social problem where there is uncertainty about the organisational systems or sets of rules that are to be developed. In general it should be easier to define shortcomings in capacity in an “operating situation” than in a “reform situation”. In the former case the interpretation of the problem (including an analysis of shortcomings in capacity) can be – but does not need to be – performed by an actor in the system. In the latter case the problem itself has often not been adequately defined. Thus there is not a clear owner of the problem – apart from the government which is always ultimately responsible for all public activity and in this sense the owner of the problem. Cooperation on reforms is taken up in case 3 below.

### **Complex operating situations**

Medical services, education, and public communications can be mentioned as examples in which there is a complex relationship between the social responsibility and the organisational structure that is to discharge the responsibility. Even if the social responsibility is complicated, there is often in these cases a fairly well established division of roles between the

organisations that should implement and develop the activity in question. One typical feature of cases of this type is that a number of organisations are jointly responsible for performing or providing the social undertaking, that the institutional framework is in place, and that both the institutional framework and the organisational division of roles are in a state of permanent, but "calm" change. The system is stable but not static, complex but still identifiable. Contributions for capacity development must be assessed in the light of the whole picture, the meaningfulness of one contribution aimed at one certain part of the structure must also be assessed in relation to the state of affairs in other parts of the organisational system.

In other words, one important difference between this case and the first case (Case 1) is that, when designing the system of cooperation, a decision must be reached on that part (or parts) of the recipient system that the contributions should be aimed at. Accordingly a priority must be made, often in coordination with other donors. This choice has repercussions on the professional expertise that the international partner should possess. Consequently, this expertise may need to be much broader than in classical twinning cooperation, even if it is coordinated in one and the same organisation of the donor side, for example in the form of a multidisciplinary team of consultants recruited from different organisations.

One important feature of this form of multi-organisational cooperation is to get the sectors in the recipient system to work together: this can actually be one of the most important aims of cooperation.

### **An analytical model for defining the system in question**

Since we are talking about systems of organisations here, we must develop criteria for what should determine whether a certain organisation is included in the system or not. What functions in a system should one try to identify if one wants to describe and delimit the system in a way that is appropriate for formulating capacity development contributions. There is a need of a model that captures the characteristics and condition of the system. The model should be able to provide data that describes both the system in question and adjacent systems of importance for the functioning of the system. The description should identify the sets of rules (institutional framework) and the organisations that are part of the system – or that are highly significant for its way of working.

This can of course be done in different ways. Here it is done on the basis of an assumption that public activities are of interest to international development cooperation mainly for the reason that it is often public organisations that are responsible for providing key services for the citizens. These services can be direct services for the citizens (health and medical services, education etc), but they can also be public activities that are of indirect importance but nonetheless vital for the effective organisation of society (for example statistics, tax collection). The services can refer to the legal system or general public administration (exercise of public authority) or to the management and control of public and private institutions.

The model is thus based on a citizens' perspective. Therefore it is suitable to have "service delivery" as the point of departure, i.e. the provision of services on the basis of a public undertaking that is decided

upon by a political body at central government or local government level. This approach governs what constitutes the borders of a "system of organisations" in an analysis of an area of operations in the public sector. What is it that determines whether or not, in our analysis, we should include a certain organisation in the "system". Since here we are taking up publicly approved and managed activities, on the basis of the simplified model described in the first part of this paper, the answer should be sought in the national administration's classification of activities into politically relevant fields. In Sweden these fields are now called policy areas and in Sweden they constitute the basis for the determination of goals, organisation and resource allocation in the budget. Usually they correspond to "sectors". Examples of policy areas that correspond to traditional sectors are "health and medical policy", "education policy" and "transport policy".

A "politically relevant area" can also refer to activities that encompass several traditional sectors. This is the case with "new" policy areas such as "gender equality policy" and "children's policy". Here policy areas do not form a simple structure but a network of partly overlapping political goals, designated actors and financial resources. The more society develops, the more complex the structure of policy areas becomes.

One typical feature of all cases – in both traditional sectors and other policy areas – is that the government has defined goals and allocated resources to realise the goals. The classification into areas is however changeable and varies from one country to another. However, it is generally the case that all politically approved activities must be structured in one way or another in that it must be possible to identify goals and actors and to create a division of responsibilities between them. The classification is pragmatic and dependent on national priorities and institutional conditions. One important part of cooperation is therefore to delimit the policy area – or part of the policy area – that the programme of cooperation refers to.

What is typical in this case – that is to say operation of social undertakings in complex structures – is that the organisational and institutional systems can be identified, if with some effort.

The principle for determining the focus of capacity development is to (1) define the policy area by using the actual interface between the citizens and the public sector (content of and forms for service delivery) and, on the basis of this, (2) to delimit the "system" by determining (identifying) and (3) analysing the organisations and sets of rules for the policy area and their importance for the ability of the sector to deliver, i.e. achieve the politically determined goals (implement the policy in relation to the citizens).

What parameters should be identified when a description is being made of a policy area that has the character of a sector? In accordance with Sida's policy document we should take into consideration both the "system of organisations" in question and the corresponding "institutional framework". We start with the system of organisations.

## **System of organisations in a policy area that has the character of a sector**

Initially a distinction must be made between

- the sector's "own" organisations, i.e. organisations that exclusively or principally have tasks in the sector, and
- organisations that exert an influence on the sector in the sector's external environment (i.e. organisations that have tasks that also concern or have an effect on other policy areas, perhaps the entire public sector).

We start with the organisations in the sector.

### **Sector-specific organisations**

In order to identify the organisations that are part of the system in question, a definition must be made of the functions in the sector that shape the activities of the sector. As a suggestion, the organisation of the following functions in the sector should be identified:

- Steering [controls come later]: regulations/norms/resource allocation (including budgets/financing/disbursements). With the aid of controls, the framework for service delivery is set in respect of the quality and quantity of the goods/services supplied, and resources and production conditions for the goods/services supplied are allocated.
- Production: actual service delivery to the final user, in other words the citizen as the client, customer, patient, student or the equivalent.
- Control: inspection/follow-up/evaluation/results analysis/overview/audit. In other words this includes all institutionalised controls (including monitoring) of activities in the sector, regardless of the perspective from which they are performed or to whose interests they refer (for example the interests of production management, the citizens, the financiers or the political decision-making body).  
Different perspectives require different methods and have different dimensions as their starting point (measured in different units) in the activity being examined. For example, inspections are made on the basis of the interests of the citizen/client, while audits are made on the basis of the interests of the owner/financier.
- Development of activities:
  - Activities that are intended to improve service delivery: quality, efficiency, productivity in existing systems (of organisations and norms)
  - Activities that are intended to develop new arrangement (organisations, norms) for service delivery or to review undertakings in the policy area/sector
  - Activities that refer to the supply and maintenance of expertise for the activity (basic and further training of staff in the sector, etc).

As a rule, it should be possible to find that the functions mentioned in all policy areas are allocated to several organisations. Sometimes, some of the functions can be located at one and the same organisation, but the patterns vary in different sectors. Moreover the distribution of functions

in a given sector varies over time. In other words, there are no self-evident patterns or norms for the allocation of functions. For example, sudden demands for in-depth changes can affect the division of responsibilities.

Analyses of different sectors will also show that the bodies concerned have varying degrees of formal status. They can be

- public (established through political decisions, governed by public law)
- non-profit making (professional, trade union, ideological, industry or trade associations, client or customer-based), or
- commercial (enterprises that operate in the sector in cooperation with, for example, public sector actors and have a role in the sector's output to the citizens).

Even if our starting point is, as here, activities that are based on a public undertaking, it is important not to limit the analysis merely to public organisations in the sector. In order to understand the activity, it may be necessary to include organisations that are of considerable importance for the activity in the sector but which cannot be governed directly through public decisions. However, they can, for example, be affected by public decisions on financial grants or on cooperation agreements.

Non-profit making and commercial organisations can have tasks in all the functions described above, for example:

- Steering: professional organisations can exert a considerable influence on standards in the activities in question.
- Production: private hospitals are often considered motivated to create benchmarks for publicly produced care services, or as a complement to overworked public production.
- Control: sector organisations are often responsible for authorisation and controls of activities in the sector; patients' associations and "barefoot organisations" can call attention to shortcomings and institute proceedings at relevant organisations; accredited bodies can have the responsibility for deciding whether an activity lives up to agreed standards.
- Development: professional associations are often responsible for further education or making demands in respect of state-organised basic and further education; sector organisations and trade unions are bodies to which proposed reforms of the sector are submitted for consideration.

We will return to the question of organisations that are external to the system but which have an important influence on the sector. First we will take up the institutional framework that is of importance for the sector/policy area.

### **The institutional framework**

In the analysis of the institutional framework, a distinction should be made between

- sets of rules specific to the sector, and
- rules outside the sector but which affect the sector (i.e. rules that are also of relevance for other policy areas).



# Case 3:

## Reforms of vaguely defined social problems or policy areas that cover several sectors

In this case the "complex" political situation has been resolved in the relationship between a central problem in a newly established hierarchy of goals and the sharing of responsibilities between the organizations that are to participate in solving the problem or in achieving the goal. It is thus possible to speak about central problems or reforms that affect several sectors. The typical case is found in Sweden in the early 1970s in relation to health and social insurance reforms. An example is the introduction of health insurance in 1974.

Reforms that refer to several sectors cannot be solved by a simple reorganization of one single identified organization or group of organizations. One can thus speak about reforms with the aid of a simple model of organization in the institutional framework. A simple reorganization must be directed towards the basic institutional framework and "systems of organizations" simultaneously. The measures to be included in the reform must also encompass several institutional frameworks and several central systems of organizations. Since the changes are so complex and there is reason to use the term "reform", rather than "reorganization".

The necessary analysis work is to be characterized by the "institutional framework" should be changed, by determining which organizations that should participate in implementing the reform, and which organizations that should be changed.

The important component in the analysis is to characterize the rights in the reform that are suitable for international development cooperation. Since the potential measures are multi-dimensional, potentialities must be made, particularly in the relation of the parties of cooperation.

### General conditions for the three typical cases

As a rule in the present conditions of the process of development

No public welfare and no public undertakings are implemented by a central authority. It is rather to make an assessment of the possibilities of achieving development cooperation and then lead to a decision on what other kind of other organizations that are involved in activities in the sector. Some functions that are of the fact important for a sector policy from and development can be handled in organizations that are responsible for activities in large parts of the public sector. Industries, public health

tions, ministries of finance, central political planning bodies with overall responsibility etc. If these do not function well, there will also be repercussions on the individual sectors and the bodies operating in the sectors. Capacity development in sector organisations can be promoted or inhibited by the state of things (capacity) in these organisations. Not least, important decisions can be affected by external actors that have a considerable influence on the development of the entire public sector.

General regulation of public (or publicly financed or governed) activities

Part of the institutional framework consists of the rules that refer to all (or most) public activities. Also here an analysis can be made of entire hierarchies of rules. The equivalent to the Swedish institutions listed below exists – or should exist – in all public systems:

- Constitution, which lays down the division of responsibilities between public bodies (Parliament, government, public administration)
- Public administration law, local government law, laws on central government or local government employment, laws of publicity/ secrecy and so on.
- Government agency ordinances and other regulations of lower rank than laws, that are of general importance for all public organisations or special groups of organisations
- Administrative regulations issued one level under the government, for example regulations concerning personnel, finance (financial management, procurements etc) and routines for decision-making

## Two final observations

Making a complete description of a potential area of cooperation on the basis of the model proposed here shows to be very demanding. This is the case regardless of whether the situation refers to case 2 or case 3. Nor is making an inventory of all organisational and institutional aspects always necessary. Sometimes certain parameters can merely be identified rather than described or examined. A relatively brief analysis of the entire system can sometimes show that certain parts of the rules or certain actors constitute the weakest links in the system. Development cooperation can then be primarily directed towards these parts. However, in normal cases there is reason to devote considerable attention to the planned cooperation system – the risk of not giving sufficient attention to the introductory analysis is greater than the risk of wasting resources on an analysis that proves to be of no use in future cooperation.

Experience gained from programmes of international development cooperation shows that contributions should not necessarily be directed towards the actors or the rules that are of immediate importance for “delivery” to individual citizens. It can be the case that earlier parts in the production system are the weak link, for example the training of a certain professional group of importance for “service delivery”, or a secondary set of regulations, for example rules for disbursements. However, it is only after an analysis – sometimes possibly a brief analysis – of the entire complex that the weak link can be identified and thereby cooperation is given a sensible focus and scope.

The discussion here has revolved around the official system, which has been laid down in political decisions. This applies to both actors and the rules. This is not always sufficient. In public structures there are often institutional frameworks that exist in parallel with each other, related to each other in ways that can be difficult for an outsider to understand. Traditional systems of norms can live on, in parallel with a new "modern" system which is codified on paper but which has not always been incorporated in general practice. Different expressions of group loyalty, for example family ties in different ethnic groups, as well as remnants of old, often colonial, systems can also play an important role in public activities. A thorough description of the planned cooperation system can also draw attention to issues of this type.