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Ownership or Donorship?

Results and ownership in Swedish international
development cooperation

by

Therese Brolin



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW

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Institutionen för Ekonomi och samhälle
Handelshögskolan vid Göteborgs universitet
Viktoriagatan 13
405 30 Göteborg

Unit for Human Geography
Department of Economy and Society
School of Business, Economics and Law
University of Gothenburg
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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is a critical investigation of how the increased demand for results in international development cooperation has influenced relations between donors and partner countries. The increased demand for results, manifested in the so-called results agenda, and partner country ownership are considered key factors to increase effectiveness and efficiency in international development cooperation. There are, however, challenges in how to combine the implementation of the results agenda, which is mainly encouraged by donors, with a development cooperation that is owned and driven by partner countries. The aim of this study is to explore how the results agenda has influenced relations between donors and development partners, and thereby partner country ownership. A factor that complicates the implementation of the results agenda is the lack of a common understanding as regards what qualifies as a result, why results are required, and whose results should be achieved and measured. A central concern of this study has, therefore, been to examine how stakeholders within development cooperation have been framing the results agenda and partner country ownership.

This study gives examples from Swedish development cooperation and Swedish development relationship with Uganda and Mozambique. Semi-structured interviews have been carried out with informants at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida in Stockholm, and with informants from Sida and development partners in Ugandan and Mozambique. Swedish policies and guidelines on development cooperation have also been analysed to get an overview of how the framing of results and partner country ownership has changed over time.

Development stakeholders have different ways of framing the results agenda, especially as regards the reasons to report results. While the Swedish Government's main reason for implementing the results agenda is to increase accountability, development partners report results mainly for learning purposes. The implementation of the results agenda has altered the relations between development stakeholders by changing their mandates and responsibilities. The Swedish Government has become more involved in the formulation of results requirements, and its mandate to define development objectives has thereby increased. Development cooperation has also become more instrumentalised: protocols and procedures are given priority over the achievement of development objectives. Development partners are responsible for achieving and reporting results in line with protocols decided by donors, which entails that their responsibilities for development failures have increased.

The implementation of the results agenda has thus had a negative effect on partner country ownership. However, this study argues that it should be possible to combine the results agenda and partner country ownership. The concluding discussion addresses the implications of the findings from this thesis and suggests how the results agenda can be reconciled with partner country ownership.

Keywords: international development cooperation, results, partner country ownership, development effectiveness

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List of abbreviations

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
AGIR	Programa de Acções para uma Governação Inclusiva e Responsável
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India and China
CDG	Critical Development Geography
CEES	Central East European Countries
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCF	Development Cooperation Forum
DFID	Department for International Development
EBA	Expert Group for Aid Studies
EC	European Commission
EGDI	Expert Group on Development Issues
Frelimo	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
G.A.	General Assembly (UN)
GBS	General Budget Support
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GNP	Gross National Product
GoM	Government of the Republic of Mozambique
GoS	Government of Sweden
GoU	Government of the Republic of Uganda
GQP	Government five-year operational plan
HDI	Human Development Index
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Country
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IESE	Instituto de Estudios Sociais e Económicos
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPO	Intermediary Partner Organisation
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFA	Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAI	Nordic Africa Institute

NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIS	Newly Independent States (from the Soviet Union)
NPM	New Public Management
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRM	National Resistance Movement
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEC	Organization for European Economic Co-operation
PAF	Performance Assessment Framework
PAP	Program Aid Partners
PARP	Action Plan for the Reduction of Poverty
PARPA	Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty
PBR	Payment By Results
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PFM	Public Financial Management
PGD	Policy for Global Development
PME	Unit for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
PO	Partner Organization
PQG	Plano Quintuenal do Governo
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RBFA	Results Based Financing Approaches
RBM	Results Based Management
Renamo	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
RQ	Research question
SADEV	Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation
SAREC	Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation within international development cooperation
SCC	Swedish Cooperative Centre
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programs
SASDA	Secretariat for Analysis of Swedish Development Assistance
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEK	Swedish Crown, currency of Sweden
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

UPC	Uganda People's Congress
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	U.S. Dollar
UTV	Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

1. Introduction: results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation

1.1. Introducing the research problem

This thesis is a critical investigation of the increased demand for results in international development cooperation and its influence on the relations between donors and recipients of development assistance. It examines how stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation have conceptualized results and the issue of partner country ownership, and discusses how different actors perceive how the results agenda has influenced these relations.

This research has grown out of my experience working as an evaluator at a Swedish Government agency, the Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV), between 2006 and 2011. In this period, the Swedish Government launched several reforms that aimed to improve the results reporting of its development cooperation (cf. Statskontoret, 2011). These reforms were commonly referred to as *the results agenda*. How to implement the results agenda was intensely discussed amongst Swedish aid practitioners, who were not clear about what the Swedish Government's intentions were with the agenda, or how it should be implemented. The relations between the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Swedish international development cooperation agency (Sida) were strained during in this period. In 2007, the Swedish Government introduced a "Model for enhanced results based management in international development cooperation". The intention with the model was to increase development quality and efficiency by means of improved results based management (RBM) and clearer political governance of Swedish development cooperation (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2008, p. 1). For Sida, the model entailed a loss of some of the agency's former possibilities to influence Swedish development cooperation; from the Government's perspective, the results agenda served as an instrument that clarified Sida's role and responsibilities within Swedish aid (cf. Statskontoret, 2011; Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2008). The introduction of the results agenda

led to an intense debate between Sida and the Government. For Swedish aid practitioners, for whom results reporting was not a new issue, it was unclear why the Government increased its demands for results at that particular time: was the aim to increase accountability or to learn from previous experience to increase aid effectiveness, or a combination of both? Another problematic issue introduced by the results agenda concerned the focus on partner country ownership that had long been a distinct characteristic of Swedish aid. The results agenda entailed an increased focus on results reported in line with Swedish development objectives and procedures, rather than partner countries'. As the title of this thesis suggests, the results agenda entailed a greater focus on Swedish development cooperation, i.e. donorship, rather than a focus on partner country ownership.

Working as an evaluator of Swedish development cooperation at SADEV implied that the results agenda was discussed on a daily basis. Questions that were frequently raised were 'What do different development actors mean when they talk about results?' and 'Whose development results are we looking for: the Swedish Government's or the partner country's?'. For staff at SADEV, as well as Sida, it was a challenge to reconcile the increased demand for results with partner country ownership and the influence of the results agenda on relations between donors and partner countries was a constant preoccupation. These issues and concerns also guided this thesis. This study investigates how the results agenda has influenced the relations between donors and partner countries by exploring Swedish development relations with Uganda and Mozambique. Sweden is a reputedly innovative and reliable donor that gives priority to sustainable development cooperation and partner country ownership in its development cooperation, and that is fast in embracing new trends and international development agreements (CGD, 2011; OECD/DAC, 2005a). Sweden was also one of the first donor countries to adopt the results agenda and to establish it as its top priority (G. Carlsson, 2011; DAC, 1996; Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2008; Vähämäki, 2015).

The following sections outline some of the central aspects of results and ownership in international development cooperation and present the research framework, the aim, the research questions and contributions of this study. This introduction also provides a summary of relevant methodological considerations, and an outline of the chapters that comprise this thesis.

1.2. Framing the study: results and ownership in international development cooperation

1.2.1. International development cooperation and the results agenda

Results in international development cooperation

Several international agreements have established the terms and conditions of international development cooperation in the 2000s. Among them, the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (UNDP, 2000) have had a particularly influential role between 2000 and 2015.¹ The MDGs defined common development goals and indicators for most development actors. In order to achieve the MDGs, it was necessary to make international development cooperation more effective. Therefore, a number of international agreements were reached on how to increase aid effectiveness and efficiency.² The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (hereafter referred to as the Paris Declaration), signed by 137 donor and partner countries in 2005, is one of the most prominent of these agreements. Donors and partner countries that signed the Paris Declaration, committed to five partnership commitments that address ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability (OECD/DAC, 2008a). Reporting development results is central to all of these agreements; the MDGs concerned what results to achieve with international development cooperation and one of the partnership commitments of the Paris Declaration was managing for results. Apart from the focus on results in these agreements, donors' results requirements have also increased during the 2000s. Donors have required more evidence that their development assistance makes a difference and that it is not subjected to corruption or other forms of mismanagement (cf. Department for International Development, 2013; Swedish Government, 2013). Donors' results requirements brought to the fore their development objectives, where results should be reported in relation to objectives and indicators defined by donors. This approach to results conflicts with the principle of ownership, according to which partner countries should define their own development objectives and decide how they should be reached (e.g. OECD/DAC, 2008a).

¹ The MDGs were succeeded by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 (UN General Assembly, 2015).

² These agreements include the Rome Declaration (OECD/DAC, 2003b) the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (the Paris Declaration) (OECD/DAC, 2005b), the Accra Agenda for Action (the AAA) (OECD/DAC, 2008a) and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, 2012).

Development results and new public management

A number of theories and approaches to development have influenced international development cooperation since it was formally established after the Second World War. Many of these have their origins in the global North and are strongly influenced by liberal approaches, where development often has been considered as synonymous with economic growth, promoted by industrialisation, free markets and international trade (Hettne, 1990). World politics have been under the aegis of neoliberal ideologies since the early 1980s. These neoliberal approaches have changed the functions of national governments, by limiting their role as service providers and prompting them to facilitate industrialization and free trade. Neoliberalism has also changed how governments are managed: the so-called new public management (NPM), whose aim is to increase efficiency and accountability, has become a favoured public management system in many countries. NPM approaches are inspired by management systems in the private sector that advocate a clear division of labour, where decisions should be based on expertise rather than political standpoints (e.g. Elias Sarker, 2006; McCourt, 2008; Rist, 2002). A core feature of NPM is RBM. RBM departs from the assumption that everything relevant can be quantified and measured through monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (Drechsler, 2005), where focus is on outcomes and impacts, rather than on the inputs and processes leading to these results (Elias Sarker, 2006; Fattore, Dubois, & Lapenta, 2012). NPM approaches have implied changes in responsibilities: the responsibilities of politicians and decision-makers have decreased, while the responsibilities of civil servants have increased. In other words, while politicians define policy objectives, civil servants are responsible for achieving and reporting results in line with these objectives, thus making civil servants responsible for the achievements of results (Aucoin 2016; Burnham, 2001).

The search for development results is not a new issue in international development cooperation, despite the relatively recent introduction of the results agenda and NPM approaches to public management. Donors have been interested in the results of their development cooperation, that is to say, donors have wanted to know whether and how their money has contributed to development, ever since they started providing development assistance and for nearly as long as development cooperation has existed, the impact and effectiveness of development cooperation have also been disputed (Fors & Carlsson, 1997; Riddell, 2007). The literature that examines if, and how, aid has led, or contributed, to development results is extensive. The more recent academic debate on development results can be traced to Burnside and Dollar's World Bank Working Paper "Aid, policies and growth" published in

1997. Burnside and Dollar explore whether and under which circumstances official development assistance (ODA) can stimulate economic development. Their findings show that “aid has a positive impact on growth in developing countries with good fiscal, monetary and trade policies. In the presence of poor policies, on the other hand, aid has no positive effect on growth” (Burnside & Dollar, 1997, p. ii). Burnside and Dollar’s report spurred an intense academic debate where a number of scholars either confirmed their findings; claimed that ODA did not, under any circumstances, lead to development; or identified other conditions as crucial prerequisites for development (e.g. Doucouliagos & Paldam, 2009; Easterly, 2006; Hansen & Tarp, 2001; Tarp & Hjertholm, 2002). The abundance of studies of the relation between ODA and development, and their different findings, indicates that there are numerous ways of measuring development, which contributes to the dispute as to whether development cooperation has improved the situation for poor men and women.

The results agenda and challenges in measuring results

Scholars and practitioners of development cooperation have over a long time debated how to measure development and development results, but they have not reached a consensus about a precise definition of *result*. One of the most common political definitions of development results (i.e. the definition that many donors and partner countries resort to) was provided by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC). According to OECD/DAC, a result is the “output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention” (DAC, 2002, p. 33). Outcomes and impacts are, thus, associated with results, yet the OECD/DAC’s definition does not specify what kind of results, how results, or whose results should be measured. In addition, there is no common understanding amongst aid practitioners and scholars concerning how one can conceptualise or operationalize the results agenda (Barder, 2012a; Bjerninger, 2011; Eyben, 2010; Hydén, 2011; Natsios, 2010; Renard, 2007). Many actors agree on the necessity of an increased pursuit of results, but they have different views about the implementation of the results agenda and about what constitutes a result, including whose results should be sought and why. Actors also differ in their views about the overall objective with the results agenda. Some stakeholders have argue that the main objective of the results agenda is to increase accountability and transparency in international development cooperation, while others argue that the results agenda aims to increase aid effectiveness by means or learning or improved management of aid organisations. Yet others argue that a combination of these objectives underpins the results agenda, but this is a view that most development

actors do not consider feasible (cf. Bjerninger, 2011; Eyben, 2010; Hydén, 2011; Natsios, 2010; Renard, 2007).

Development actors, as well as scholars, have found inconsistencies and contradictions between the implementation of the results agenda and what is considered good development practices in terms of innovative, long-term and sustainable development cooperation, owned and driven by partner countries. These inconsistencies and contradictions were found in that the results agenda implied a focus on producing measurable results with an emphasis on results that can be quantified, reported within a short time perspective, and attributed to a specific donor or a specific intervention (cf. Barder, 2012b; Eyben, 2010; Follér, Haug, Knutsson, & Thörn, 2013; Hydén, 2008; Natsios, 2010; Renard, 2007; Sjöstedt, 2013; B. Taylor, 2013).

1.2.2. Partner country ownership and the results agenda

Partner country ownership

Partner country ownership refers to development partners³ possibilities and responsibilities to define and implement their own development objectives and agenda. Partner country ownership departs from the assumption that people in partner countries, represented by their Government or by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), know best what their needs are and how development can be promoted. Another important assumption related to partner country ownership is that when partner countries own their development processes, these processes are more likely to continue even when donors have withdrawn. Partner country ownership could thus contribute to more sustainable development cooperation. On the other hand, increased partner country ownership also might lead to decrease in donors' control and influence over development cooperation (Faust, 2010; Whitfield, 2009). The extent to which donors are willing to allow this decrease has varied over time, and partner country ownership has been debated since the formal development cooperation was initiated (Wohlgemuth, 1976; 1994). Another term associated with ownership is that of partnership. However, while partnership is based on mutual responsibilities and obligations between the donor and the recipient of ODA, ownership should be entirely based on the policies and strategies of partner countries (cf. Jerve, 2002; Maxwell & Riddell, 1998).

³ *Development partners* here refers to actors that implement development cooperation in partner countries, such as Governments in partner countries and CSOs. The terms does not refer to donor countries or multilateral organisations.

As with the results agenda, there is no consensus about what partner country ownership means or about the best practices to promote partner country ownership. However, most development actors agree that partner country ownership concerns the relations between development actors, and the management of these relations through formal and informal agreements (cf. Jerve, 2002). The relations between donors and development partners is a central issue in discussions on ownership. These discussions tend to address power in these relations from two perspectives; one that considers donors' willingness to give away some of their power, and another that focuses on development partners' possibilities to influence decision-making processes (Eyben, 2006; Jerve, 2002). Despite the lack of a common understanding about what ownership entails, donors and partner countries committed to increasing partner country ownership when they signed the Paris Declaration in 2005. Partner countries committed to setting their own development strategies, improving their institutions and tackling corruption, while donors committed to bringing their support in line with these strategies and using local systems (OECD/DAC, 2005b). The increased interest for ownership in the 2000s has been spurred by decades of failures of donor-driven development agendas, failures which often have been accompanied by a range of aid conditionalities.⁴ Ownership allegedly encourages political commitment in the partner country and aligns and harmonizes donors around partner countries' policies, with in turn is supposed to increase aid effectiveness and efficiency (Faust, 2010; Whitfield, 2009; see also OECD/DAC, 2008a).

Challenges in combining the results agenda and ownership

As mentioned above, one of the main challenges of the results agenda is how to reconcile its implementation with partner country ownership and how to encourage a relationship between donors and partner countries based on mutual trust (Barder, 2012a; Follér et al., 2013; Hydén, 2008; Natsios, 2010; Sjöstedt, 2013).⁵ Sjöstedt's (2013) study, for instance, examines the tension between reporting on the donor country's development objectives and aligning these objectives with the interests of the development partners. The implementation of the results agenda is argued to have affected partner country ownership and the relations between donors and development partners. Partner country ownership

⁴ Aid conditionality is a promise of development assistance, if a development partner complies with conditions set by a donor. In case of noncompliance the donor can withdraw or reduce its assistance (Manning & Malbrough, 2010).

⁵ As noted in the previous section on Development results and the results agenda, not many studies have been conducted on the actual implementation of the results agenda. The studies that have been conducted are chiefly concerned with theoretical aspects; see Barder, 2012a; Eyben, 2008; Vähämäki, Schmidt, & Molander, 2011.

is based on mutual trust, while the focus on results and accountability can be taken as a sign of donors' lack of confidence in development partners and in the credibility of partner countries. In the long run, the focus on results might, undermine or counteract a relationship between donor and partner countries built on mutual trust (Hydén, 2008). One of the underlying principles of the Paris declaration is *mutual accountability* and it has raised questions regarding what accountability to whom and for what. Partner countries should primarily be responsible to their own citizens, but donors' demands tend to divert accountability: partner governments become less responsible for addressing the needs of their own citizens and more engaged in meeting the demands of donor countries (Kindornay, 2011). In addition, development cooperation is considered to be more effective if development actors work together (with each other, as well as with partner countries, the private sector, etc.) and when they align to partner countries' systems. However, it is arguably more difficult to engage in collaboration if every aid program should demonstrate results that can be attributed to a specific donor's intervention (Barder, 2012a; Binnendijk, 2000).

The results agenda has into focus results that are quantifiable and possible to report within a short-term perspective. This focus might influence donors and development partners in terms of what kind of development cooperation they choose to conduct. In other words, donors and development partners might opt for cooperation that can deliver quick and measurable results, rather than long-term development cooperation in strategic areas, in which results can be more difficult to trace (Ahmad, 2011; Barder, 2012a; Natsios, 2010; Shutt, 2016).

1.3. Presenting the research framework: a critical approach

1.3.1. A critical realistic research approach

This study departs from a critical realistic approach to research. Critical realism acknowledges the existence of an objective reality independent from people's interpretation. This reality cannot, however, be captured through empirical studies, as these only cover that part of reality that can be understood and explained by the means of concepts that exist in, and are interpreted through, available discourses. People's experience and conceptualisation of the world reveal, hence, aspects of the reality, but they do not reveal all events taking place (or not taking place), neither do they explain the mechanisms that cause the events that create and shape reality, such as power relations and social structures in a society (Bhaskar, 2008; Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen, & Karlsson, 2003; Sayer, 2000). Results and ownership are two central concepts in this study,

and the study departs from how development stakeholders are conceptualizing these concepts. This conceptualization is revealed through analyses of how stakeholders are framing results and ownership. The framing analysis applied here focuses on the following issues: how actors describe a perceived problem; how they act upon this problem; how they motivate their engagement in the issue at stake and how they justify internally their engagement (see for instance Benford & Snow, 2000). The power relations and the structures behind these framing processes have been analysed in order to explain why development actors frame results and ownership as they do and to address how they perceive the relation between these concepts. A theoretical framework, mainly based on theories developed by Critical Development Geography (CDG) scholars, informs this analysis. The disciplinary background to this study is presented below.

1.3.2. Disciplinary background: critical development geography

Globalisation and uneven development have been recurrent issues in human geography; people and places are increasingly interlinked through the organization of work, the flows of goods and services and the exchange of ideas. However, while some people and places are involved in these global networks, others are largely excluded, creating new and reinforcing old patterns of poverty and uneven development. A central issue for CGD scholars is the (unequal) power relations between actors in the global South and in the global North. Since the early 1980s, these relations have been shaped by neoliberal ideologies (Flint & Taylor, 2011; Harvey, 2006; Peet, 2007; Perrons, 2004; Sharp, 2009). International development cooperation is embedded in these ideologies and in the structures they create: the relations between donors and recipients of development assistance are strongly influenced by unequal power relations that are enforced by uneven development. At the same time these relations are manifested and reinforced through development cooperation (cf. Bebbington, 2004). Development assistance has often been used as an instrument for promoting political and economic interests of donors, even though they claim that poverty reduction in partner countries is their main objective (Riddell, 2007). Neoliberal ideologies and development theories focusing on economic growth have been challenged by Marxist and neo-Marxist human geographers, who find the explanations for poverty, or uneven development, in what they consider unjust capitalistic structures that benefit some at the expense of others. CDG scholars, thus, criticise the prevailing approaches to development and international development cooperation.

Geographies of power are important aspects of this study, since it focuses on relations between donors and partner countries, i.e. relations between countries in the global North and in the global South. The CDG makes two important contributions for understanding power relations between the global North and global South. First, it attends to the social and geographical sense of location of subjects in the power relations, including issues related to identity and places. Second, the CDG theorises development as contextual, where power relations are seen as consequences of material and intellectual histories. On this view, institutional practices and political environment influence how the term *development* is constructed. This includes the construction of the development discourse, which in this study concerns the framing of results and ownership (cf. Glassman, 2010; Lawson, 2007; Peet, 2009). Another, key geographical feature of this study concerns of how policies from the global North travel to the global South, and how these policies are reframed in this process. The study has as point of departure Swedish policy on development cooperation and how it has been framed in a global North context; it then proceeds to investigate how development actors in the global South have reframed the policy.

In development geography, a distinction is often made between normative and instrumental development. Normative development has to do with theories that dwell on how development takes place, whereas instrumental development is concerned with the means and instruments used for the implementation of development efforts (Power, 2003). This study concerns mainly instrumental development, related to international development cooperation (e.g. Hart, 2010).

1.3.3. Aim and research questions

This study contributes to the understanding of the dynamics and relations within international development cooperation, by investigating two issues that have dominated international development cooperation since the early 2000s, namely the increased focus on results and partner country ownership. Over the last few decades, the demand for results in international development cooperation has been manifested in, what is commonly referred to as the results agenda. The results agenda has led to new ways of framing results which have implications for how development stakeholders perceive the issue of partner country ownership. This is mainly a conceptual study where the aim is *to explore how the results agenda has influenced the relations between donors and development partners, and thereby partner country ownership.*

In order to reach this aim, three research questions (RQs) have been formulated, with focus on Swedish development cooperation. The results agenda, as well

as partner country ownership, are contested concepts within international development cooperation, given that stakeholders have different understandings of these concepts. A central concern of this study is, therefore, to investigate how stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation have framed the results agenda and partner country ownership. Two of the research questions asked in this study address how stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation frame the results agenda and partner country ownership.

RQ1: How are different stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation framing the results agenda? Why are results required, what kind of results is required, and whose results are required?

RQ2: How are different stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation framing partner country ownership? Why and how is ownership promoted, and whose ownership is considered?

The relations between Sweden and its development partners are another central concern, since relations based on mutual trust are a prerequisite for partner country ownership. The third research question explicitly addresses these relations.

RQ3: How is the results agenda influencing relations between Sweden and its development partners, and how has it in turn influenced partner country ownership in the case of Swedish development relations with Uganda and Mozambique?

1.3.4. Research contribution

This research intends to make a number of contributions, which concerns theoretical, disciplinary, and practical aspects related to results and ownership in international development cooperation.

i) Theoretical contribution: New approaches to framing analysis have been developed for this study to analyse how the results agenda and partner country ownership have been conceptualised in Swedish development cooperation. An analytical framework that captures how the results agenda has influenced partner country ownership, has also been developed. This framework combines different analytical approaches: it considers the development thinking behind the results agenda, the policy arrangement which the results agenda is a part of, as well as different actors' framing of results. Thereby it is possible to combine different perspectives how the results agenda has influenced the issue of partner country ownership. The analytical framework is presented in Chapter 3. Although this

framework has been developed for this study on international development cooperation, it is also suitable to studies of other policy areas.

ii) **Disciplinary contribution:** Development geographers' contribution to studies of international development cooperation and the broader field of development studies has been disputed. Some have argued that development geography has left few traces in the broader development debate (see for instance Bebbington, 2003, p. 297). Although relations between the global South and the global North have been of interest for many development geographers, not much research has been done by these scholars regarding the global North's development assistance to the global South.⁶ In 1993, Sven Holdar published "The study of aid: unbroken ground in geography", in which he claims that the study of development assistance has been neglected in geography (Holdar, 1993, p. 454). In 2013, Overton et al. (2013) published "Geographies of Aid: A Critical Research Agenda" and corroborated Holdar's conclusions on the absence of research on development assistance in geography. Over the last few years, some research has been conducted within the area, and Overton et al. (2013) have compiled a list of these contributions. Despite being short, the list includes research in the following areas; mapping of aid; critical analyses of aid and development institutions; aid chains and networks; aid practices; the geopolitics of aid; and aid and conflict (Overton et al., 2013). One intention with this study is to contribute to the broader field of development geography by means of a critical investigation of some of the most common practices in contemporary international development cooperation. This study looks into how policies travel, that is to say, how a development policy stipulated in a country in the global North is framed and reframed before it is implemented in a country of the global South.

iii) **Practical contribution:** CDG scholars have been criticised for presenting criticism of development, but not offering suggestions about what could be done to improve development practices (e.g. Glassman, 2010). This study addresses this critique by discussing how some of the challenges identified in this study could be addressed. The approach intends to make the study more relevant for policy makers and practitioners involved in international development cooperation. The concluding discussion presents suggestions on the implementation of the results agenda can be facilitated, and on how the results agenda can be reconciled with partner country ownership. Sweden is one of the so called likeminded donor countries, a group of donors including Canada,

⁶ For exceptions, see for instance Bebbington (2003), Biddulph (2010), Glassman & Samatar (1997), Holdar (1993), Knutsson & Lindberg (2012), Mawdsley et al. (2014), Murray, McGregor, & Overton (2013), Närman & Simon (1999)

Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK. These donors have similar approaches to development cooperation and their development partners. These countries have relatively high levels of ODA, encourage partner country ownership, and give emphasis to development results (Danielsson & Wohlgemuth, 2002; Elgström & Delputte, 2016; Eyben & Guijt, 2015). The findings and results presented here should also be relevant for development scholars and practitioners in these countries.

1.4. Methodological considerations

1.4.1. Methodological considerations and delimitations

This study is based on qualitative research methods, where document analyses and semi-structured interviews have been the main techniques for data collection. The document analysis covers all policy documents on Swedish development cooperation, and all general handbooks that Sida has published on how to implement Swedish development cooperation, as well as Sida's guidelines on monitoring and evaluating development cooperation from the early 1960s to 2014. The document analysis was supplemented by in-depth interviews with Swedish development experts with long experience from working with Swedish development cooperation. In order to grasp the current situation, semi-structured interviews have been carried out with development actors that represent different authorities and organisational units within Swedish development cooperation. To capture how the results agenda has influenced Swedish development relations with partner countries, Swedish development cooperation with Uganda and Mozambique were chosen as examples. The reason for choosing these two partner countries as examples were that they both had longstanding relations with Sweden, but these examples also illustrate different relations between Sweden and partner countries. While Swedish relations with Uganda were very strained at the time of the interviews due to the adoption of an anti-homosexual bill and incidences of corruption (Sida, 2015f), the relations with Mozambique were comparatively good. At the time of the interviews, Mozambique received general budget support, which is only given to partner countries where there is a substantial degree of mutual trust between donors and recipients of aid (e.g. Koeberle & Stavreski, 2006). By selecting Uganda and Mozambique, this study covers different aspects of relations between donors and partner countries, which makes it possible to explore how the results agenda has influenced partner country ownership in different development circumstances. However, this study does not intend to make a comparison between the Ugandan and the Mozambican examples, given that the development context and the nature of Swedish development

cooperation, are very different in the two countries. These two examples serve to illustrate partner country ownership has been framed within the results agenda in Swedish policy on development cooperation.

This is mainly a conceptual study, which entails that its main concern is to explore how different development stakeholders conceptualise issues and relations within international development cooperation. This study does not explicitly concern the actual implementation of the results agenda or the impact of the results agenda on international development cooperation. It departs from a donor's and its development partners' perspectives on, and framings of, results and ownership, and it does not explicitly engage with the perspectives of poor men and women that should be benefitted by development cooperation. The development agenda, and thereby the results agenda, is normally set by the donor since they have the economic and political power (Robb, 2004); while development partners implement development cooperation. The study considers actors that receive funding from the Swedish aid budget, defined in budget line 7 in the Swedish state budget (see for instance Swedish Government, 2012b) and decision-makers involved in the formulation of the Swedish development policy. Although Swedish development cooperation is part of wider international relations that also encompass other donors and international organizations, these relations are not explicitly addressed in this study. Furthermore, this study focuses on bilateral development cooperation, and therefore excludes other kinds of development cooperation, such as humanitarian and multilateral aid.

Being a researcher and having experience from working within the field I am studying entails both advantages and disadvantages. Although my intentions are to be as objective as possible, my definitions of development concepts and my approaches to them, are coloured by the prevailing discourses within Swedish development cooperation. On the other hand, my experiences from working at a Swedish Government Agency involved in development cooperation has also given me unique insights into the implementation of the Swedish results agenda (during the years 2006-2011), as well as into the execution of Swedish policy on development cooperation. Such insights could hardly be obtained by different means.

1.5. Outline of thesis

The next chapter presents the context in which this study takes place. Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive contextual description of development thinking, by including development ideologies, theories and strategies that have had significant influence on international development thinking since the Second World War. This historical outline explains what has formed current international

development cooperation. Chapter 2 also presents the aid architecture, i.e. the main agreements, structures and actors that constitutes the overall framework of international, and Swedish, development cooperation. Chapter 3 presents the theories and the analytical framework applied here. This chapter plays a central role in this study, as it discusses the research approach adopted and presents how the findings have been analysed and theoretically explained. Chapter 4 explains the methodology applied in this study, and discusses the possibilities and limitations with these methods. Chapters 5 to 7 present findings: Chapter 5 addresses results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation; Chapter 6 focuses on results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda; and Chapter 7 focuses on results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique. Each of these chapters ends with a concluding analysis of the framing of the results agenda and ownership and the role this framing has played in the policy arrangement of Swedish development cooperation. The final chapter of this thesis presents the conclusions and a discussion of how the results agenda has influenced partner country ownership.

2. Introducing the research area

2.1. Introduction

The intention with this chapter is to introduce the wider context of this research. Swedish development cooperation is heavily influenced by, as well as part of, international development cooperation at a global scale. In order to contextualize Swedish development cooperation and how it has evolved over time, the chapter begins with an overview of the main theories, ideologies, and strategies⁷ that have dominated international development cooperation over the last 60 years. It then proceeds to a presentation of the current aid architecture and to an outline of some of the main features of Swedish development cooperation. Before these issues are explored, however, some of the main concepts used here are outlined and discussed.

2.2. Definition of development concepts

The core concept in studies of international development cooperation is *development*. Even though the term is frequently used and highly contested, it does not have a universal definition. As with other terms, *development* is understood and defined in accordance with prevailing discourses, where a discourse entails “both what *can* and *cannot* be said or done, what appears to be true, legitimate or meaningful and what is dismissed as false, deviant or nonsensical” (Wylie, 2006, p. 304 italics in original). Definitions and understandings of development also reflect power structures in a society, which, in the specific context of this study, are manifested as power relations between development actors. Although this section does not focus on discourses or power structures, it is important to be aware of these when definitions of the term *development* are discussed and when countries and people are categorised, for instance, when determining who is rich and who is poor (c.f. Lawson,

⁷ Development ideologies, theories and strategies are part of what Hettne (2009) refers to as Development thinking. The development thinking approach is also a part of this research analytical framework, presented in Chapter 3.

2007; Rist, 2002; Williams, Meth, & Willis, 2014). This research, and thus the definitions and understandings of development used here, departs from a development perspective determined mainly by people and institutions in the global North.⁸ As a consequence, terms used by development agencies in the global North are applied, although these terms do not necessarily reflect the true nature of the relationship between development actors. For instance, the term *development partner* is frequently used, without necessarily meaning a development cooperation based on equal possibilities of influence.

In this study, *development* refers to instrumental and planned development, formalized through international agreements on development cooperation. The term does not, to any major extent, relate to immanent or normative development processes, which occurs independently from international development cooperation (Hart, 2010; Power, 2003). Development could be understood as “a continuing transformation of cultural, political, social, and economic conditions, patterns or situations of a region, society or country considered underdeveloped” (Spicker, Álvarez Leguizamón, & Gordon, 2007, p. 51). This is a rather common definition of development, which reveals some of the unequal power relations concealed by the term as it is based on the assumption that there are underdeveloped societies in need of transformation. Although *development* is a contested term, it is widely used to describe donors’ formal intentions with their engagement in partner countries. Most people also associate development with progress and with the notion of “making a better life for everyone” (Peet, 2009, p. 1). Another popular understanding of the concept encompasses the assurance that people’s basic needs are fulfilled in terms of sufficient food and shelter, access to education and health facilities, respect, dignity, and possibilities of fulfilling personal and societal desires (e.g. Soubbotina, Sheram, & World Bank, 2000; UNDP, 2015a). Since basic needs are built on value judgments (as regards, for instance, what a basic need is and when it is fulfilled) the assurance of basic needs is a complex definition of development. In addition, development priorities change over time and between places, which adds to this complexity. Understood as *progress* and *a better life for all*, development implicitly makes a powerful (political) statement that appeals to people’s good intentions. However, this understanding of development can also disguise other purposes, mainly of a political and economic nature, that are in conflict with the more egalitarian motive described above. For instance,

⁸ The global North refers to countries in the northern hemisphere, and (economically) richer countries in the southern hemisphere (such as New Zealand and Australia). The global South refers to (economically) poorer countries in the southern hemisphere. Adding “global” entails that these are not geographical categorisations, but that they include economic inequalities and that they are part of the same global processes (e.g. Rigg 2007).

development has been an alleged reason for richer countries to promote their own economic and political interests in the global South (e.g. Riddell, 2007; Veen, 2011). In this study, instrumental development is broadly conceived as some kind of positive change for men and women in a particular context. The positive aspects of this change are defined by poor men and women in the global South.

In geographical literature on *international development cooperation*, the concept *foreign aid* appears to be the most frequently used to describe the transactions made between donors and recipients of ODA. The term is used by, for instance, Williams et al., 2014. “Foreign aid” translates into Swedish as “bistånd”. Although the term *foreign aid* is still widely used, development scholars and practitioners have criticised it on the grounds that it manifests unequal relationships between donors and recipients of development assistance (e.g. Lancaster, 2007; Sida, 2017a). In Swedish development cooperation the term *foreign aid* has, to some extent, been replaced by *international development cooperation* with the aim of emphasising the donor’s supportive role in development cooperation and the mutual engagement in development processes (Sida, 2017a). *International development cooperation* is also the concept applied here to refer to the distribution of development assistance and the development relations between donors and recipients of development assistance.

The most common definition of development assistance is provided by the OECD/DAC⁹. In order to measure resource flows to countries in the global South, the OECD/DAC has defined what they refer to as ODA. The OECD/DAC’s definition is also used when references are made to development assistance or to ODA in this study, and it comprises

those flows to countries and territories /.../ which are: i. provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and ii. each transaction of which a) is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and b) is concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25% (calculated at a rate of discount of 10%). (OECD/DAC, 2008a, p. 1)

Throughout this study, references are made to a number of different groups of actors. *Donor countries* are countries in the global North that give ODA to countries in the global South. The term excludes, thus, South-South development cooperation. In this study, the term *donor countries* includes the signatories of the Paris Declaration in 2005, who committed to “[respecting]

⁹ The OECD/DAC), aims to “promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world” (OECD/DAC, 2015).

partner country leadership and [helping] strengthen their capacity to exercise it” (OECD/DAC, 2008a, p. 3). *Partner countries* are countries that receive ODA. The organisations, companies, and partner countries that implement Swedish development cooperation are referred to as *development partners*, while *development actors* are all actors involved in development cooperation. Development partners, refers to donors, partner countries, and development partners. *Implementing partners* are the development actors that work with the implementation of development cooperation on the ground in partner countries, and the term includes organisations that work with the poor men and women (beneficiaries) that development cooperation actually concerns. The term *beneficiaries* refers to the poor men and women in the global South who are assumed to be affected by a development intervention. This is a controversial term, since the “beneficiaries” might not in fact benefit from development cooperation. However, since the informants consulted frequently referred to beneficiaries when they were talking about the men and women concerned by development interventions, this term is also used here.

2.3. Development thinking: an historical overview

A great number of theories and approaches to development have influenced international development cooperation since it was formally established after the Second World War. This historical overview of the development thinking reveals some of the ideologies, theories, and strategies that have dominated and formed international and Swedish development cooperation from the late 1950s to the early 2000s.

2.3.1. Development thinking from the 1950s to the 1970s modernisation theories, dependency school, and alternative approaches to development

Formal and structured international development cooperation was initiated after the Second World War. Many countries in Europe were in ruins after the war and in desperate need of financial support to rebuild their industries and infrastructure. The U.S. was the only belligerent country that had not been physically damaged by the war. With a well-functioning industry, it needed an export market. In 1947, the U.S. launched the Marshall plan, a financial plan to restore the war-torn economies in Europe. The plan was successful and several of the European economies recovered within a few years which opened an export market for American products. After the success of the Marshall Plan in Europe, a similar approach to poorer nations with agrarian economies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America was brought into question. The idea was that massive injections of capital could give the economies in these countries a push to develop. Technical programs and technical assistance were also in focus, and

a great amount of money were invested in infrastructure and education projects. In addition, aid was given to supplement savings and to enhance investments, two factors that were considered vital to industrialisation processes and, thereby, to development (Desai & Potter, 2002; Riddell, 2007).

In the 1950s, the issue was raised as to how much money richer countries should direct to development assistance. It was, however, first in 1970 that an agreement was reached in the UN general assembly. The agreement states the following:

Each economically advanced country will progressively increase its official development assistance to the developing countries and will exert its best efforts to reach a minimum net amount of 0.7 percent of its gross national product at market prices by the middle of the decade. (UN General Assembly, 1970 paragraph 43)

Even though the 0.7% target gained acceptance in a majority of the richer countries in the global North, there were also exceptions. For instance, the U.S. did not agree with the strict timetable, and a majority of the donor countries have not yet come close to reaching the 0.7% target. Sweden and a few other countries agreed on a 1% target as early as 1968. Sweden reached this target in 1973 and, with few exceptions, it has continued to achieve it ever since (OECD/DAC, 2002b).

The end of the Second World War also marked the beginning of the cold war. Development assistance was employed both by the Western and the Eastern Block to promote their respective ideologies and to make allies in poorer, often newly independent, countries in the global South (Hjertholm & White, 2002; Lancaster, 2007). The different ideologies were also reflected in how development was promoted. The Western Block promoted capitalistic and liberal development strategies, while the Eastern Block promoted the *Soviet Model*, distinguished by radical state-oriented policies inspired by the Soviet Union's five-year plans of transferring resources from the agricultural to the industrial sector (Potter, Binns, Elliot, & Smith, 2008). Consequently, the first decades of international development cooperation pursued by the Western Block were dominated by liberal theories on economic growth, where industrialization and international trade were considered key factors to promote development. The main role of richer countries was to share knowledge and provide financial assistance to help poorer countries become competitive on a free market. These liberal development theories are often referred to as *modernisation theories*, since they were based on the assumption that poorer countries could catch up with richer western countries and, thus, become "modern". Furthermore, development was considered an evolutionary process: richer countries had reached further

in their economic and cultural development than poorer “underdeveloped” countries (de Vylder, 2002; Potter et al., 2008; Rist, 2002).

In the late 1950s, a group of scholars and planners in Latin America and Africa began to challenge the liberal notions of modernisation by including external factors in their explanations of the reasons why some countries were poorer than others. These scholars were initially called structuralists. As their theories gradually came to focus on the unequal relations between richer and poorer countries, these scholars became known as members of what is referred to as *the dependency school* (Potter et al., 2008; J. Roberts, 2006). One of the dependency school’s main critique against modernisation theories was that these did not consider colonial and neo-colonial relationships between developed and developing countries to explain the roots of poverty. Dependency scholars traced the absence of development in poorer countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa to the exploitation of people and natural resources by the wealthy European countries and by North America. This meant that the wealth of some countries was produced by structures that hindered development in poorer countries (de Vylder, 2002). Protection of domestic markets in richer countries, for example, constrained poorer countries to the export of raw materials. Whereas prices on raw materials fluctuated, prices on processed manufactured goods tended to increase steadily, which implied that countries in the global South would never have the opportunity to catch up or compete with the industries in developed countries (J. Roberts, 2006). The dependency scholars considered import substitution and protection of domestic markets from imported goods as part of the solution. These ideas were embraced by many governments in the global South, since protectionism of domestic markets in combination with industrialisation were welcomed arguments to explain poverty at the same time as it strengthened the Government’s role in industrialization and development processes (de Vylder, 2002). The dependency school enjoyed great popularity around 1970, offering developing countries an alternative to both liberal and communist development theories. In the mid-1970s, however, the adequacy of the dependency theories began to be disputed. Protectionism, for instance, had not resulted in the intended promotion of industries that could endure the competition on the international market (de Vylder, 2002; Potter et al., 2008). Furthermore, the dependency school was criticized for explaining poverty rather than theorising how development could be promoted (J. Roberts, 2006).

In the 1970s, *alternative approaches* to development emerged as a consequence of the frustration that, despite 20 years of development cooperation, many men and women still suffered from severe poverty. Unlike previous development theories, these alternative approaches were not manifested in common theories

on economic development. Instead, these approaches challenged the basic assumption that development equate to economic growth, by including social, human, and other aspects as part of the development concept. A central concern of the alternative approaches to development was to satisfy men and women's basic physical, social, and cultural needs. In contrast to previous development efforts, the alternative approaches focused on decentralisation, sustainability, and local development processes (Brohman, 1996; de Vylder, 2002). Another issue emphasized by the alternative approaches to development was poor men and women's participation in development processes. One of the intentions with increased participation was to contribute to the improvement of development processes by better adjusting them to local circumstances and pre-existing technology and knowledge. Another intention was to stimulate people's involvement in development processes (Brohman, 1996).

2.3.2. Development thinking: debt crisis and structural adjustments in the 1980s

The economic situation in the 1960s and the early 1970s was favourable for many developing countries. Prices on raw materials increased and many countries in the global South experienced a comparatively high economic growth. During this period it was fairly easy for poorer countries to be granted international loans to relatively low interest rates. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, the situation changed: prices on raw materials fell and interest rates increased. Many poorer countries had taken loans that they could no longer repay, which resulted in a debt crisis. In addition, the protectionist approach promoted by the dependency school had created industries that could not compete on the international market. The debt crisis struck many countries very hard, especially in Latin America and Africa, with long-term aftermaths. Throughout the 1980s, international development cooperation was dominated by the debt crises, and it focused on repayments of interest, instalments on foreign debts, and payments of imported goods. At the same time, neoliberal ideologies dominated politics in many Western countries, which considered development assistance as harmful to the free market on the grounds that it created over-dimensioned and inefficient governments (de Vylder, 2002; Desai, 2002).

Structural adjustment became the dominant approach to deal with poor countries' incapacity to repay their foreign debts. Structural adjustment did not deal with development per se. Rather, its point of departure was the belief that before development can take place, the economy in many of the developing countries must be structurally adjusted to the global market. This adjustment would,

furthermore, create harmony in the international system and the structural adjustment was part of this globalisation of the economy (Hettne, 2009). The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank became the central actors in the negotiations of the foreign loans. After not having managed to repay their debts, many of the highly indebted countries were forced to follow Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP), negotiated with the World Bank. The SAPs were built around macroeconomic stabilisation (under the supervision of the IMF) and structural reforms (under the supervision of the World Bank). Thereby, the IMF and the World Bank came to determine much of the economic policy in many poor countries. This contributed to a hegemony of thinking commonly referred to as the Washington Consensus in which the IMF, the World Bank, and the U.S. Government were central actors (de Vylder, 2002; Hettne, 1990; Rist, 2002).

The theories behind the SAP were very liberal, with a strong belief in the benefits and forces of the free market. This neoliberal approach to development implied liberating markets from political and bureaucratic arrangements. Fiscal austerity, i.e. decreased state expenditures, was imposed, often in combination with increased charges on public service and measures to limit inflation. The structural reforms focused on deregulating prices and abandoning subsidies, privatising state-owned industries, and liberalising foreign trade by means of the abolishment of import duties and quotas, for example (de Vylder, 2002; Hettne, 1990; Rist, 2002). The SAPs directed international development cooperation, and put emphasis on debt relief, rather than to development and poverty alleviation (Hjertholm & White, 2002). However, the SAPs did not work as planned. The programs failed to deliver the intended macroeconomic development in terms of increased export, employment rates, and inflation. In addition, the social consequences of the SAPs proved to be devastating in many countries. Development vice, the 1980s is by many considered a lost decade, given that the economic and social situation deteriorated in many countries in the global South (de Vylder, 2002).

Specific issues within international development cooperation, such as environmental protection, gender equality, and human rights gained increased interest in the mid-1980s, and several international agreements were reached on how countries should act in relation to these issues. The increased attention to environmental protection brought to the fore the so-called “sustainable development” approach. At first, sustainable development involved only environmental issues. Gradually, it also came to encompass other areas such as women and development, ethnicity and development, and justice and development. In other words, sustainable development eventually

included all areas that actually concern development (Potter et al., 2008). The debate on sustainable development also resulted in a greater awareness of the interdependent relationship between developed and developing countries. For instance, it became evident that environmental problems were mainly caused by developed industrialised countries, but that the solutions to the problem were in the hands of both developed and developing countries. As a consequence, environmental concerns turned the focus of attention towards globalisation: sustainable development has become everyone's responsibility (Rist, 2002).

2.3.3. Development thinking in the 1990s: human development, new wars and post development

The end of the cold war brought changes to international development cooperation, stimulating progress towards liberal democracy, "good governance", and human rights issues. It also became common for donors to attach explicit political conditionalities to their ODA in terms of economic conditions, environmental requirements, or gender equality, for instance (Desai, 2002). The ODA levels had been relatively low in the 1980s, but increased during the 1990s. The devastating social consequences of the SAPs and an increased number of natural disasters in developing countries also increased the interest for giving international aid, both amongst the general public, as well as among decision makers (Riddell, 2007).

The 1990s are a complex period when it comes to theories of development. Even though the neoliberal theories remained the backbone of development thinking, a number of alternative theories arose, challenging the traditional mainstream views on development (Knutsson, 2011). Part of the complexity of the development theories of the period reflects the complexity of the historical events that shaped the 1990s, in particular the end of the cold war and the breakdown of the Soviet Union. The end of the cold war created a feeling of development optimism, distinguished by a strong belief that the benefits of liberal democracy and market economy would be embraced by all countries in the world and, thereby, pave the way for peace and prosperity (Fukuyama, 1992). Although there was still a strong focus on economic approaches to development, other issues arose on the development agenda. In 1990, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published the first Human Development Report, which introduced a new way of measuring development through a Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI included not only economic growth, but also other development-related issues, such as income, life expectancy, and literacy. Issues such as political freedom and social opportunities also became central aspects of development (Hettne, 2009; Potter et al.,

2008; Rist, 2002). Although neoliberal theories on development dominated development politics, these theories were also challenged by, for instance, *post-development* scholars. The post-development theories do not offer a theory of development as such; rather, they challenge the development discourse, arguing that development is a Western construction, based on Western thinking about economy, politics, and social standards. The post-development theories resemble the alternative development theories, but they focus more on underlying development premises and motives (Pieterse, 2000; Potter et al., 2008). This criticism opened up for new approaches to development, which contested prevailing development discourses and power relations (cf. Easterly, 2006; Moyo, 2010).

A number of radical changes occurred within international development cooperation throughout the 1990s. The failures of the SAPs were palpable and, for instance, the governments of many countries in the global South were still very weak, unable to provide health care, education, and other basic facilities for their citizens. The SAPs were therefore replaced by poverty reduction strategies (PRS) devised by the government in the country in question. The IMF and the World Bank, however, still had to approve the PRS, which should be based on the recipient countries' needs and intentions, rather than on structural adjustments programs. New aid modalities were implemented in the development arena: fewer and larger projects and programs replaced many smaller development projects, for instance. Besides, support to a whole sector in a country, the so-called sector-wide approaches (SWAP), became a common modality in the distribution of development assistance, as well as support given directly to a developing country's state budget (Riddell, 2007).

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have always played an important role in international development cooperation and their importance has increased over time. They have contributed significantly to collaboration between development agencies and governments in partner countries, to service, and to policy delivery (Desai, 2002). Over the last decades, growing amounts of development assistance have also been distributed through NGOs: in 2004, more than 30% of the total ODA was distributed through these organisations (Riddell, 2007).

2.3.4. Development thinking in the early 2000s

The early 2000s were dominated by the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York in 2001 and by U.S. strategy of unilateralism and coercive dominance that followed upon the attacks. The wars on terror changed the configuration of development cooperation, turning it into a means to create stability and, thereby, avoid

conflicts and future terrorism. This period is further characterised by several global crises, such as climate change, international financial crises, food crisis, and refugee crises. The global crises stressed the notion of interconnectedness and globalisation, and it has become evident that international development cooperation is an instrument to protect donors' economic, political, and social interests (e.g. Hettne, 2009). However, international development cooperation has also been under pressure. The economic crisis in Europe and the so-called refugee crisis have led to decreasing and changing aid flows from many of the European countries. Despite the wars on terror and the many global crises, the new millennium began with a rather hopeful view of development. In the year 2000, leaders representing 189 countries signed the Millennium Development Declaration, in which the signatories committed to

[sparing] no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone. (UN General Assembly, 2000, p. 4)

Eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)¹⁰ accompanied the Millennium Declaration, whose overall objective was to free people from extreme poverty and multiple deprivations (UNDP, 2000) by 2015. Although there was a common understanding about what should be achieved by means of international development cooperation, the theories about development and how to promote it have become even more multifaceted during the 2000s, which reflects the increased recognition of the complex nature of development processes (Knutsson, 2011).

Another major change that took place during the 2000s is the remarkable reduction of the number of low-income countries. In 2000, 74 countries were considered low-income countries (OECD/DAC, 2000); in 2014, there were 52 low-income countries (OECD/DAC, 2014a). One of the most significant changes in this respect is that large countries in the global South, such as China and India, are no longer considered low-income countries, but middle-income countries (China is an upper middle-income country, whereas India is a lower middle-income country). The new middle-income countries have changed the relations between the global North and South, not least within international development cooperation (e.g. Zimmermann & Smith, 2011), and these changes are discussed below.

¹⁰ The Eight MDGs were: 1. Eradicate extreme poverty; 2. Achieve universal primary education; 3. Promote gender equality and empower women; 4. Reduce child mortality; 5. Improve maternal health; 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; 7. Ensure environmental sustainability; and 8. Develop a global partnership for development (UNDP, 2012).

2.4. The international aid architecture and results requirements in the 2000s

Aid architecture refers to the agreements, systems, and actors upon which international and Swedish development cooperation rest. This section describes some of the main features of the aid architecture by introducing the main agreements and development actors. The section ends with a paragraph on the results requirements of these agreements.

2.4.1 *International agreements on development cooperation*

During the first decade of the 21st century, the aid architecture rested formally on a number of international agreements that stipulated *what* goals should be achieved by means of international development cooperation and *how* these goals would be achieved. The Millennium Declaration and the MDGs defined goals by outlining common and concrete objectives (see also Chopra & Mason, 2015; UNDP, 2012). By 2015, some progress had been made in relation to the MDGs: the number of people living in extreme poverty, for example, declined by more than half between 1990 and 2015 (UN, 2015a). However, the achievements have been uneven and, in 2015, the UN General Assembly approved a new global development agenda that covers the years 2015-2030. This agenda, referred to as *Agenda 2030*, contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Sustainable Development Goals Fund, 2016; UN, 2015b).

When the Millennium Declaration was adopted, it became clear that new and more sophisticated development structures were needed if the MDGs were to be achieved by 2015. Therefore, development actors reached a number of international agreements on how development cooperation should be conducted. These agreements stipulated good development practices, and the signatories (both donor and partner countries) committed to conducting their development cooperation in line with these agreements. One of the key issues in the agreements is how to promote *aid and development effectiveness*. Other issues are the importance of sustainability in development cooperation, partner country ownership of development processes, and the pursuit for results (Kindornay, 2011; Renard, 2007). Figure 1 provides a list of these documents.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Name of agreement with a short description</i>
2002	The Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development is an agreement in which, among other things, donors' recommit to reaching the target of giving 0.7% of the GNP as ODA (United Nations, 2002).
2003	The High level forum on Aid harmonization was the first high level forum on aid harmonisation and effectiveness. The meeting, held in Rome, Italy, resulted in the so-called "Rome declaration". Donors commit, among other things, to delivering development assistance based on partner countries priorities and timing and to strengthening the leadership in partner countries (OECD/DAC, 2003b).
2005	The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (the Paris Declaration) is the result of the second High Level Forum, held in Paris, France. For the first time, donors and partner countries agreed to the same commitments and to holding each other responsible for keeping them (OECD/DAC, 2005b).
2008	The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) is the result of the third High Level Forum, held in Accra, Ghana. Representatives from the civil society were also involved. The participants agreed on the need to increase the implementation of the Paris Declaration (OECD/DAC, 2008a).
2011	The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation is the result of the Fourth High Level Forum, held in Busan, South Korea. New donor countries, such as China, India, and Brazil participated and an agreement was reached to, among other things, increase the focus on fragile states and results (Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, 2012).

Figure 1: International agreements on international development cooperation.

The Paris Declaration is arguably the most influential of these agreements. The five Partnership commitments of the Paris Declaration are:

Ownership: "Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies and co-ordinate development actions" (OECD/DAC, 2008a, p. 3).

Alignment: "Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures" (OECD/DAC, 2008a, p. 3).

Harmonization: "Donors' actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively effective" (OECD/DAC, 2008a, p. 6).

Managing for results: "Managing resources and improving decision-making for results" (OECD/DAC, 2008a, p. 7).

Mutual Accountability: "Donors and partners are accountable for development results" (OECD/DAC, 2008a, p. 8).

These commitments also specified what partners and donors committed to doing in order to reach these issues. For instance, in order to reach ownership,

partner countries committed to taking active leadership in the development and implementation of their own national strategies; translating these strategies into results-oriented programs; and taking the lead in the coordination of development cooperation in dialogue with donors and other actors. Donors committed to respecting partner country leadership and to strengthening their capacity to exercise it (OECD/DAC, 2008a). The five *Partnership Commitments* agreed upon in the Paris Declaration were endorsed in the Accra Agenda for Action and in the Busan meeting with a few changes. Since the 1970s, countries in the global North have repeatedly reinforced their commitment to devote 0.7% of their Gross National Income (GNI) to ODA. Figure 2 presents an overview of the development commitments that have dominated international development cooperation during the 2000s.

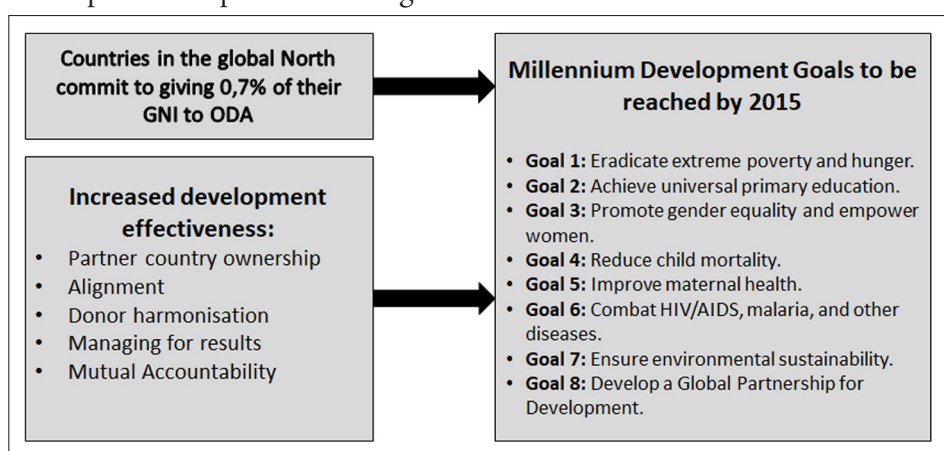


Figure 2: Key features of international development cooperation in the 2000s.¹¹

Source: Author's elaboration, based on OECD/DAC (2005b); UN (2002); UN (2012).

2.4.2. *Main actors in international development cooperation*

Despite the formal commitment to the above-mentioned agreements, the lack of a shared understanding among development actors has led to different interpretations about how the agreements should be implemented (c.f. Wood & Dansk Institut for Internationale Studier, 2011). Besides, the agreements also contain inconsistencies and contradictions, some of which could be related to the implementation of the results agenda (c.f. Kindornay, 2011; Renard, 2007; Wood & Dansk Institut for Internationale Studier, 2011).

¹¹ As early as 1970, an agreement was reached in the UN in which richer countries committed to giving 0.7 % of their GNP to ODA, a goal that should have been achieved in 1975. Sweden and the Netherlands were the first countries to reach the 0.7 % target in 1975, followed by Norway (1976), Denmark (1978) and Luxembourg (2000). Finland reached the target once in 1991, but no other DAC members have done so (OECD/DAC, 2002b, 2016a).

Since the end of the cold war, the donor community has mainly consisted of countries from the global North. The OECD/DAC has been one of the main coordinating actors within international development cooperation. The Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), which is the OECD's predecessor, was formed in 1948 to administer aid under the Marshall plan for the reconstruction of Europe after the Second World War. The OEEC was reconstituted in 1960 and became the OECD. Initially, 16 European countries, the U.S., and Canada made up the members of the OECD; at present, the organisation consists of 35 members, most of which are countries from the global North (OECD/DAC, 2016b). However, many countries in the global South have not been involved in the work carried out by the OECD/DAC, which has resulted in their exclusion from the main coordination organ. During the 2000s, so-called “new” actors¹² such as Brazil, Russia, India, and China (often referred to as BRIC-countries, or *the new donors*) have also challenged traditional structures of development cooperation by bringing along new ways of conducting development cooperation (Gavas, Koch, Bello, Sters, & Furness, 2011; Walz & Ramachandran, 2011). China, for example, has become one of the most influential actors in international development cooperation. Its extensive engagement in countries in sub-Saharan Africa blends grants, commercial loans, and diplomacy into what the Chinese call “mutual benefit” (Rotberg, 2008). The new donors' engagement in development cooperation has also brought opportunities for countries in the global South in terms of investment agreements, joint ventures, and technological transfers. In addition, this cooperation is associated with less administration and fewer political conditions. However, China's engagement in countries in the global South has been met with scepticism by many countries in the global North, which argue that China's neglect of human rights and environmental concerns are serious threats to the future of global development (Eyben & Savage, 2013; Gore, 2013; Grimm, Humphrey, Lundsgaarde, & De Sousa, 2009; Kragelund, 2011; McEwan & Mawdsley, 2012). The new donors' participation in development cooperation has led to changes in the relations between donors and partner countries. Partner countries do not depend on funding from traditional donors to the same extent that they previously did, since they can now turn to other actors who have different requirements (Campbell, 2008; Mawdsley, 2007).

In 2011, a High Level Forum was held in Busan, South Korea. One of the aims of the forum was to involve new development actors further in the international

¹² Although these actors are called “new” or “emerging” donors, several of them have been engaged in economic cooperation with countries in the global South for decades (Walz & Ramachandran, 2011).

development cooperation (e.g. Mawdsley, Savage, & Kim, 2014). World leaders, including representatives from the new donors, came together and made an agreement on how to improve the aid effectiveness (Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, 2012). However, the actual outcome of the Busan agreement has been disputed, since the new donors demanded that the word “voluntary” be explicitly included in those parts of the document that concern South-South cooperation (Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, 2012; Kindornay, 2011; Mawdsley et al., 2014). Some argue that the meeting in Busan changed the discussions about international development cooperation; the previous strong focus on aid effectiveness was partly replaced by discussions and negotiations between traditional donors and the new donors. According to one expert informant, the role of the DAC has also diminished after Busan, since the new donors were not part of this network (the BRIC countries are not members of OECD) (SEI2, 18/03/2015). In 2007, the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) was established, whose goal was to make the administration more legitimate, as the UN does not have a history of being dominated by countries in the global North. The DCF has partly replaced the DAC’s role as the leading actor for donor coordination, but the DCF’s possibilities to influence international development cooperation have been disputed (Verschaeve & Orbie, 2016). During the leadership of the DCF, two high level meetings have been held: the first in Mexico City in 2014 and the second in Nairobi 2016. The first set of meetings focused on making development cooperation more effective, especially in relation to the post-2015 global development agenda. The 2016 meeting focused on the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and on the accomplishment of the SDGs (DCF, 2016; DCF, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico, & Mexican Agency for International Cooperation for Development, 2014).

2.4.3. The results agenda and international agreements

The question of development results is emphasised in all the above-mentioned agreements. The MDG’s framework was built on indicators for how to eradicate extreme poverty and, out of the five Partnership Commitments made in the Paris Declaration, two are directly concerned with results management (i.e. Managing for Results and Mutual Accountability). These commitments have been enforced or modified in subsequent agreements. Figure 3 presents some of the key issues related to results requirements in these agreements.

Results requirements in international agreements on development cooperation			
Monterrey Consensus on Financing Development (2002)	Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005)	Accra Agenda for Action (2008)	Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011)
Improve ODA targeting the poor, coordination of aid, and measurement of result (United Nations, 2002).	Aid should be managed and implemented in such a ways that it focus on the desired results. Information should be used to improve decision-making (OECD/DAC, 2005b).	Achieving development results – and openly accounting for them – must be at the heart of all interventions (OECD/DAC, 2008a, p. 16).	Focus on results: Investments and efforts must have a lasting impact on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, on sustainable development, and on enhancing developing countries' capacities, aligned with the priorities and policies set out by developing countries themselves (Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, 2012)

Figure 3: Results requirements in international agreements on development cooperation

The documents mentioned in Figure 3 establish the framework for the results agenda. However, the agenda is also informed by other policies, guidelines, and related discourses developed at national levels (in donor countries or amongst development actors in partner countries). It should be noted that results management has been on the development agenda for a long time, but according to Vähämäki et al. (2011, p. 17) “the results management perspective became an integral part of the global development aid policy” in the early 2000s. The agreements listed in Figure 3 attest to this. Although there is no consensus about how to implement or understand the results agenda, the OECD/DAC’s definition of development results has been the most widely used within the aid community during the 2000s. Figure 4 presents an overview of the results chain, based on the OECD/DAC definitions (OECD/DAC, 2002a, p. 33).

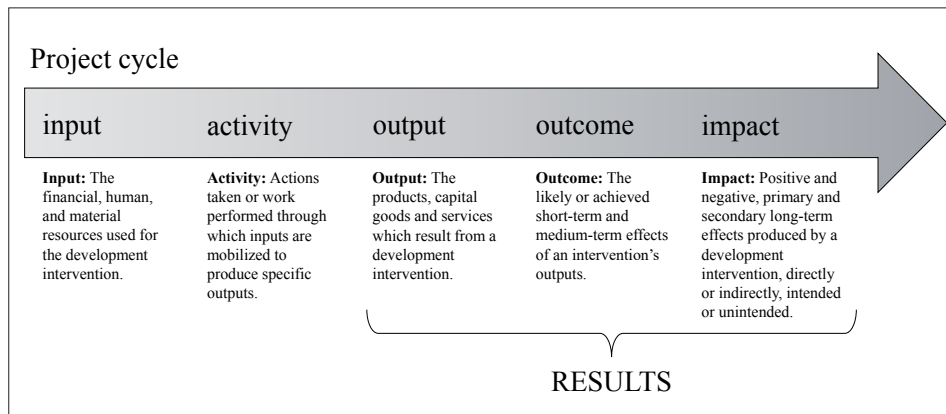


Figure 4: The results chain.

Source: Brodin (2016) see also OECD/DAC (2002a).

In addition, the OECD/DAC has published guidelines for the evaluation of development results. In 1991, the *DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance* (OECD/DAC, 1991) was published, which stated that evaluations should be impartial, independent, credible, and useful. In 2010, they were followed by the *Quality Standards for Development Evaluation*, whose aim was to improve the quality of the evaluation reports and facilitate joint evaluations (OECD/DAC, 2010).

2.5. An introduction to Swedish development cooperation

2.5.1. Swedish development policies

Partner countries and other donors generally perceive Sweden as a politically independent and transparent development partner due to its lack of a colonial legacy and of involvement in the world wars (Danielson & Wohlgemuth, 2005). In addition, Sweden has been recognised for its high levels of ODA and its swiftness in adopting international policies and agreements (CGD, 2011; DAC, 2000). During the 2000s, however, Sweden has been repeatedly criticised by the OECD/DAC for “the complex overlay of policies and themes” (OECD/DAC, 2009, p. 25), for having too many partner countries, and for being engaged in too many areas and sectors (OECD/DAC, 2005b; Statskontoret, 2011).

The first major Government Bill¹³ concerned exclusively with international development cooperation was the Government Bill 100, adopted by the Swedish Parliament in 1962.¹⁴ The overarching objective of the policy was “to improve the living standard for the poorest people” (Swedish Government, 1962, p. 7). It focused on poverty alleviation, human rights, justice, and equity. Partner countries’ involvement in development cooperation was also considered an important factor to pursue effective development cooperation (Swedish Government, 1962). With small changes in its formulation, the overarching objective has remained the same in the current development cooperation (Odén & Wohlgemuth, 2012; Swedish Government, 2003), and the same focus areas are still priorities (Government Offices of Sweden, 2014). The Swedish Parliament has adopted six Government Bills since the 1960s. Some of their main features are described in Figure 5.

¹³ The first Swedish Government Bill on Development Cooperation was adopted by Parliament in 1961, but it only concerned the management of technical development cooperation (Swedish Government, 1961).

¹⁴ The Swedish Government presents a proposition to be accepted or rejected in Parliament. When the proposition is accepted by Parliament, it becomes a Government Bill (Sveriges Riksdag, 2015).

The Government Bill 100 1962 is the first major Swedish Government Bill that concerns international development cooperation. Its overall objective is to increase the living standard for the poorest people. With small changes in its formulation, this objective has remained the same until the 2000s (Swedish Government, 1962).

The Government Bill 101 1968 shares the main objective of the Government Bill 1962:100 but includes a timetable that establishes how and when the target of spending 1% of the Swedish GNI on ODA should be reached (Swedish Government, 1968).

The Government Bill 1977/78:135 – concerning guidelines for international development cooperation etc. established the following development goals: 1. Economic growth; 2. Economic and social equality; 3. Economic and political autonomy; 4. Democratic development of society (Swedish Government, 1978).

The Government Bill 1987/88:100 added a fifth development goal: Sustainable development. (Swedish Government, 1987)

The Government Bill 1995/96:153 introduced gender equality as a new objective in Swedish international development cooperation (Swedish Government, 1996).

The Government Bill 2002/03:122 *Shared responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development* turns Sweden into the first country to adopt a development policy that concerns all policy areas within the Swedish state (Swedish Government, 2003).

Figure 5: Government Bills on international development cooperation

Swedish development policies in the 2000s

As mentioned above, the Swedish development administration has been criticized over the past 15 years for the many aspects and priorities that guide development cooperation (OECD/DAC, 2005a, 2009, 2013; Statskontoret, 2011). This section clarifies and illustrates the abundance of issues that those who work within the Swedish development administration have to address. The abundance of objectives and perspectives can also have implications for the implementation of the results agenda, in particular when Swedish development actors define indicators and report results.

With the adoption of the Government Bill 2002/03:122 *Shared responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development* (PGD), Sweden became the first donor country to adopt a policy that integrated development cooperation in all policy areas (OECD/DAC, 2009; Swedish Government, 2003). The PGD has guided Swedish development cooperation since 2003 (Fellsson & Román, 2016). The Bill stated that the overarching goal for Swedish development cooperation should be “to contribute to an environment supportive of poor people’s own

efforts to improve their quality of life” (Government Offices of Sweden, 2014; Swedish Government, 2003). As in previous Bills, the PGD expressed a strong belief in poor men and women’s capacity to create their own development. The PGD contained a number of commitments and perspectives, which included eight “central component elements”¹⁵ and two guiding perspectives (Swedish Government, 2003).¹⁶

In addition to the PGD and the documents mentioned above, a large number of Government Communications,¹⁷ guidelines, and other steering documents, also guided Swedish development cooperation in the early 2000s. In peer reviews from 2005 and 2009, the OECD/DAC concludes that Swedish development cooperation is governed by “a forest of policies” (OECD/DAC, 2005a, 2009), policies which were produced both by Sida and the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). To reduce the number of documents, the MFA carried out several reforms between 2005 and 2011. These reforms included structural changes within Swedish development cooperation, with a clearer division of responsibilities between the MFA and Sida. For instance, it was stipulated that the MFA produces and make decisions on policies, and that these policies should be time-bound (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012). In addition, a process to reduce the number of partner countries from 125 to 30 and to limit Swedish involvement to a maximum of three sectors in each partner country was initiated in 2007¹⁸ (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007). Although some progress has been made in these areas, improvements are still necessary as regards, for instance, a clarification of the policy structure (OECD/DAC, 2013). In March 2014, the Government presented to Parliament the Communication 2013/14:131 *Aid policy framework – the direction of Swedish aid* (Government Offices of Sweden, 2014). This Policy Framework was based on the PGD and stated that the three thematic priorities mentioned above should continue to permeate Swedish development cooperation (Government Offices of Sweden, 2014). After the general elections in 2014, a new government constituted by a coalition between the Social

¹⁵ These eight components are: human rights; democracy and good governance; gender equality; sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment; economic growth; social development and security; conflict management; and global public goods (Swedish Government, 2003).

¹⁶ One perspective takes into account international human rights conventions; the other takes into account the poor (Swedish Government, 2003).

¹⁷ Government Communications are documents of a descriptive character, without proposals, which the Government presents to Parliament. These Communications are not adopted by Parliament (Swedish Parliament, 2015).

¹⁸ See section below on the geographical distribution of Swedish development cooperation for more information on the limitation of the number of partner countries.

Democratic Party and the Green Party came into power in Sweden. This new government changed the direction of Swedish international development cooperation, emphasising gender equality, environment, and climate change. In December 2016, the Government presented a new *Policy framework for Swedish international development cooperation and humanitarian aid*. This framework has as its points of departure the Agenda 2030, the SDGs, the commitments Sweden has made to finance development, and the Paris Agreement on climate change (Swedish Government, 2016).

Official development assistance: size, distribution and opinion

Since 1975, Sweden has lived up to the UN target of spending 0.7% of the GNI annually on international development assistance (OECD, 2016; OECD/DAC, 2005a). Amongst the DAC members, Sweden is one of the largest providers of ODA as a percentage of GNI. In 2015, Sweden was the sixth largest donor in terms of volume (OECD, 2016, p. 265). This long-term commitment to disburse a relatively high share of its GNI to development issues has given Sweden a reputation of being a generous and committed donor (OECD/DAC, 2009). Recent figures on the geographical distribution of Swedish ODA indicate that Swedish development cooperation is given mainly to countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which received 25% of Swedish bilateral ODA in 2013-2014. According to the OECD, South and Central Asia received 7%; Middle East and North Africa, 6%; Europe, 4%; South America, 3%; and Other Asia and Oceania received 3 % of Swedish bilateral ODA in the same period. Yet it should be noted that 51% of this ODA was unspecified by region in these figures, and that a major part of this 51% was channelled through the multilateral system and NGOs (OECD, 2016, p. 266). Over the last years, a relatively great share of Swedish ODA has been distributed to refugees in Sweden. Despite being carried out in accordance with the rules established by the OECD/DAC, the distribution of ODA to refugees has been criticised both in international (see for instance Jacobsen, 2015) and Swedish media (see for instance Bolling, 2015; Zetterman, 2014). The question is whether aid given to refugees in Sweden qualifies as ODA, since ODA is normally is disbursed to countries in the global South. In general, Swedes are positive to international development cooperation, and a majority of the Swedish population wants either to keep or to increase the size of Swedish ODA. Amongst the reasons given for this positive approach to ODA is the humanitarian crisis in the world, in particular the situation in Syria (Liljeström, 2015).

2.5.2. The organization of Swedish development administration

The Swedish MFA is responsible for the policy making (including the development of results strategies) and the budgeting of Swedish development cooperation, as well as for the multilateral development cooperation. Government agencies, in particular Sida, are in charge of implementing other forms of development cooperation. It should be noted that Sida is an independent government agency, although it is accountable to the MFA (c.f. Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012). Since the 1960s, Swedish development cooperation has been reformed and reorganised a number of times. For instance, a major reorganisation took place in the 1990s, when five autonomous development entities were merged into one, and the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) became the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). In 2008, Sida was restructured again. The new organisation rested on three pillars, namely policy, operations, and management. The operations pillar became responsible for strategy and for the implementation of Swedish bilateral development cooperation (OECD/DAC, 2009). Another major reorganisation took place in 2012. The three pillars were replaced by ten sections, a planning secretariat, an internal audit, and the director general's secretariat. Parts of Sida's management is delegated to Sida's foreign missions, often placed at Swedish embassies in partner countries (Sida, 2012a).

Organization of monitoring and evaluation activities in Swedish development cooperation

In the mid-1980s, the interest for M&E increased in Sweden and became an integral part of Swedish development cooperation, incorporated in Sida's project cycles and other procedures. The OECD/DAC also recognised the increased attention to evaluations in Sweden, and the DAC review from 1996 states that:

Starting in the late 1980s the SIDA evaluation report series represents an important contribution to the knowledge and methodology about evaluation, particularly in areas such as poverty reduction, decentralized government, environment, small business promotion, health and sanitation, institution building, hydropower and emergency aid (DAC, 1996, p. 26)

The necessity of evaluations has constantly been stressed both by decision makers and implementers of development cooperation in Sweden. Evaluations are seen as essential instruments to maintain and improve the quality of aid, as well as to increase the effectiveness of the delivery mechanisms (DAC, 1986, 1988; OECD/DAC, 2009). Sida has an in-house evaluation unit, Sida's Unit for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME), which, among other things, commissions evaluations of projects and programmes implemented by Sida. Over the last 25 years, additional government institutions have also been

established with the purpose of evaluating and assessing Swedish development cooperation. In 1993, the Swedish Government established the Secretariat for Analysis of Swedish Development Assistance (SASDA). SASDA's mandate was to analyse the results and effectiveness of Swedish development cooperation, and its final report was published in mid-1994 (DAC, 1996). One of the main lessons learnt from SASDA was, to make aid more effective, Sweden needed to be more demanding and explicit as regards what was expected from their partners in terms of quality and effectiveness.

In 1995, the Swedish Government set up the Expert Group on International Development Issues (EGDI), which operated independently from the government to analyse and give advice on development issues and to make contributions to policy making (Hettne & Odén, 2002). In 2006, following another change of government, the Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV) was established as an independent evaluation agency with the mandate to evaluate all Swedish development cooperation (DAC peer review 2009, p. 17). However, the SADEV was closed down in 2012 after the quality of its evaluations had been criticised by, among others, the Government's Survey Support¹⁹ (Statskontoret, 2012). In 2013, an Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA) was established. The EBA is a government committee with the mandate to "evaluate and analyse Sweden's international development assistance" (Expert Group for Aid Studies, 2016a). Even though there is a tradition of evaluating and monitoring Swedish development cooperation, the DAC has criticised Sweden for its lack of a results-oriented approach to development cooperation. Besides, the DAC has also encouraged Sweden to enhance the development of qualitative and quantitative indicators. The emphasis on results has increased during the 2000s and, in 2007, the Swedish Government made results-based management (RBM) a top priority (Swedish Government Offices, 2007). However, the DAC peer review from 2009 pointed out that "few staff were clear on what results based management really means in practice" (OECD/DAC, 2009, p. 59). The DAC encourages the increased focus on results, not least to retain public and parliamentary support, but it also notes that the Swedish aid system needs to be managed by and for development results (OECD/DAC, 2009).

2.6. Summary of chapter

The intention with this chapter has been to provide the reader with basic information about the research area of the thesis. Although development theories and approaches to development have shifted over time, as discussed in the section

¹⁹ The Government's Survey Support i.e. Statskontoret

on development thinking, different aspects of these theories and approaches are still present in current development cooperation, although they take on different forms. For example, many NGOs still apply alternative approaches to development and the SAPs still have a great impact on development processes in many countries in the global South. The following chapters will show that the development thinking has also had an impact on results requirements in international development cooperation. During the 2000s, the international development agenda has been dominated by the MDGs and by discussions about how to achieve these goals. The Paris Declaration from 2005 is perhaps the agreement that has had the greatest influence on the relations between donors and recipients of development assistance. The Paris Declaration has clarified the importance of the partner countries' ownership over their own development processes and strategies.

The focus on results has also increased throughout the 2000s, and the results agenda became a top priority within international development cooperation. Although there is no common understanding of what exactly a result is, the OECD/DAC's definition has become influential in the debate about results.

International agreements on development cooperation have also guided Swedish development cooperation, although partner country ownership and the focus on results are not new issues on the Swedish development agenda. Swedish development cooperation has been guided by a large number of policies and other steering documents (which, according to some, to have impeded the implementation of development cooperation), as well as by the concern about how results should be reported. Although several reforms have been carried out to reduce the number of steering documents, there are still a large number of issues that Sida's staff have to relate to in their daily work. Attempts have also been made to clarify decision-making structures within Swedish aid administration. For instance, it has been clarified that only the MFA can make decisions on policies, with the implication that Sida lost part of its mandate. As in other policy areas, Swedish development policy has been influenced by changes of government and ministers. Since its adoption in 2003, the PGD has been the most prominent policy document in Swedish development cooperation. The PGD concerns all Swedish policy areas, and not only development cooperation. Over the years, several government agencies have been given mandate to monitor and evaluate Swedish development cooperation, which shows that the interest in development results has been significant for a long time. Over the last decade, however, the interest in results has increased even more, which became particularly clear in 2007, when the government reinforced that RBM was a top priority within Swedish development cooperation.

This chapter serves as a general introduction to international and Swedish development cooperation, providing a general account of some of the main theories and ideologies that have informed them. The following chapters should be read with this chapter in mind, since they provide more detailed information about results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation.

3. Theory and analytical framework

3.1. Introduction

People and the relations and interactions among them make up the core of social science. Unlike natural science, where the study objects are naturally produced but socially defined, the study objects in social sciences are both socially produced and socially defined. The social science researcher studies societies consisting of people who make their own interpretations of reality and develop their own definitions and concepts about how the world is constituted. To explore power relations between actors and how people conceptualize their reality, including how they attach meaning to their actions, are, therefore, central concerns within social science (e.g. Danermark et al., 2003). These are also central aspects in this study. The following chapter reveals how power relations between donors and partner countries have been approached theoretically and analysed here. This chapter aims to present the overall research approaches applied in this study, to provide theoretical perspectives on central concepts, and to outline the framework applied in the analysis of the empirical information gathered for this thesis.

There are many ways to approach a research problem, and the specific way a researcher chooses to approach a problem has consequences for how the research is conducted. To make the processes behind this research as transparent as possible, this chapter begins with an outline of the *research approach*. This section also presents an overview of how the different parts of the research process relate to each other. After the research approach has been presented, the *theoretical perspectives* this study departs from are outlined. This section provides theoretical perspectives on two of the central concepts in this study, namely, the results agenda and partner country ownership, focusing on how these concepts relate to power relations between development actors. The purpose of this section is to explain, from a theoretical point of view, why and how the results agenda has influenced partner country ownership, and thereby inform the overall objective of this study.

The aim of the *analytical framework* is to present the analytical tools that have been applied to reveal power structures within Swedish development cooperation, as well as to investigate how stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation exercise their relative power. One of the main analytical instruments applied here is the analysis of frames and framing processes, in order to investigate how actors are framing and reframing of partner country ownership and the results agenda. The analytical framework concerns mainly how the research questions were answered. The chapter ends with a summary, which combines the research approach, the theoretical perspectives and the analytical framework.

3.2. The research approach

There is no single and generally accepted way of doing research in social science; how it is done depends upon a wide range of factors. Two of the most influential factors in the choice of approach are the researcher's idea about how the reality is formed and what can be known about it (ontology), and the nature of this knowledge and how it can be derived or arrived at (epistemology) (Danermark et al., 2003; Hubbard, Kitchin, Bartley, & Fuller, 2002).

The ontological and epistemological points of departure for this study are inspired by a critical realist approach to research. This approach acknowledges that there is an objective reality that exists independently from people's interpretation of it. However, this reality cannot be captured through empirical studies, as these are limited to cover that part of reality that can be understood and explained with concepts that exist in, and are interpreted through, available discourses. The implication is that people's experience and conceptualisation of the world reveal aspects of reality, but they do not reveal all events taking place (or not taking place). Furthermore, people's experiences of reality do not explain the mechanisms that cause the events which create reality, such as power relations and structures in a society (Bhaskar, 2008; Danermark et al., 2003; Sayer, 2000). Therefore, critical realists make distinctions between the real world and our experiences of it, by distinguishing three different ontological domains: the real, the actual, and the empirical (Danermark et al., 2003; Sayer, 2000).

The real domain: The real domain is both what exists (regardless if they are natural or social objects or phenomena) and the realm of objects, including their actual and possible structures and/or power relations. Since it is seldom possible to observe these structures and relations, theories are required to explain the real (Sayer, 2000). In this study, theories on uneven development, power relations, and public management have been identified as central to explain the real domain, in other words to provide explanations for why power relations

and framing processes occur the way they do. These theories are presented in the section on theoretical perspectives.

The actual domain: The actual domain consists of events that take place regardless of being directly experienced or not. It concerns what happens “behind” our experience of reality, including the power structures and discourses in which we all take part, but of which we not always are aware (e.g. Danermark et al., 2003). To reveal the actual domain, this study investigates how different actors are framing two central concepts in Swedish development cooperation, namely that of *results* and *partner country ownership*. The study also explores the power relations between stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation by showing how it is organised and how resources and power are distributed between actors. The section on the analytical framework explains how these relations and concepts are investigated.

The empirical domain: The empirical domain is what people experience, directly or indirectly. Empirical experiences can be captured by researchers (Sayer, 2000). However, in order to capture these experiences, the researcher has to apply different methodologies, which can be both qualitative and quantitative. The methods applied in this study comprise document analyses and semi-structured interviews, and these are further explained in the chapter on methods.

The different domains presented above are interrelated and, as such, impossible to be completely separated. However, in order to approach these domains, they must be treated as different entities. presents an overview of why and where the different domains are included in the study.

<i>Domain:</i>	<i>Purpose:</i>	<i>Reflected in:</i>
<i>Real Domain:</i> theories which explain power relations/structures and framing processes.	To provide theoretical explanations for why power relations and framing processes occur the way they do. It explores the objective of this study.	Theoretical perspectives
<i>Actual domain:</i> power relations/structures and frames that exist regardless of being experienced.	To reveal power relations and framing processes. It seeks answers to the research questions.	Analytical framework
<i>Empirical domain:</i> Directly or indirectly experienced power relations and framing processes.	To explore how different actors experience power relations and describe framing processes. It concerns the collection of the data material this study is based upon.	Chapter on methods

Figure 6: An overview of the research approach.

Source: Author’s elaboration and Danermark et al. (2003).

3.3. Theoretical perspectives: uneven development and power relations in international development cooperation

3.3.1. Uneven development and power relations

Swedish development cooperation is embedded in networks of power relations between stakeholders within Sweden and between stakeholders in Sweden and in partner countries. These relations are manifested through development concerns and policies, such as ownership and results requirements. Even though all development actors adhere to the results agenda, it is primarily initiated and driven by donors (Eyben & Guijt, 2015; Riddell, 2007; Veen, 2011; Witty, 2015). The unequal power relations between countries in the global South and in the global North could be traced to colonial legacies, according to which “western ways of knowing have been held up as *the* way of knowing, whether it is in terms of religion, science, architecture or governance. Other forms of knowledge have been rendered less valid, or even downright wrong” (Sharp, 2009, p. 111, italics in original). These ideas are, to a great extent, still valid, which partly explains why people in the global North possess much of the ideological and political power, including the possibilities to influence global political and economic discourses. In international development cooperation the influence of the countries in the global North is, for instance, demonstrated when institutions in the global North define the needs in the global South. The global North is considered to possess the knowledge about what is best for countries the global South and, therefore, has the mandate to speak for poor men and women in these countries (Sharp, 2009, p. 110). Over the last decades, critical development scholars have often ascribed the inequalities and uneven development to the neoliberal ideologies that dominate much of today’s politics and economics. David Harvey (2006) is one of the human geographers who argue that poverty in the global South and the global uneven development, is a consequence of a neoliberalism built on “accumulation through dispossession” (Harvey, 2006, p. 41). On this view, wealth is distributed from lower to upper classes and from poorer to richer countries, a redistribution that would not be possible without an uneven distribution of power (Harvey, 2006; see also Peet, 2007). The issue of power can be approached from different perspectives. For instance, it could be seen as either *power over* or as *power to do* something; it could be considered a possession that can be held, delegated or distributed, or as a pre-given capacity (Allen, 2003). In this study, power is defined as control over capital and assets (economic power), rationalities (ideological power, i.e. control over ideas and theories), and policy formulations (political power, i.e. control over practices transmitted as policies).

3.3.2. *Power relations and partner country ownership*

International development cooperation is not only an act of solidarity; it is also commonly employed as an instrument to pursue other objectives often related to the donor countries' economic or political interests (Riddell, 2007; Veen, 2011). A challenge for many donors is to combine these objectives with partner country ownership, where the donor should not set the development agenda (c.f. Jerve, 2002). Development cooperation can undermine the sovereignty of partner countries, as they often have to adjust their political and economic systems in order to meet donors' requirements. In this context, sovereignty is usually considered either as *a right* of the partner country's government to make authoritative decisions (i.e. to set the development objectives and make policy decisions), or as *a means of control* over the implementation and follow up of policies and strategies (Brown, 2013; Thomson, 1995; Whitfield & Fraser, 2009a). These are two competing and potentially contradictory ways to perceive sovereignty, and they are closely related to partner country ownership. The first definition, i.e. sovereignty as a right, is more challenging to implement, given that the development partner is often more dependent on the donor than vice versa. Partner countries' possibilities to claim their rights are, thus, limited. Other issues that constrain partners from claiming ownership over policies are, for instance, those related to foreign policy, trade, and historical relations with the donor country. On the other hand, the right to control the process and the outcomes of policies and strategies, i.e. sovereignty as a means for control, is associated with responsibilities to implement and achieve goals set in policies (Whitfield & Fraser, 2009a). This includes the responsibilities to reach, and report on, development results. Full sovereignty for partner countries appears to be difficult to obtain: donors often have other intentions with their development cooperation than just poverty reduction, and want to see how their money is spent (cf. Riddell, 2007; Veen, 2011).

Ownership has also implied what Whitfield (2009) defines as a 'reverse conditionality', that is, donors compel their development partners to 'take' ownership over development cooperation. The partner countries do not have to accept the conditions set by the donors, but are required to accept the ownership and the responsibilities that come with it (Whitfield, 2009). Faust (2010) points out that the interest in ownership should come from the development partner. If it does not come from the partners, there are no expectations on the donors to hand over the control (and responsibilities) of development cooperation (Faust, 2010, p. 528). In addition, there is a tension between ownership and conditionality, since donors often demand significant ownership from the development partners. At the same time, however, they condition their assistance to policy requirements. For example, this could imply that partner

countries are required to meet certain democratic standards before donors feel confident in handing over ownership (Faust, 2010). Even though ownership is supposed to replace previous conditionalities, new requirements must be fulfilled by the development partner before cooperation can be initiated (Faust, 2010; Whitfield & Fraser, 2009b). Consequently, power relations between countries in the global North and in the global South play a major role in international development cooperation, not least in relation to partner country ownership and the implementation of the results agenda. These relations are exposed when development cooperation is negotiated, i.e. when donors and partner countries discuss new strategies and programmes. Jerve (2002) argues that relations between donors and partner countries rest on three sets of responsibilities which are negotiated: the responsibilities of the donor (i.e. what donors give); the responsibilities of the partner country (e.g. what donors get in terms of development results); and their joint responsibilities (Jerve, 2002, p. 390). These responsibilities are also applicable to ownership, especially in terms of development partners' and donors' joint responsibilities. A number of factors influence the negotiation process between donors and development partners. As mentioned previously, donors' intentions are not only altruistic (Riddell, 2007), and development partners are not passive recipients of ODA, since they always have the choice to accept or decline funding. Therefore, the outcome of a negotiation depends on context and timing, as well as on the actors and individuals involved in the negotiation process (Whitfield & Fraser, 2009a, p. 28).

3.3.3. Power relations and New Public Management in international development cooperation

Relations within donor countries, as well as between donors and development partners, play a central part in how development actors have understood, interpreted and implemented the results agenda. The results agenda is considered here a product of NPM as well as an instrument for its implementation. The relations between policy makers and public servants within the donor country, as well as between donors and development partners, are of relevance for the implementation of the results agenda. This section examines how the results agenda, as an instrument for the implementation of NPM, has influenced the management and administration of international development cooperation. NPM reforms are often imposed on the public service sector by the political leadership, who introduce new structures to manage the relations between the government and public servants. Several reasons are given to introduce NPM reforms, but amongst the more frequently mentioned is governments' and ministers' lack of trust in the public service. For instance, there has been

a general distrust in the public servants' capabilities regarding economic and efficient management of the state's resources (Aucoin, 2016; Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2015). There are different ways of restructuring the relations between the government and the public servants, but one of the most common strategies is to establish explicit mechanisms to distinguish policy making from administration, and thereby to increase ministers' control over policy making and implementation. Another strategy is to require public service managers to focus on the management of resources and to hold public servants accountable for their performance (Aucoin, 2016; Batley, 1999). Some of the strategies that are deployed to restructure the government's relations with public servants are discussed below. They are: depoliticisation, responsabilisation, and instrumentalisation. These strategies have consequences for all actors involved in policy implementation.

Depoliticisation and responsabilisation of public management in international development cooperation

As a governing strategy, the process of *depoliticisation* aims to remove the political character of decision making and replace it with notions of expertise, implying that decisions should be based on transparent expert reports rather than on the opinion and ideological conviction of individuals. One strategy employed by politicians to depoliticise these structures is to delegate and decentralise implementation policies (Burnham, 2001), which is referred to as *responsibilisation*. Responsibilisation implies that responsibilities have shifted from ministers to public servants and other implementers and managers of policies. The demand for accountability has also called for increased transparency and reporting on performance, with the aim of making it more difficult for public servants 'to hide behind their ministers'. This means that Ministers' responsibilities have decreased, while their control over public management has increased. It has become customary to write 'contracts' that specify the line of implementation with very clear definitions of what has to be achieved (i.e. with clear output and outcome targets) and details concerning the responsibility for the accomplishment of goals (Aucoin, 2016). This way, ministers can oversee the interpretation of objectives and avoid overlaps and 'bureaucratic pathologies' (Aucoin, 2016; see also Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Public servants' mandate has thereby decreased, while their responsibilities have increased. A consequence of this arrangement is that it creates a 'squeezed middle', where managers are forced to implement ministers' requirements on actors further down the implementation chain without necessarily finding it purposeful (e.g. Eyben, 2015). In international development cooperation, responsabilisation can also mean that donor countries resign from the responsibility of encouraging development in partner countries. Instead, partner countries are made responsible

and accountable for their own development processes (e.g. Hansson, 2015), with the implication that they do not acknowledge unjust structures and development constraints faced by countries in the global South.

Depoliticisation, technicalisation and instrumentalisation of development cooperation

Depoliticisation processes are closely related to, and usually implemented through, *technicalisation* and *instrumentalisation* processes. Maybe more than other policy areas, international development cooperation has been dominated by the idea that there is a technical fix that can solve the issue of poverty (see Dar & Cooke, 2008; Willmott, 2008). This idea has been further emphasised through NPM approaches to development. NPM is inspired by private sector approaches to administration, where technical solutions are often seen as central to make public administration and policy implementation more efficient and effective. One of NPM's basic assumptions is that results can be measured and quantified from all forms of policy implementation, provided that the right instruments and techniques are applied (Drechsler, 2005; see also Hood, 1991; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Development actors have criticised this assumption by arguing that there are important development results that cannot be captured, or are too difficult or costly to measure. Interventions related to democracy and human rights, for example, are difficult to assess in terms of development results: these interventions often relate to peoples' perceptions of what it entails to live in a democracy, rather than to results that can be easily measured and quantified (see for instance Binnendijk, 2000). The results agenda has been criticised on the grounds that it leads to a development cooperation in which development interventions that generate quantitative results are favoured, especially if these results can be reported within a relatively short-term perspective (Natsios, 2010; Shutt, 2016). The assumption that most things can be measured and quantified has also implied an instrumentalisation of development cooperation. Indicators and the filling in of results matrixes can be said to govern development cooperation, at the risk of neglecting overall objectives (e.g. Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2015; Eyben, 2005). A number of planning and reporting strategies have been used within international development cooperation, such as Log frames, Paying by Results, etc. Eyben (2015, p. 21) refers to these reporting strategies as "techniques of power", since they force development actors to fill in matrixes and to act according to existing protocols. Technocratic approaches to development are often invoked to legitimise dominant development practices that are commonly dictated by a donor or by the donor community (Dar & Cooke, 2008; Willmott, 2008).

Another issue associated with the instrumentalisation of development cooperation is a demand for results that are possible to attribute to one intervention, or to one donor's development assistance. However, proving attribution, i.e. the causal link between achieved results and a specific intervention, is a major challenge in all forms of results reporting (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). More often than not, results are not achieved through one intervention, but through a series of events. Results depend often on general economic, social, or environmental changes, which makes it impossible to reveal or prove causal links. Instead of looking at attribution, it would be more relevant to discuss the contribution of a particular development intervention (Binnendijk, 2000; Mayne, 2001).

3.3.4. Power relations and the results agenda

Scholars and practitioners of development cooperation make a distinction between *managing for results* and *accountability for results*, stressing potential challenges in combining these two purposes (see for instance Binnendijk, 2000; OECD/DAC, 2014b). One of the main issues as regards both the accountability for results and the managing for results is to shift from focusing on results as inputs, activities, and outputs, to focus on outcomes and impact results. The importance of understanding the cause-effect relations between these different levels, that is, why an activity has been successful or not and under which circumstances and contexts, has also been emphasised. Nevertheless, accountability for results often tend to focus on output results, since they can be more easily obtained and attributed to specific activities (Binnendijk, 2000). However, both managing and accountability for results are often presented as reasons to implement the results agenda, where one of the main challenges is the tension between learning, associated with the management for results, and accountability.

Managing for results has to do with learning to improve development effectiveness and efficiency. It departs from the idea that development partners should report results – or the absence of results – to improve the understanding of the reasons why results have been achieved, as well as the means whereby they have been achieved (Carlsson & Wohlgemuth, 2000). Accountability for results requires transparency and the ability to demonstrate for donors how ODA has been used and what result it has generated. Accountability for results is often associated with donors' requirements as regards accountability. As negative results can generate cuts in funding or other sanctions, accountability tends to emphasise positive performances. Another consequence of the accountability for results is the avoidance of development cooperation in complex contexts where outcomes are more difficult to foresee (Binnendijk, 2000; OECD/DAC,

2014b). Furthermore, accountability for results can be seen as an indication of distrust in relation to the way development partners spend money, rather than as a means to improve development cooperation (e.g. Eyben, 2015).

3.4. The analytical framework

3.4.1. *Introducing the analytical framework*

While the previous section presented theories that explain how power relations are reflected in international development cooperation and transformed by NPM-processes, this section concerns how power relations within international development cooperation could be disentangled, and how these relations are manifested in the way different actors are framing and reframing development policies.

The analytical framework has been developed by combining three different analytical approaches. The first approach, *development thinking*, concerns the analysis of the context in which development cooperation exists, and the way development cooperation is executed through policies and strategies. The *policy arrangement approach* explains analytically how development policies, revealed by means of the development thinking approach, are put into practice. The policy arrangement approach implies analyses of the substance of a policy and of the organisation behind the implementation of this policy. Policy discourses, and the different ways actors adhere to these, are essential aspects of the policy arrangement, as the *analyses of frames and framing* conducted here will show.

The analysis of policy discourses through frames and framing processes is a central aspect in this study because frames and framing processes reveal how stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation relate to the results agenda and to partner country ownership. Furthermore, an exploration of frames and framing processes makes it possible to explore the power that Sida and development partners have to reframe a specific government policy,²⁰ such as the results agenda. In this study, *frame* analysis concerns the analysis of specific policy frames, while *framing* analysis refers to the analysis of how actors have reached a certain understanding about policy frames, including how they attach meaning to them, and justify their definition and implementation (e.g. Benford and Snow, 2000; Entman, 1993; Fisher, 1997). Frame and framing analysis have

²⁰ Government policies are considered master frames here, i.e. frames to which all development stakeholders have to relate to if they want to be part of Swedish development cooperation (see below).

been applied to explore how actors within Swedish international development cooperation understand and justify the results agenda and partner country ownership. By exploring how Sida and development partners are framing the results agenda and partner country ownership, it is possible to reveal these actors' capability of influencing the implementation of the results agenda. This section on the analytical framework begins with outlines of the development thinking and the policy arrangement approaches. These approaches introduce the analysis of the context and the development relations between development actors. Thereafter, the frames and framing analyses applied here are presented.

3.4.2. The development thinking approach

The development thinking approach comprise analyses of the development theories and the ideologies that have informed a development policy, as well as of the strategies and policy documents that these ideologies and theories have resulted in (Hettne, 1990; see also Potter, 2008). It brings to the fore the policy frameworks which actors have to relate to if they want to become or remain part of Swedish development cooperation. Therefore, these frameworks constitute what is referred to here as *master frames* (e.g. Benford & Snow, 2000; Oliver & Johnston, 2000). Analyses of the development thinking approach reveal how these master frames are constituted and how they have evolved. They also provide a background to examine how scholars, decision-makers, and implementers of development cooperation understand and approach development issues. Below is a brief explanation of the different aspects of the development thinking approach:

Development ideologies refer to how decision makers within development cooperation rationalise and legitimise their development objectives by means of ideologies (Hettne, 1990). These ideologies often originate in a political conviction (or dominance) amongst decision makers within international development cooperation. It should be noted, however, that development theories are strongly influenced by ideologies, and vice versa. In the context of Swedish development cooperation, the development ideologies are likely to be informed by prevailing international ideologies such as global neoliberal trends, as well as by national policies that vary depending on the composition of the government.

Development theories relate to the theoretical attempts to explain the roots of poverty. They address how development has taken place in the past and/or how it can be promoted or supported. Development theories have mainly attracted the attention of scholars, but planners and politicians have also shown interest in them (Hettne, 1990). These theories have varied over time, and Chapter 2 of

this thesis provides an historical overview of the theories that have dominated international development cooperation from the 1950s onwards.

Development strategies concern the practical implementation of development theories and ideologies, i.e. the realisation of international development cooperation through development policies and strategies (Hettne, 1990). In the case of Swedish development cooperation, the development strategies are outlined in the Swedish Government's policies on development cooperation and in Sida's implementation strategies and guidelines. These documents have been analysed in order to uncover the development strategies in relation to results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation.

3.4.3. *The Policy Arrangement Approach*

The development thinking approach reveals the development ideologies and theories that constitute the framework in which development strategies are developed. However, it does not explain how these theories and ideologies are transformed into strategies and practices. This transformation can be explained through a policy arrangement approach, which explores how policies are shaped in terms of organisation and substance at different geographic and administrative levels. A policy arrangement approach departs from the notion that a policy does not exist without substance (principles, objectives, measures, etc.), or organisation (actors, instruments, procedures, etc.). While the substance of a policy arrangement is defined through policy frames, the organisation of a policy arrangement is characterised by actors and coalitions, political rules²¹, and the distribution of resources and power within the arrangement (Arts, Tatenhove, & Leroy, 2000a; Liefferink, 2006; Pestman, 2000). By taking into account organisational aspects, the policy arrangement approach also allows for an analysis of power relations between stakeholders involved in the arrangement. Furthermore, a policy arrangement approach offers possibilities to study how different policies interact because it encompasses different policies within a wider policy domain (e.g. Arts et al., 2000a). In this study, Swedish development cooperation is considered one policy domain, and the results agenda and partner country ownership are considered as two policy frames within this domain, where the focus lies on how the results agenda influences partner country ownership.

²¹ In the literature on policy arrangement (e.g. Arts, Tatenhove, & Leroy, 2000a), the policy rules are referred to as "the rules of the games". The policy rules refer to formal and informal rules and procedures to which Swedish development cooperation must relate.

The different parts of the policy arrangement approach and their application in this study are described below. It should be noted that all parts of a policy arrangement are interrelated, so that changes in one part affect all the other parts of the arrangement (Arts et al., 2000a; Liefferink, 2006; Pestman, 2000).

The organisation of a policy arrangement

The organisation of a policy arrangement involves the actors and policy coalitions in the implementation of a policy, as well as the relations between these actors. The organisational aspects of a policy arrangement are, therefore, applied to reveal power relations between actors.

Actors and policy coalitions: An arrangement often includes a limited number of policy coalitions that consist of actors sharing the same interpretation of policies. By identifying and analysing the relations between different actors and their role in the policy-making process, it is possible to ascertain, among other things, whether actors support or oppose a certain policy frame. These relations can be approached from actors' strategic point of view or from an institutional perspective. An actor's decision to be part of informal policy coalitions is often a strategic choice based upon the possibility of achieving goals through cooperation with others. These coalitions are often built on social relations between actors. The institutional perspective, on the other hand, concerns formal decision-making structures, including how these structures are formed and developed (e.g. Arts et al., 2000a; Liefferink, 2006). The actors and policy coalitions that are relevant to this study are the stakeholders who participate actively in Swedish international development cooperation. The institutional perspective includes the official standpoints of decision makers (i.e. ministers and politicians), government offices, and government agencies. These standpoints are expressed in policies and other steering documents that have been analysed. Actors' strategic points of view are captured through interviews with stakeholders at the Swedish MFA, Sida, and representatives from development partners in partner countries.

Resource allocation and power: Resource allocation and power are aspects of development cooperation that concern how resources (in terms of money, information, technology, legislative power, etc.) are distributed between actors. This distribution leads to stratifications in power relations and, thereby, to possibilities of influencing decision-making processes. The concept of power includes the mobilisation and distribution of available resources, as well as the control over capital, rationalities, and practices transmitted as policies (Peet, 2007). Within a certain policy arrangement, there are often a number of actors that depend upon each other to have access to money, information,

technology, political legitimisation, etc. (Arts et al., 2000a; Liefferink, 2006). This study examines the allocation of resources with the aim of revealing how actors within the policy arrangement devise strategies to get adherence for, or to promote, their interests.

Policy rules: The rules of the game refer to the formal and informal rules in decision-making procedures and in the implementation of a policy arrangement (Liefferink, 2006). These rules define a policy arrangement by determining the possibilities and limitations for the participating actors. In addition, these rules establish the framework according to which policies are implemented and structured. This framework specifies which norms are accepted, how policy outcomes are achieved, and which actors can be involved in the policy arrangement. The rules include both the formal procedures of decision-making processes described in legal documents and the informal routines and norms that are governed by the culture in the specific setting (Arts, Tatenhove, & Leroy, 2000b).

The substance of the policy arrangement – the policy frame

The frames of a policy arrangement²² concerns the substance of an arrangement, i.e. what the policy is about (Arts et al., 2000a; Liefferink, 2006). In this study, the policy arrangement approach is applied to explore how two policy frames interact and influence each other, namely the results agenda and partner country ownership.

Although a policy arrangement approach includes all the above-mentioned aspects, the main focus of this study is the substance of the arrangement and how actors are framing, and reframing, policy frames related to the results agenda and partner country ownership. A policy frame concerns the views and narratives of the actors involved in the policy arrangement, including these actors' norms, definitions, and solutions of problems. In this case, it also includes the underlying interests and purposes that actors have when they pursue their policy as regards partner country ownership and the results agenda. The master policy frame is revealed through the development thinking approach. However, actors are not only passive users of master frames; to different degrees, actors are able to reframe and renegotiate these master frames. For example, they can do so by means of selective descriptions to make the master frames more suitable to their needs and purposes (Entman, 2003; Triandafyllidou & Fotiou, 1998).

²² In the literature on policy arrangement, the *policy frame* is referred to as *policy discourses* (e.g. Arts et al., 2000a; Liefferink, 2006; Pestman, 2000). However, as this study focuses more specifically on policy frames, the concept of policy frame is used to avoid misunderstandings. The policy frame concept is explained in the section on frame and framing processes.

Actors can frame objects around a specific issue, rather than frame the issue at stake, and vice versa. Therefore, the same arguments can be used to promote different political standpoints, and the same political standpoint can be framed in different ways to be promoted with different arguments (e.g. Fisher, 1997). Actors' capacity to reframe master frames depends on the strength of the frame and on the relative power that the involved actors possess. A master frame can be dominating, or it can be contested and replaced. In addition, two or more frames might have equal parity under certain circumstances (Entman, 2003).

When framing analysis is conducted in this study, the frame hierarchies, including master frames and different framing processes, are considered. As all actors have to relate to the master frames, this study explores how actors at different positions or levels within Swedish development cooperation relate to these frames and how they reframe them. This study seeks to capture how actors within Swedish development cooperation interpret the instructions they receive from their funders; i.e. how staff at the MFA and Sida interpret the Swedish Government's policies and how development partners in Uganda and Mozambique interpret the guidelines they receive from Sida. To put it differently, this study examines how policies travel: a policy's master frame is defined in Sweden but implemented in a partner country, a process that involves a number of actors (e.g. Flint & Taylor, 2011). The power and possibilities different actors have to (re)frame the master frames are also considered. The policy frame of a policy arrangement is, thus, explored through analyses of frames and framing processes, which are more thoroughly explained below.

3.4.4. Analysing the framing of the results agenda²³

Frame and framing analyses

Frame analysis refers to a specific approach within the broader tradition of discourse analysis (Johnston, 1995; Triandafyllidou & Fotiou, 1998). However, while a discourse often relates to several aspects of a perceived reality, frames and framing processes are limited to specific semi-structured elements of the discourses that people employ. These elements focus on how people attach meaning to a specific issue (Entman, 1993; Fisher, 1997; Johnston, 1995) and offer a way to study "the discursive mechanisms through which policy options are (re)defined" (Triandafyllidou & Fotiou, 1998 paragraph 1.3). Entman (1993, p. 52) describes the framing process as follows:

²³ Parts of the section on the analysis of the framing of the results agenda are published in the article *Framing the results agenda in Swedish development co-operation* (Brolin, forthcoming).

Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient /.../ in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

This study treats frames as schemata of interpretations, or 'mental orientations' that individuals employ to process information in order to understand and make sense of the world. Frames are based on an individual's attitudes and perceptions of the issue at stake, reflecting negotiated and shared meanings which serve to organise common experiences and to guide and mobilise actions (Benford & Snow, 2000; Chong & Druckman, 2007; Entman, 1993; Johnston, 1995). Frames are not static; rather, they are part of constantly ongoing framing processes and they are products of continuous interactions between individuals involved in (re)negotiations and (re)constructions of a perceived reality (Fisher, 1997; Snow, 2004; Triandafyllidou & Fotiou, 1998). Among other things, these framing processes aim to process information to make it more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable for both the producer and the receiver (Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Snow, 2004).

Framing processes take place in all the stages of policy making. Therefore, framing analyses are carried out at the level of master policy frames presented in the section that discusses the development thinking approach. In addition, framing analysis is part of the examination of the policy arrangement of international development cooperation.

Framing tasks and framing processes

Frames have a core task that relates to how actors negotiate the shared understanding of a policy frame that they wish to change. These tasks are achieved through three main framing processes: *diagnostic framing*, which involves problem identification and attribution; *prognostic framing*, which concerns the solution to the problem; and *motivational framing*, which is how actors justify their engagements in the issue at stake (Benford & Snow, 2000; see also Entman, 1993, 2003; Levin, Schneider, & Gaeth, 1998). These framing processes also provide the point of departure for this study. A fourth framing task has been developed for this study related to *framing rationale*. Framing rationale is closely related to the other framing processes, especially to the motivational framing process. However, whereas the motivational framing relates to how others are motivated to adopt a specific diagnostic and prognostic framing, the framing rationale relates to how actors justify their actions to themselves.

Diagnostic framing: Frames often relate to changes of the current situation by addressing (perceived) problems. The diagnostic framing tasks attend to

the identification of these problems, including their cause(s). An exploration of actors' diagnostic framing of the results agenda and the partner country ownership makes it possible to reveal how actors perceive these problems and their causes; and if there are similarities and/or differences between how different actors are doing their diagnostic framing. In that the diagnostic framing can identify the causes of a problem and who, or what, to blame this problem on, the diagnostic framing could also convey a so-called "boundary framing". The boundary framing seeks to draw a line between what is considered good or bad, including the identification of antagonists and protagonists in relation to a certain frame (Benford & Snow, 2000). To reveal how actors in Swedish development cooperation have been diagnostically framing the results agenda and partner country ownership, questions have been asked related to why and whose results were asked for.

Prognostic framing: Prognostic framing is closely related to diagnostic framing and involves the articulation of solutions to the identified problems, as well as the strategies to obtain these solutions. Different actors can, however, find different solutions to the same problem; conversely, the same solutions and strategies can be applied to different problems. The prognostic framing often specifies the actor responsible for the implementation of these strategies (Benford & Snow, 2000). The questions asked in relation to prognostic framing regarded what kind of results were required (i.e. to reveal if they were asking for results attached to activity, output, outcome, or impact levels) and the way they were reported (including the strategies to report them and if results were reported as qualitative or quantitative data). Additional questions were asked in relation to the agent responsible for solving problems, which also ties in with partner country ownership.

Motivational framing: Motivational framing refers to how actors motivate their engagement in the issue at stake in relation to other actors, as well as to the means they employ to encourage other actors to follow their interpretation of the frame. More specifically, the focus of attention lies on how development actors motivate their reporting of results in relation to other actors, i.e. to funders in Sweden (including decision makers and taxpayers), development partners, and beneficiaries. In some cases, the motivational framing corresponds with the diagnostic, but other motivational frames can also be applied in order to make a convincing case (Benford & Snow, 2000; Entman, 1993; Fisher, 1997).

Framing rationale: Although the above-mentioned framing tasks and framing processes cover important aspects of the framing process, they do not include the framing rationales. Therefore, this particular framing aspect has been

developed specifically for this study. The framing rationale is closely related to the other framing processes, especially the motivational framing. More specifically, the framing rationale addresses how actors justify internally the reasons why they have adopted a certain frame. Although actors have the means to (re)frame a policy, these means are limited insofar as they depend on the actors' positions within development cooperation (the actors' position in the implementation chain) and on the strength of competing (master) frames. The internal justification for the implementation of a specific frame does not necessarily correspond with the motivational frame; some actors might have to implement policies that they do not support and which cannot be reframed in such a way that it can be internally motivated.

3.4.5. Applying theory and the analytical framework

Polletta and Ho (2006) stress that although many scholars have studied frames and framing processes, not much attention has been devoted to the relation between frames and their cultural and political context. By combining development thinking within Swedish policy on development cooperation and a policy arrangement approach with frame and framing analysis, this study provides an alternative and more comprehensive analysis of how development policies are framed by different actors. These aspects correspond to events, or possible events, associated with the actual domain of the research approach adopted here. By revealing similarities and differences in how actors within Swedish development cooperation are framing the results agenda disclose power relations between different actors and the influence of the (master) frame(s). More specifically, a framing analysis can reveal who has the power to decide and influence how the results agenda is implemented.

Although a framing analysis uncovers frames and framing processes, it does not explain the context in which policy frames exist or the organisational aspects associated with their implementation. These aspects are analysed here with recourse to development thinking and power arrangement approaches. The development thinking offers a vantage point into the context in which Swedish development cooperation takes place by explaining the theories and ideologies that have informed the strategies and policy documents that define Swedish development policy. Besides, it also explains the master policy frame, to which all stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation have to relate. In order to examine the power relations between these stakeholders, a policy arrangement approach has been applied. It identifies the involved actors, the distribution of resources and power between these actors, and the policy rules that regulate these relations. These three analytical approaches have been

combined into a comprehensive analytical framework that covers the central aspects of this study. An overview of the analytical framework is presented in Figure 7.

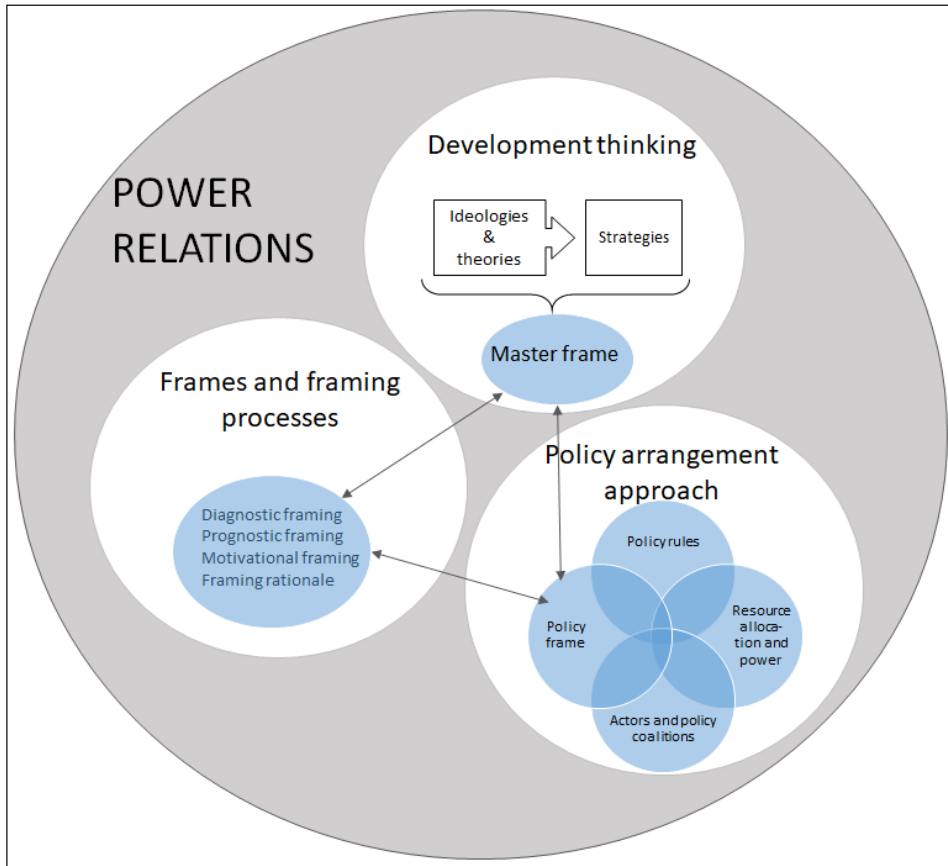


Figure 7: Analytical framework.

Source: Author's elaboration

The analytical framework reveals power relations, frames, and framing process in Swedish development cooperation, as well as the theoretical perspectives applied to explain why these power relations exist and what their origins are. The theoretical perspectives adopted here are influenced by CDG and thus presents critical perspectives on prevailing neoliberal approaches to development and public management. CDG theories on development argue that neoliberal ideologies enforce uneven power relations between countries in the global North and South. On this view, countries in the global North define discourses and set policy agendas for countries in the global South. International development cooperation is, in many ways, part of these structures, not least because it involves transactions of money attached to donors' expectations

about the delivery of a certain kind of result. Here, the power concept includes mobilisation and the distribution of available resources, as well as the control over capital, rationalities, and practices transmitted as policies (Peet, 2007). In the context of ownership and power in relation to the results agenda, power refers to development partners' *power over* the objective of the agenda and *power to* influence how it is implemented. For instance, power over the objective of the agenda can refer to the establishment of the development objectives that should be achieved by means of the results agenda, while power to influence implementation refers to the particular ways the results agenda should be implemented. The theoretical perspectives on power and power relations seek to explain the overall aim of this study.

The research approach adopted here defines three ontological domains. This chapter concerns two of these domains. The theoretical perspective on the reasons why power relations and framing processes occur the way they do provides an outline for how the real domain is explained. The analytical framework makes it possible to explore the power relations and framing processes, which informs how the real domain is explored. The following chapter on methodology examines how the empirical domain has been investigated, i.e. the methods employed to examine how actors involved in Swedish development cooperation experience power relations and are framing the results agenda and partner country ownership.

4. Methodology

4.1. Introduction

This chapter on methodology explains how the empirical data for this study was gathered. The chapter considers, thus, the empirical domain presented in the research approach. The methodological considerations made here are based on the nature of the object that is being studied and on what can be known about this object. As it was not possible to comprehend *à priori* what could be known about the results agenda, the exact methods were not determined presumptively. Instead, the exact methods were developed during the course of the study, and the theoretical and analytical frameworks developed in Chapter 3 have informed these methods. This is an *abductive* approach, which means that events or phenomena also are interpreted from a set of general ideas, contexts, or patterns (Danermark et al., 2003).

An intensive research approach is often associated with qualitative research methods, where causal explanations of how certain objects and events are produced, are central issues (Sayer, 2000). According to Sayer (1992, p. 99), structures are “constituted by internal relations which must be understood qualitatively”. A qualitative approach has been applied here, given that structures and power relations are central concerns in this study. This approach allows in-depth analyses of how actors are framing the results agenda and analyses of the policy arrangement and of the development context in which these framing processes take place (c.f. the theoretical framework).

The research design departs from a case-study approach. This chapter commences with an outline of this approach and how the cases for this study were selected. The chapter proceeds to examine the ways in which the research design also relates to the sampling conducted for this study. Thereafter, a detailed description is made of the methods used in the collection of empirical data.

4.2. A case-study approach

4.2.1. *Rationale for conducting a case study*

There are a number of ways to define a case study. What distinguishes a case-study approach is that it is based on one or more cases selected from a bigger sample; that the issue, or phenomenon, is studied in context; that several data collection methods are used; and that the study is detailed and intensive. A case study approach is often relevant in relation to questions such as “how” and “why”, since it can provide profound knowledge about structures and connections (J. Lewis, 2003; Yin, 2014). A sample design can also be structured in a number of ways, but it is often designed around context(s) rather than around a series of individual participants. For instance, the focus of the case study could be a process or an organisational context, including the actors involved in this context (J. Lewis, 2003). As further motivated below, a case study approach was chosen in this study, where Swedish policy on international development cooperation is considered the main case. In addition, two of Sweden’s partner countries, Uganda and Mozambique, were chosen as examples for in-depth analyses of how the results agenda and ownership have been framed by different actors within Swedish development cooperation. Swedish development relations with Uganda and Mozambique are seen as within-cases in this study, since they serve as examples of how Swedish development cooperation is implemented.

Case study approaches have been criticised on the grounds that they provide insufficient evidence for scientific generalisation, among other things because they are too situation and context specific and, therefore, not appropriate for generalization and thus of less scientific value (Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Flyvbjerg, 2006). However, researchers such as Flyvbjerg (2006) oppose the idea that social science has to be generalisable and generate universal theories, since all human affairs are based on specific cases which depend on the context in which they exist. Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 224) argues that “[p]redictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is, therefore, more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals”. The critique against generalisability can be traced to statistical approaches to science. However, the statistical way of generalising is not applicable to case study research, and the sample is not big enough to make such generalisations. Instead of a statistical generalisation, a so-called *analytical generalisation* can be more appropriate. Yin (2014, p. 41) writes that analytical generalisation is based either on correcting, modifying, or rejecting existing theoretical concepts and that new concepts also can be developed during the course of the research. In the particular case of this

study, I would argue that a combination of these two approaches to analytical generalisations is valid. The analytical generalisations involve a conceptual claim, for they prove how findings from the case study relate to specific theories or theoretical constructs (for instance, a framing approach to research). When the same theory or theoretical construct is applied in similar situations, analogous events might occur (see also Kvale, 1996; Yin, 2010). Analytical generalization involves “a reasoned judgment about the extent to which the findings from one study can be used as a guide to what might occur in another situation” (Kvale, 1996, p. 233). This means that even though the exact same thing cannot be expected to happen in another context, it is possible to understand what might happen in another setting. For instance, a reasoned judgment can be based on theories or on logical argumentation, where the supporting evidence and the arguments are made explicit. The intention is also to make it possible for the reader to judge the soundness of the generalisations (e.g. Kvale, 1996).

Since international development cooperation takes place in different contexts that involve various structures and power relations, this study does not aim to draw any statistical conclusions. However, it gives examples of how the results agenda can influence the relations between donors and partner countries and, thereby, influence partner country ownership. Furthermore, it contributes to a wider understanding of the relations and structures within international development cooperation. Put differently, analogous events might occur in other situations, such as the relations between similar donors and partner countries. Therefore, it is possible to draw conclusions from these cases that also are valid for other cases.

4.2.2. Selection of cases

Selection of the Swedish case and time perspective

This study focuses on Swedish policy for international development cooperation and the actors involved in making and implementing this policy. It could have been of relevance to study other donor countries' implementation of the results agenda. However, Sweden was amongst the first donors to embrace the agenda and has been strongly advocating its implementation (cf. Vähämäki, 2015). In addition, Sweden is a donor with a long tradition of monitoring and evaluating its development cooperation (OECD/DAC, 2009) and of promoting partner countries' ownership (Wohlgemuth, 1976; 1994). Sweden also belongs to what is commonly referred to as the “likeminded countries” or “Nordic-Plus countries” in international development cooperation, i.e. a group of donor countries with similar approaches to development cooperation, distinguished by a relatively strong focus on ownership and results. This group of donors

often include Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Norway, the Netherlands, and the UK (and sometimes Canada) (Norad, 2006). Therefore, the Swedish case is illustrative of how ownership is framed within the results agenda in these like-minded countries. On these premises, Swedish development cooperation was selected as the main case for this study. Another advantage of having selected Sweden as a case is that I have worked with the implementation of the results agenda in Swedish development cooperation, which gives insights into policy procedures. Such insights would have been difficult to obtain in any other way.

In order to capture how the framing of results and ownership has changed in government policies and in Sida's guidelines and manuals, the time perspective for the document analysis takes as its point of departure the first major policy exclusively concerned with Swedish development cooperation. This policy was adopted in 1962 (Swedish Government, 1962). The analysis takes into account all government policies on development cooperation that have been published since then, as well as all Sida guidelines and manuals on development cooperation in general and the M&E in particular. The focus on results has increased over time, and the results agenda has become the top priority in international development cooperation in the 2000s. Although it is difficult to define precisely when it became a priority, the 2006 elections are a milestone when it comes to the results agenda in Swedish policy on development cooperation. In 2006, a central-right wing government was elected in Sweden and remained in power until 2014. This government pursued a development policy that put a strong focus on accountability and results (Vähämäki, 2015). This research focuses on the period 2006-2014 and especially on the later years, since informants often remember recent events with more clarity.

Within-case selection: Uganda and Mozambique

In the process of selecting partner countries for in-depth studies of Sweden's relations with development partners, all partner countries with which Sweden has had long-term or post conflict²⁴ development agreements were reviewed. At the time of the review, August 2013, Sweden had such agreements with 15 countries. The selection of Swedish relations with Uganda as a case was based on the nature of Swedish development cooperation with Uganda. Sweden has a long history of working with Uganda; the country has received substantial amounts of development assistance from Sweden over the years. However, Swedish relations with Uganda have shifted. For years around the turn of the millennium, Uganda's economy was expanding and the country was considered

²⁴ For information about the Swedish Government's classification of partner countries, see <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/10428> (Swedish Government, 2012c).

a donor darling, i.e. a country where ODA generated positive results and, as a consequence, attracted many donors (Lie, 2015). During this time, Sweden also had good relations with Uganda, which were reflected in Swedish aid modalities. In the early 2000s, Uganda received general budget support (GBS), from Sweden, which is only given to countries that are assessed to have sound financial systems, a relevant plan for development, and that are committed to improving democracy and human rights (Koeberle & Stavreski, 2006b; Sida, 2015a). However, the Swedish GBS to Uganda was discontinued in 2007, after growing concerns as regards the democratic situation in the country and failures in meeting commitments made in development plans (Embassy of Sweden, Kampala, 2007, 2008; Openaid, 2015). Since then, the relations between Uganda and Sweden have deteriorated and, at the time of the fieldwork in the spring 2014, these relations hit a low mark. After Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni signed an anti-homosexual act in February 2014, the Swedish Government decided to withhold all its support channelled to the Ugandan Government, except for the support disbursed to the research sector. Although the act was later annulled on technical grounds, Sweden still avoids cooperation with the Ugandan Government with reference to the high incidence of corruption in the country (Sida, 2015b). The strained relations between Uganda and Sweden had consequences for this study. For instance, no interviews could be carried out with representatives from the Ugandan Government, as it was too politically sensitive to discuss Swedish development cooperation or development relations with a Swedish PhD student at that time.

In light of the problematic relations with Uganda, the main criterion in the selection of a second partner country was a relatively good and stable relation with Sweden for a long time. As briefly described above, GBS is given to partner countries "with a good track record and a reasonably sound policy and institutional framework, including transparent and adequate financial management arrangements" (Koeberle & Stavreski, 2006b, p.12). In other words, GBS is given to countries with which the donor has comparatively good relations (see also Sida, 2015a). Consequently, GBS became an indicator in the selection of the second partner country for an in-depth study. At the time of this selection (spring 2015), Sweden gave GBS to two countries: Tanzania and Mozambique (Sida, 2015a). However, as the Tanzanian Government adopted new laws which, among other things, threatened freedom of speech and press freedom (e.g. Freedom House, 2015a; A. Nilsson, 2015), there was a risk that the relations between Tanzania and Sweden could deteriorate as they did with Uganda. Even though the Swedish relations with Mozambique has undergone changes lately, these relations appeared more stable, and, for instance, the Swedish Embassy in Maputo celebrated "40 years of strong

relations between Sweden and Mozambique” (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2015) in 2015. Therefore, Sweden’s development relations with Mozambique were selected as a second case in this study. One of the drawbacks of selecting Mozambique as an example was the language. In Mozambique, Portuguese is the official language, which is a language I do not speak. Nevertheless, as English is frequently spoken within the development community, all interviews could be carried out in English (see also the section on sampling approaches). In Uganda, in contrast, English is an official language and, therefore, there was no major problem in conducting the interviews in English.

Uganda and Mozambique are representing two very different Swedish partner countries, representing different forms and aspects of Swedish development relations with partner countries. Therefore, it is possible to draw conclusions from these cases that are also valid for Swedish relations with other countries. However, as Uganda and Mozambique represent too different cases, a straightforward comparison between the two countries is unsuitable, which has consequences for the study. It was comparatively easy to reach government officials in Mozambique, but not in Uganda. Consequently, the data material collected in Mozambique is more extensive than the material from Uganda.

4.3.2. Sample design and sampling

Sample design: purposive sampling

Within the case study, a number of sampling units (i.e. the constituencies included in the study) were chosen as bases for the selection of informants for interviews and texts for the document analysis. A unit is defined here as a group of actors working at the same level of implementation of Swedish development cooperation, such as the MFA, Sida, and organisations in the partner country. The sampling was mainly made through *purposive sampling*, described as an approach in which

the selection of participants, settings or other sampling units is criterion-based or purposive /.../ The sample units are chosen because they have particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and questions which the researcher wants to study. (Ritchie, Lewis, Elam, Tennant, & Rahim, 2014, p. 113)

The sampling units are chosen according to certain purposes. One purpose is to ensure that all relevant units are included in the sample, i.e. that all necessary stages of implementation of Swedish development cooperation are represented. Another purpose is to make sure that within these units, enough diversity is included so that the impact of the concerned issue can be explored. There are

different approaches within purposive sampling, and the specific approach adopted here is the critical or typical case sampling (Ritchie et al., 2014). The sample units have been selected on the basis that they demonstrate a particular position in the process of implementation of Swedish development cooperation. This approach was chosen in order to explore how actors that represent different parts and aspects of the Swedish development administration are framing partner country ownership and the results agenda. This approach made it possible to discover similarities and differences between the way actors that represent different units were framing these issues. In addition to the purposive sampling, some informants were selected through *convenience sampling*, an approach “in which selection is made purely on the basis of who is available” (Ritchie et al., 2014, p. 115). Convenience sampling was not the intended approach at first; however, it was not always possible to reach the intended informants, especially during the visits to Uganda and Mozambique. As a consequence, the persons available under the limit period for the visits were interviewed instead. In Mozambique, the language was an issue and some informants were selected because they spoke English, as this was preferred before using an interpreter. Some aspects related to the convenience sampling and other challenges related to the research process are further discussed below.

Sample size

As in most qualitative research, the sample in this study is limited. Yet, the informants represent all sampling units selected for this study. As discussed in the section on case studies, the intention with this study is not to make any statistical generalisations, but to provide supporting evidence where the arguments are made explicit for the reader to judge the soundness of the generalisations (cf. Kvale, 1996; Ritchie et al., 2014). This study is also based on an intensive research design, in which a lot of information about a smaller sample has been gathered (cf. Danermark et al., 2003). It would not have been possible to manage and process that amount of detailed and context-specific information with a larger sample and within the time frame of a PhD study. Nevertheless, enough informants have been interviewed to reach a certain level of saturation. In a number of interviews, the informants within each sample unit often gave similar answers, which implies that a larger sample size would not have contributed to gather new information. This saturation occurred despite the challenges related to the access to all intended informants and the limited time for the visits to Uganda and Mozambique. When an intended actor could not be reached for an interview, experts within that field were interviewed instead. One of the key criteria taken into account in the process of purposive sampling was that all units working with the implementation of Swedish development cooperation should be represented in the sample.

4.2.4. Sample design and sampling in this study

Sampling units

The sampling units included in this study are: the Swedish Parliament and the MFA (also representing the Government); Sida; Sida Field Offices; Swedish International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs)²⁵ and their field offices; other INGOs that receive Swedish ODA; implementing partner organisations in the partner country; and the government in the partner country. The different implementation units in Swedish development cooperation considered in this study are illustrated in.

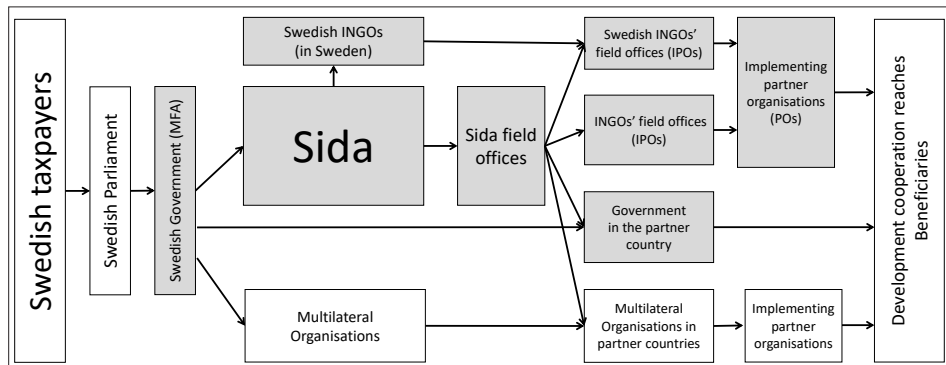


Figure 8: Sampling units (in grey boxes). Arrows illustrate the flow of ODA.

Source: author's elaboration.

Two sample units have been excluded: multilateral organisations and beneficiaries. Multilateral organisations have been excluded due to Sweden's limited possibilities of pursuing its own policies in relation to them. Although the beneficiaries are the most important actors within international development cooperation, they have not been included in this study because their concrete interests and possibilities to influence the results agenda are limited compared with the other actors in the implementation of international development cooperation. In addition to these sampling strategies, a number of experts with long experience of Swedish development cooperation were also interviewed in order to get a complementary perspective of Swedish development cooperation. These experts are, for instance, consultants who have worked with Swedish partners and academic, specialized in development cooperation.

²⁵ These INGOs appear in the Union of International Organisations' list of international organisations (Union of International Associations, 2017)

Sampling in the Swedish case

In the Swedish case, informants included representatives from the Swedish Parliament and the Government; the Swedish MFA; Sida and Swedish INGOs. The informants were selected on the grounds of their work with policy issues or with M&E. They should preferably have several years of experience of work with Swedish development cooperation. The informants were interviewed on different occasions. Most interviews were carried out in December 2012 and in the spring and summer 2015, and complementary interviews were carried out in-between these two occasions. There are two main reasons for the timing of the interviews. The first one is that Swedish development cooperation underwent changes during this time, and the interviews conducted in 2012 needed to be supplemented with more recent information. The second reason is that not all informants were available at the same time, so the interviews were carried out on different occasions. It should be noted that it has been difficult to meet staff at the Swedish MFA for interviews. Some of the requested interviews have been declined with reference to the workload at the Ministry.

The expert informants selected for the in-depth interviews were all individuals with extensive experience (often more than 30 years) of work with Swedish development cooperation. While the semi-structured interviews focused on recent development cooperation and framing processes, the objective of the in-depth interviews was to get an historical overview, starting in the 1960s until the current development cooperation. Not so many people work with issues related to development cooperation in Sweden, so that the same person could have worked at Sida and at a Swedish INGOs or another organisation. Many informants are, therefore, supposedly well aware of how different development actors work. It should be noted that expert informants represent their own views, which not necessarily correspond with the views held by Sida or the MFA. As these informants were interviewed about historical events, it could be possible that they did not remember details correctly. These issues have been handled through triangulation with information provided by other informants or written sources. The selection of expert informants was based on their competence and knowledge, rather than their representativeness (e.g. Bernard, 2011). In total, 25 interviews were made in Sweden with staff working at the MFA, Sida, and Swedish NGOs, including expert informants met for the in-depth interviews (see figure 10 for an overview of the informants interviewed). It was a challenge to reach, and interview MFA staff. Consequently, the information provided by the MFA staff could be inadequate. To some extent, the document analysis (which includes documents produced by the MFA) addresses this scarcity of information.

Sampling in the Ugandan context

The selection of informants included representatives from Sida and Swedish INGOs in Uganda as well as CSOs and authorities that received Swedish ODA. The interviews in Uganda were conducted with Sida staff working at the Swedish Embassy in Kampala and with professionals representing Swedish INGOs and Ugandan organisations funded by Sida. The goal was to interview representatives from multilateral organisations and from the Ministry of Health in Uganda, but the appointments for the interviews were cancelled several times. In Uganda, Swedish ODA to democracy and human rights was in focus, especially the support to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), gender equality, and women's rights (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009). These areas were chosen because it is often a challenge to promote partner country ownership within them (Edgren & Sida, 2003) and to report the results of such interventions (Dawidson & Hultström, 2006). Interventions within SRHR include both medical concerns and rights-related issues. However, medical issues are easier to quantify than rights-related ones, which makes them more suitable to a system that favours results. SRHR interventions were chosen as examples because they can shed light on different implications of the implementation of the results agenda.

The interviews in Uganda were carried out during a stay in Kampala from February to May 2014. This was a rather turbulent time, since many of the organisations considered for interviews were engaged in reacting to the new anti-homosexual act. The president's signing of the anti-homosexual act also influenced relations between the donors and Uganda: many donors withdrew part of their ODA to Uganda in repudiation of the act. Nevertheless, eleven interviews were conducted with thirteen informants (three informants were present during one interview). Six of these interviews were carried out with informants that worked for Swedish INGOs in Uganda; two informants worked for Ugandan CSOs, and two informants worked at Sida in Uganda (see figure 10 for an overview of the informants interviewed). In addition, several informal interviews were made with people with expertise in Ugandan international development cooperation. In the cases where Swedish INGOs and Ugandan CSOs had someone working with M&E, this person was interviewed. If the organisation did not have such a position, a programme coordinator or director was interviewed. The informants were mainly contacted through e-mail or phone, but in some cases also in person (some of the informants were difficult to reach by e-mail or phone as they had changed their phone numbers and e-mail addresses).

English is an official language in Uganda, and everyone that works with development-related issues speaks good English. Therefore, all interviews were conducted in English. In general, the informants in Uganda were perceived as rather open and critical of the increased result requirements they considered to come from donors. Many seem to have reflected over how the results agenda had influenced their possibilities of formulating their own objectives and indicators, as well as over their relations with their funders.

Sampling in the Mozambican context

In Mozambique, the selection of informants included representatives from the Mozambican Government; Sida; Swedish INGOs and other INGOs receiving Swedish ODA; and from Mozambican CSOs implementing Swedish development cooperation. In addition to the interviews, a focus group discussion was held with informants that represented implementing partners. The development cooperation initiatives in focus for the Mozambican example were the Swedish GBS and the support to democracy and human rights. The interviews in Mozambique were conducted from October to December 2015.

The Swedish support to the democracy and human rights sector was mainly carried out through the Action Programme for Inclusive and Responsible Governance (the AGIR programme),²⁶ directed to and implemented by the CSO community in Mozambique. Interviews were made with Sida staff at the Swedish Embassy in Maputo. However, the person responsible for the AGIR programme at the Sida in Mozambique was on sick-leave at the time for the interviews. Even though his/her substitute were interviewed, and interviews were made with other staff members at Sida, there were not enough information gathered to fully comprehend how staff at Sida in Mozambique conceptualised results and ownership within the AGIR programme. How staff at Sida in Mozambique is conceptualising results and ownership with specific attention to the AGIR programme is thus only briefly described. More attention has been given to how informants that represented Swedish and other INGOs working within the AGIR programme and their implementing partners conceptualised results and ownership. The CSO community in Mozambique was rather limited and tight: many of the organisations cooperated and their staff members knew each other. This familiarity among them had implications for the contact with people that work for CSOs. At first, it was difficult to get in contact with desired informants, since they did not respond to e-mails or phone calls. Once the first interviews were made, however, these informants put me in contact with other people that work within the CSO community.

²⁶ In Portuguese: Programa de Acções para uma Governação Inclusiva e Responsável.

This sampling method is often called snowball sampling or respondent-driven sampling (see Bernard, 2011, p. 164). Although the method has advantages (it facilitates the initial contact, for instance), it also has disadvantages. For instance, intermediary partners might put the researcher in contact only with partners that are satisfied with how the development cooperation is conducted, or that only organisations with similar agendas and networks might end up being included in the study. Therefore, additional interviews were made with non-recommended informants that worked for implementing partners and with external informants who have long experience of work with CSOs in Mozambique (these informants are referred to as “experts”). In total, 28 interviews with 31 informants were carried out, and one workshop with eight informants was also held (see figure 10 for an overview of the informants). As the GBS is given directly to the government in Mozambique, three informants that worked for the government were also interviewed. In addition, a number of interviews were conducted with informants that had extensive experience of work with GBS for the Mozambican Government, as well as experience of work with donor coordination of GBS support. The AGIR programme was chosen as an example because of the size of the programme and that it supports democracy and human rights-related issues such as SRHR. This example corresponds, thus, with the examples discussed in the study conducted in Uganda. Examples from Swedish GBS cooperation were included in this study because this is an aid modality that encourages partner country ownership and that should be based on mutual trust (e.g. Michel, 2008).

The official language in Mozambique is Portuguese, and many Mozambicans do not speak English. However, people that work for the intermediary organisations generally speak English, while some who work for implementing partners do not. The interviews could have been conducted with an interpreter, but the risk that the informants’ descriptions of the framing processes would not be translated with accuracy was deemed too high. Therefore, one of the selection criteria was that the informants spoke English, so that all interviews could be carried out in English. In general, the informants spoke very good English, and the language was not an issue in most of the interviews. However, as in all research in other countries, there might be differences in the meaning of the spoken word. The intention with this study is to explore these meanings by looking at different actors’ framing processes related to the results agenda. However, the choice of selecting only informants who spoke English and were based in Maputo might have influenced the findings presented here. More specifically, since the informants spoke English, they knew the meanings of the terminology associated with the results agenda. In addition, being based

in Maputo probably entailed that the informants were more likely to have participated in M&E trainings, since these often take place in the capital.

The informants in Mozambique seemed to be less outspoken and less critical (or not as direct in their criticism) than the informants in Uganda. Different reasons might explain their hesitation, and some of them are discussed in the section about the Mozambican context. Yet, the fact that the interviews were not conducted in Portuguese might have contributed to this lack of openness.

4.3. Qualitative methods: document analysis and interviews

4.3.1. A qualitative approach to the framing of the results agenda

As a result of the above-mentioned methodological considerations, three main methods for data collection were employed: document analysis, in-depth interviews, and semi-structured interviews. These approaches were chosen given that, in order to examine how actors have framed the results agenda and partner country ownership, it was necessary to reveal the involved actors' perceptions of these concepts, which are also expressed in official statements made by the Swedish Government and Sida. In the semi-structured qualitative interviews, actors could describe how they were framing the results agenda and partner country ownership in their own words. The document analysis, on the other hand, revealed how the same concepts have been framed in Swedish policy documents and in guidelines of development cooperation. The document analysis and some of the in-depth interviews informed the analysis of the development thinking underlying Swedish development cooperation, including how it has evolved, since the 1960s. The qualitative methods used in this study were informed by this study's theoretical framework. The questions and themes covered in the interview depart from the four main framing processes identified in the analytical framework, namely, diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, motivational framing, and framing rationale. However, it should be noted that the collected data have not been limited to cover issues related to results and ownership. As the semi-structured interviews contained open-ended questions, informants were also able to discuss other issues.

4.3.2. Document analysis

The main study object of this research is Swedish international development cooperation, which formally rests on a number of government policies manifested in policy documents. In addition to the government policy documents, Sida has published a large number of guidelines and manuals that specify how these policies

should be integrated and implemented in their work (c.f. Forss & Carlsson, 1997; Sida, 2015d). As all stakeholders involved in development cooperation pursued by Sida must take these documents into account, all government policies (and communications) that concern international development cooperation have been analysed, as well as Sida's guidelines and manuals that spell out how to implement the general development cooperation. In addition, Sida's specific documents on monitoring and evaluation of development cooperation were included in the analysis (see Figure 9 for a list of the analysed documents). The analysed documents are written in Swedish or English.

Government Bills	
1962	Government Bill 100 1962
1968	Government Bill 101 1968
1978	Government Bill 1977/78:135 – concerning guidelines for international development cooperation etc.
1988	Government Bill 1987/88:100
1993	Government Bill 1992/93:244
1996	Government Bill 1995/96:153
2003	Government Bill 2002/03:122 Shared responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development.
Government guidelines for development cooperation and results strategies	
2005	Riktlinjer för samarbetsstrategier [Guidelines for cooperation strategies]
2010	Riktlinjer för samarbetsstrategier – allmänna riktlinjer [Guidelines for cooperation strategies – general guidelines]
2013	Riktlinjer för resultatstrategier inom Sveriges internationella bistånd [Guidelines for results strategies in Swedish development cooperation]
NIB, SIDA, and Sida manuals for development cooperation	
1972	SIDA: Metodhandbok del 1: Insatsberedning – från idé till avtal [Handbook part 1: Preparation of interventions – from idea to agreement]
1973	SIDA: Metodhandbok del 2: Insatsförvaltning. Från avtal till samarbetets slut [Handbook part 2: Management of interventions: from agreement to the end of the cooperation]
1985	SIDA: Metodhandboken. Metoder för beredning, genomförande och utvärdering av biståndsinsatser [Handbook. Methods for preparation, implementation and evaluations of aid interventions]
1990	SIDA: Handbok för SIDA. METOD handbok 90 [Handbook for SIDA. METHODS handbook 90]
1997	Sida: Så arbetar Sida. Sidas metoder i utvecklingssamarbetet [Sida at work. Sida's methods for development cooperation]
2005	Sida: Sida at work: Manual for Sida's contribution management process
2005	Sida: Sida at work: a guide to principles, procedures and working methods
2006	Sida's direction plan: where we are, where we are going.
2012	Sida at work. Manual for Sida's contribution management processes
NIB, SIDA, and Sida guidelines for results measurements (M&E)	
1971	SIDA: Resultatvärdering – ett programförslag [SIDA Results Valuation – a program proposal]
1974	SIDA: Program för SIDA's verksamhet på resultatvärderingsområdet [SIDA Program for SIDA's activities within the area of results valuation]
1976	SIDA: Resultatvärdering – några råd och anvisningar [SIDA Results Valuation – some advice and instructions]
1994	SIDA: Evaluation manual for SIDA
1997	Sida: Sida's evaluation policy
2007	Sida: Looking back, moving forward. Sida evaluation manual.

Figure 9: List of analysed documents.

Source: Author's elaboration

The analysis of these documents gives an historical overview of the changes in the conceptualisation of results and ownership. Therefore, the document analysis includes all government policies that have been adopted by the Swedish Government since 1962, when the first major policy that specifically concerned development cooperation was adopted by Parliament (i.e. Swedish Government, 1962). One intention with the analysis of these documents is to reveal how ownership and results have been framed historically in Swedish policies on development cooperation and in Sida's guidelines and handbooks, including how these frames and framing processes have changed over time. The document analysis reveals the framing processes behind the results agenda as well as the development thinking in Swedish development cooperation.

4.3.3. *Qualitative interviews*

Most of the interviews in this study are semi-structured interviews. They were carried out primarily with professionals that work with Swedish development cooperation at the MFA, Sida, and INGOs, or with representatives from Swedish development partners in Uganda and in Mozambique. These are referred to as *informants*.²⁷ In addition, more extensive in-depth interviews have been carried out with experts who have long experience of work with international and Swedish development cooperation. The experts interviewed are referred to as *expert informants*. The interviews followed an interview guide or a topic list with questions or issues to be covered. Different interview guides were used depending on the nature of the interview and on who the informant was.²⁸ In general, the semi-structured interviews took around one hour, while the in-depth interviews took from one and a half to two hours. In the following sections, the advantages and disadvantages of these modes of interview are discussed. One important aspect is the relation between the interviewer and the informant, which is further discussed below.

All interviews have been conducted in Swedish or English. The Swedish quotes have been translated to English by the author of this thesis. A majority of the interviews were recorded. However, there were occasions when it was not appropriate to record the interviews (e.g. when interviewing informants representing Governments) and in some cases the informants did not want the interview to be recorded. When it was not possible or appropriate to record the interview, extensive notes were taken. Figure 10 presents the number of

²⁷ Here, an *informant* is a person that takes part in a semi-structured or in-depth interview with open-ended questions. A respondent, on the other hand, is a person that responds to a questionnaire or takes part in a structured interview (e.g. Flowerdew & Martin, 2005)

²⁸ See Appendix 1 for examples of interview guides.

informants, what sampling unit they represented, and how they are referred to in this study (see Appendix 2 for a more thorough presentation of the informants).

Informants representing	Number of informants	Reference
Government of Sweden (MFA)	5	GoS 1-5
Swedish expert informants	9	SEI 1-9
Sida and INGOs in Sweden	11	SI 1-11
Expert informant in Uganda	1	UEI1
Sida Uganda	3	US 1-3
Development Partners in Uganda	9	UDP 1-9
Expert informants in Mozambique	6	MEI1-6
Government of Mozambique	3	GoM1-3
Sida Mozambique	3	SM1-3
INGOs Mozambique (Intermediary Partner Organization)	13	IPO 1-13
CSOs in Mozambique (Partner Organization)	6	PO 1-6,
CSOs in Mozambique (Partner Organization) Workshop	8	POWS
<i>In total 77 informants were interviewed for this study</i>		

Figure 10: List of informants

In addition to individual interviews, group interviews were conducted with two or three informants in some cases. A group interview is valuable because it provides opportunities for the informants to discuss a concept or an issue with each other. On the other hand, informants might also be less outspoken if they have a colleague or the like present at the interview. In Mozambique, a workshop with a group of informants that represented implementing organisations was organised. A presentation of the study was made during the workshop and the informants had the opportunity to discuss their views on the issue of results and the results agenda. This discussion brought another kind of input to this study in terms of differences and similarities in how informants are framing these concepts (e.g. Bernard, 2011).

Conducting interviews

A semi-structured interview with open-ended questions is something in-between a structured interview and an unstructured conversation (Kvale, 2007). One of the main strengths of a semi-structured interview is that it allows for a combination of structure and flexibility. Even though an interview guide or topic list is used, there is room for flexibility when the informant has the opportunity to formulate his or her answers. It is also possible for the

interviewer to ask follow-up questions (Bryman, 2004; Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). This method was selected because it is adequate when exploring perceptions and opinions of informants regarding complex and sometime sensitive topics (c.f. Barriball & While, 1994). Also, as Bernard (2011, p. 157) puts it, “[i]n situations where you won’t get more than one chance to interview someone, semi-structured interviewing is best”. In most cases, there was only one opportunity to carry out an interview, and the time available was also often limited. In a semi-structured interview, knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the interviewer and the informant; the actors influence each other. The nature and the outcome of the semi-structured interviews depend largely on the personal and professional qualities of the interviewer. Different interviewers using the same interview guide might get different answers and statements (Kvale, 2007). To obtain total reliability in terms of subjectivity is not realistic, since another interviewer may end up in a different conversation with somewhat different answers. In my view, the open-ended nature of the semi-structured interviews, which hinges on the relations between the interviewer and the respondent, is both the strength and the weakness of this method. It makes it possible for the interviewer to understand how the respondent perceives the issue in question, which would not be possible to capture through other methods. At the same time, the weakness of the method is that the outcome of the interviews hinges on the interviewer.

In order to capture changes in how concepts were used in Swedish development cooperation, additional thorough in-depth interviews were made. These interviews were guided by a topic list and had the character of oral histories, in which expert informants told their view of the history of Swedish development cooperation with focus on results and ownership. One of the shortcomings of these interviews is the possibility of memory lapses and distortion (Bryman, 2004). Some of these shortcomings could be handled, since the main purpose of these interviews was to complement the general information gathered from literature on Swedish development cooperation with specific knowledge about issues related to ownership and results.

The relation between the interviewer and the respondent – some reflections

Interviewing is always a moral enterprise without explicit or predictable solutions to the problems that may arise in ethical or other terms (Kvale, 1996). This section discusses, therefore, some of the challenges in conducting interviews. Most of the interviews conducted for this study were made with professionals and experts, often with long experience of work in development cooperation. While the informants are considered experts in their field, the expectation on the interviewer is often that he or she is a quasi-expert. Expert interviews differ

from interviews with non-experts, in which the researcher is often considered the expert. Whether the informant considers the interviewer competent or not could have implications for the interview. In order to get the required information, the interviewer often has to prove his or her competence. One way of being recognized as a competent interviewer is to show knowledge about the topic of the interview through qualified references to literature or assessments made on the topic (Pfadenhauer, 2009). The interviewer must be careful, nevertheless, to avoid guiding the interviewee's answers. Many abbreviations are used within international development cooperation, and references are often made to recent agreements and reports, which indicates what is high on the development agenda. Preferably, the interviewer should be familiar with these issues before an interview with a development actor. From my previous experience of interviews with people that work in development cooperation, I knew that references to people or organisations working within development cooperation are frequently made. Having knowledge about the nature of the specific development cooperation and of the actors and people that work within the field often contributed to project the researcher as trustworthy. Yet it is not always easy or possible to be aware of these aspects beforehand. Information about social relations is very difficult to obtain through other means than actually talking to people. In the preparation for the interviews conducted for this study, I had, when possible, informal meetings with persons who were not directly involved in development cooperation, but who could provide basic information about the cooperation and the relations between actors.

Conducting interviews in another country also influences the relations between the interviewer and the respondent. Cultural differences and hierarchies influence these relations (c.f. Harrison, 2006). This study has been conducted by a Swedish PhD student from a Swedish university; the implication is that one can be perceived as a representative of the Swedish Government and Swedish interests in development cooperation. This assumption might have an impact on the interviews: answers might be biased towards Swedish development interests, the Swedish actors might be pictured in an exceedingly favourable manner, and only the "good" stories are eventually told. These are difficult issues, but one way of testing the validity of the answers given is to triangulate the information with other actors who are not stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation (by means of interviews with other donors or organisations that do not receive funding from Sweden). Another aspect that had to be considered in this research is that information could be sensitive and contentious information, so that the respondent might not want to reveal his or her name or which organisation s/he works for. Therefore, informants in this study were assured that their names would not be revealed without permission.

However, some of the informants' names can be traced through the selection of cases and the organisations they work for. It is a delicate issue to decide how much, or how little, to reveal in order to be transparent enough without disclosing too much information about the informants. The choices about the presentation of the informants were made with these considerations in mind. Being a comparatively young female researcher also had its pros and cons in the interviews with development experts. A young female researcher has probably more difficulty in gaining respect from informants than an older female, or a male, researcher. On the other hand, it might be easier for informants to open up to someone who does not intimidate them, or someone they do not feel the need to impress (e.g. Harrison, 2006; Momsen, 2006).

4.3.4. Interpretation and analysis of collected data

The analyses presented in this study depart from documents and transcriptions of interviews. The documents were gathered mainly from Sida's homepage, the Swedish Parliament Library, and through personal contacts and informants. The interviews were transcribed soon after they were concluded, based on recordings or on notes taken. The transcriptions were often made in the evening, a few hours after the interviews were conducted. Inspired by Bernard's (2011) approach to coding and interpretation of data, the documents and the transcriptions of interviews were read several times. The first reading was done to identify themes of relevance for the analysis, i.e. to identify labels under which the texts could be coded. Taking into account the analytical framework developed for this study and the first reading of the interviews, analytical matrixes were developed in Excel or in NVivo (a software programme for qualitative data analysis). These matrixes were not static; as new themes were discovered during the reading and coding of the documents, new labels were added. Issues that were of certain interest when reading the documents and transcriptions were repetitions of, and changes in, framing of different issues. The analysis was based on this coding and structuring of the collected data. The collected data were categorised according to which sampling unit it belonged.

5. Results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation

5.1. Introduction

This chapter examines how stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation conceptualise results and the results agenda. The chapter consists of two parts. The first one provides an historical outlook: it shows how results have been conceptualised in Government Bills on development cooperation adopted by Parliament and in SIDA's/Sida's²⁹ general guidelines and specific manuals on M&E. This first part also presents expert informants' views on how the conceptualisation of results have changed over time. The historical outlook begins in the 1960s and ends in the 2010s with the debate on the results agenda. The second part of the chapter examines how stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation conceptualise results, focusing on the years between 2006 and 2014. This second part is based on semi-structured interviews carried out in Sweden with informants from the Swedish Government (mainly the MFA), Sida, and Swedish INGOs.

The purpose of the chapter is to explore how different actors within Swedish development cooperation are framing results and how they perceive the influence of the increased demand for results on partner country ownership in Swedish development cooperation.

²⁹ SIDA was reorganised in the 1990s, when it given its current name, Sida. The old organisation is referred to as SIDA (in upper case), whereas the current organisation is referred to as Sida (in lower case).

5.2. Conceptualisation of results in Swedish development cooperation: an historical outlook

5.2.1. *The 1960s to the mid-1970s: improved planning and increased effectiveness, focus on partner countries*

Brief background and definitions of results: why report on results?

The first Swedish policy on development cooperation established that reporting results was important to increase effectiveness and efficiency of Swedish development assistance. According to Wohlgemuth (2013), reporting results has since then been a central aspect of Swedish development cooperation. The first Swedish policy on development cooperation states that

The realization of development interventions and their effects should be followed. Some donor countries have established that there are significant shortcomings in a number of areas, and these must be addressed. This is a delicate issue that should also be in the recipient partner's interest. It should, therefore, be possible to establish a trustful cooperation between donor and recipient country with the purpose of increasing aid effectiveness. (Swedish Government, 1962, p. 8)³⁰

In the 1960s, Swedish policy on development cooperation was mainly influenced by the Dependency School theory, which argued, among other things, that partner countries should not become (too) dependent on donors. Instead, they should be supported to create independent structures and systems of development. This view is reflected on the Government policy of 1962, which emphasised that development cooperation should strive for help to self-help (Swedish Government, 1962), and on SIDA's guidelines on M&E published in the early 1970s. These guidelines state that countries that receive Swedish development assistance should not be, or become, dependent on SIDA or Sweden for monitoring and evaluation of their economic progress or of other issues associated with development (SIDA, 1971a and SEI1, 27/11/2012). There was an emphasis on the planning phase of development interventions throughout the 1960s; the idea was that well-planned and well-designed interventions would make development cooperation more effective (Swedish Government, 1962, 1968). Learning from previous development experience was considered a key

³⁰ Translated from Swedish by the author. The original text is "Biståndsinsatsernas förverkligande och effekt bör följas. På detta område har man i vissa givarländer konstaterat betydande brister som man ny söker reparera. Det rör sig här om en grannliga uppgift, som dock torde ligga även i den mottagande partners intresse. En förtroendefull samverkan mellan givaren och det mottagande landet bör därför kunna skapas i syfte att göra biståndet effektivt" (Swedish Government, 1962, p. 8).

to improve the planning of development interventions. Lessons learnt from evaluations, inquiries, and assessments were considered important instruments to improve the effectiveness of future Swedish development cooperation (SIDA, 1974; Swedish Government, 1962, 1968). SIDA's guidelines also stressed the importance of knowing the results of Swedish development efforts in order to avoid repeating mistakes and, consequently, jeopardising the situation in partner countries by “[doing] the wrong things better (SIDA, 1972, pp. 24–25).

Reporting results: what to report and how

In the 1960s and 1970s, all activities related to results were captured in one concept: results valuations (*resultatvärdering* in Swedish). Results valuations were continuous processes that should be considered throughout the implementation of an intervention, comprising all activities carried out to investigate how a development project or programme was implemented, monitored, and evaluated (Bergman & SIDA, 1976; SIDA, 1972, 1974). Since the early 1970s, SIDA's evaluation programmes have, to various extents, been based on theories of change³¹, with defined activities and outputs, in some cases specified as “production targets”, and objectives at the levels of outcome and impact (SIDA, 1971b, 1972). Since then, results have been discussed in terms of activities, output, and goal hierarchies associated with outcomes and impacts, despite variations in the meaning of the concepts (Brolin, 2016). SIDA's guidelines describe results in terms of activities and outputs, considered relatively easy to report (c.f. Bergman & SIDA, 1976; SIDA, 1971b). The guidelines also recognised that activities and outputs could show positive results even if the outputs or impacts of the same intervention were non-existing or even negative. Therefore, activities and outputs were described as less reliable results, while results at outcome and impact levels were considered more valid on the grounds that they indicated long-term changes that took place as it had been planned (SIDA, 1972, p. 24).

Results and ownership

The Government Bills on Swedish development cooperation from the 1960s, emphasized a focus on partner countries' involvement in development cooperation (Swedish Government, 1962, 1968). Expert informants, on the other hand, claimed that there was a strong emphasis on Swedish priorities in Swedish development cooperation throughout the 1960s (e.g. SEI2, 12/11/2012). However, the emphasis on partner countries was strengthened in SIDA's guidelines and manuals published during the 1970s. These documents stated

³¹ For information about programme theories on change, see, for instance Morras-Imas & Rist (2009).

that Swedish development cooperation should depart from the development plans established by partner countries and from the development efforts made by these countries. SIDA's guidelines and manuals further acknowledged that the search for development results was in the interest of both donors and partner countries (Bergman & SIDA, 1976; SIDA, 1974; Swedish Government, 1962, 1968).

The documents revealed an idea that development cooperation should be based on mutual trust between donors and recipients of aid, rather than being built on a relationship dictated by demands made by one of the parties. This kind of cooperation was thought to contribute to a more effective and sustainable development cooperation (Bergman & SIDA, 1976; SIDA, 1974; Swedish Government, 1962, 1968). Another aim of the results valuations was to support partner countries in the planning processes, implementation, and evaluation of their development efforts (Swedish Government, 1962, 1968). The first SIDA manual on M&E, published in 1971 under the title *Results valuations - a program proposal*, stated that the main objective of the results valuations was to assist partner countries in their M&E activities through capacity building. By assisting recipient countries in their M&E processes, SIDA also expected to get information on how Swedish development projects progressed. The attribution of development results to a specific (Swedish) development intervention was not considered a relevant issue "because it is not possible and it is not in line with the focus on developing countries' results" (SIDA, 1971b, p. 3). Two additional objectives were added to the results valuations in 1974. One of them established that the results valuations should increase the knowledge about the results of development interventions and, thereby, contribute to a more effective development cooperation. The second objective was to inform the Swedish Government about the effects of international development cooperation in the recipient countries (SIDA, 1974, p. 4).

Development partners were ascribed the main responsibility for carrying out results valuations; SIDA was responsible for reporting these results to the Swedish Government Offices and accounting for Swedish development assistance (SIDA, 1973). Given both the lack of capacity and interest, on the part of the partner countries, in conducting M&E, one of SIDA's major challenges was to engage them in the planning and in the M&E processes of development cooperation (SIDA, 1974).

5.2.2. *The late 1970s and the 1980s: efficiency, control and less focus on partner countries*

Brief background and definitions of results – why report on results?

The Swedish Government adopted a new Government Bill on development cooperation in 1978. This bill was the official guiding policy for Swedish development cooperation during the 1980s. It could be questioned, however, if and how this bill was put into practice, not least given the differences between the bill and SIDA's Methodology guide from 1985 (e.g. SIDA, 1985; Swedish Government, 1978). One of the reasons why the development policy of 1978 was never implemented was that it was written before the debt crisis, when the prerequisites and approaches to development were very different (Odén, 2006). Many development actors consider the 1980s a lost decade: the debt crisis and the following Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) worsened the situation for many men and women living in poverty (see Chapter 2). During the 1980s, neoliberal ideas came to dominate much of the world politics and Swedish development cooperation. Sweden had not been engaged in macro-economic stabilisation programmes before. However, in line with prevailing neoliberal approaches in world politics, SAPs and other such programmes made their way into the Swedish development agenda. Among other things, these programmes advocated privatisation of government institutions, monetarism, and liberalisation of the trade market (Danielson & Wohlgemuth, 2005; Odén, 2006). Consequently, governments in partner countries were seen as a hindrance to development, rather than important actors to promote development (SEI1, 27/11/2012). Neoliberal ideas brought along an increased focus on efficiency, which was also reflected in Swedish development cooperation in terms of an increased interest in M&E to measure efficiency.

Evaluations became a central part of Swedish development cooperation. Only donorship mattered due to the many crises [the international crisis following the oil crisis in the 1970s]. The Swedish Government and SIDA wanted more monitoring and evaluations to see how the aid money was spent; that is to say, they want to see if development cooperation made any difference, and if Swedish money was spent in an efficient way. (SEI2, 12/11/2012)

In the 1980s, the term *results valuations* was replaced by *monitoring and evaluation*, and means-end hierarchies came to play a more prominent role. SIDA's 1985 Methodology guide (SIDA, 1985) describes the difference between monitoring and evaluation as unclear, although monitoring was defined as an instrument to assess whether development activities were implemented as intended and whether development assistance was spent in line with agreed plans. Monitoring activities were described mainly as instruments to control the

allocation of resources, which also reflected the increased interest in efficiency. Evaluations, on the other hand, were described as an instrument to make deeper and broader analyses of interventions, which could include an analysis of the likelihood of achieving results on a long-term basis (SIDA, 1985).

Although efficiency was mentioned in earlier documents that guide Swedish development cooperation (e.g. SIDA, 1972), SIDA's 1985 Methodology guide emphasised efficiency more than previous documents. Among other things, the 1985 guidelines stressed that the results of an intervention should be weighed against their cost. These guidelines described three main objectives of the M&E of SIDA's development cooperation. The first objective was to investigate whether the goals of an intervention had been reached; the second was to assess the efficiency of the project; and the third objective was to assess other unexpected results, positive and/or negative, and aspects of the intervention (SIDA, 1985). While the 1978 Government Bill stated that there was a demand amongst Swedish taxpayers for development results (Swedish Government, 1978), SIDA's Methodology guide listed two main motives for why M&E exercises should be performed: to improve the management of ongoing projects, and to make aid more effective through learning from good and bad experiences (SIDA, 1985). Unlike previous SIDA guidelines, SIDA's 1985 guidelines did not explicitly make reference to reporting to decision makers (Government offices) and/or to the general public in Sweden among the purposes of the M&E (e.g. SIDA, 1974).

Reporting results: what to report and how

The 1985 guidelines described an increased attention to goal hierarchies and relations between activities and the results of development interventions. Results should be measured on output, outcome, and impact level. It was noted, nevertheless, that results at outcome and impact level could be difficult to capture (SIDA, 1985). In the 1978 Government Bill, the recipient countries were ascribed the main responsibility for the evaluations of their own development processes (Swedish Government, 1978), however in SIDA's 1985 guidelines, the role of the recipient countries was downscaled. The main purpose of engaging development partners in M&E processes was no longer capacity building and ownership; rather, it was to facilitate that lessons learnt were incorporated into new development projects and programmes. The capacity to carry out evaluations was considered low in many partner countries and, therefore, capacity building within M&E was assigned an important role in SIDA's development cooperation (SIDA, 1985). The challenges associated with the results requirements during the 1980s were related mainly to technicalities in the implementation of the M&E. Clearly formulated goals and objectives,

for instance, along with predefined indicators were considered prerequisites to conduct M&E activities (SIDA, 1985).

Results and ownership

The objectives of the results requirements in the 1980s remained the same as in the 1960s and early 1970s. The focus on partner country ownership in planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes was still strong (Swedish Government, 1978). However, this focus on partner country ownership was not reflected in SIDA's 1985 guidelines. For instance, the guidelines focused on results in relation to Swedish development objectives, rather than in relation to the development plans of the recipient countries (SIDA, 1985). The 1978 Government Bill presented a general discussion regarding to whom the results should be attributed. This issue was especially a concern in development cooperation with partner countries whose development goals were not compatible with Swedish development objectives (Swedish Government, 1978). However, the challenge of non-compatible development goals is not addressed in SIDA's 1985 guidelines where focus is on Swedish development objectives (SIDA, 1985).

During the 1980s, international development cooperation was heavily influenced by debt crises and neoliberal approaches to development, which led to a donor-driven development cooperation (de Vylder, 2002). Although this donor-driven development cooperation was not manifested in Swedish policy and manuals on development cooperation, expert informants stressed that Swedish development priorities, rather than the development partners' priorities, were in focus during the 1980s (e.g. SEI2, 12/11/2012). In 1988, SIDA carried out an investigation about the roles that different actors within Swedish development cooperation should have. The intention with the investigation was to clarify what responsibility different actors within Swedish development cooperation had in order to make the development cooperation more effective and efficient. The investigation emphasised the importance of strengthening partner countries' participation and role in development interventions (Mothander, 1988), and it also spurred a renewed interest for partner country ownership in Swedish development cooperation (e.g. Wohlgemuth, 1994).

5.2.3. The 1990s: results based management, accountability and an increased focus on planning

Brief background and definitions of results – why report on results

Following the strong focus on reforms of economic structures in the 1980s, the early 1990s brought a shift of focus towards politics and social issues. As in other donor countries, institutionalism and policy dialogue became

central issues in Swedish development cooperation. Even though Swedish development cooperation had always emphasised partner country ownership in its development cooperation, this emphasis became even more accentuated in the early 1990s (J. Carlsson, 1998; Wohlgemuth, 1994). As a consequence, a greater share of Swedish development assistance was disbursed as sector support (SEI2, 12/11/2012).

In 1993, the Swedish Government adopted the Government Bill “concerning management and cooperation in Swedish development assistance” (Swedish Government, 1993), which introduced a model for RBM in Swedish development cooperation. The objective of the new bill was to make Swedish development assistance more effective by clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different development actors (Swedish Government, 1993, p. 3).³² The introduction of an RBM approach aimed to strengthen the focus on Swedish development objectives and goals in all forms of Swedish development, as well as in the management development cooperation (Swedish Government, 1993). Even though the focus on Swedish development objectives was strong, the issues of ownership and participation also received attention. One of Sida’s manuals stated that “Sida staff is obliged to, in relation with the cooperating partners, find a practical and attainable balance between encouraging ownership and practice control” (Sida, 1999, pp. 75–76).

The definition of M&E also changed slightly in the mid-1990s. Control was given less emphasis, whereas results and values in general received more focus. Evaluations were described as “systematic assessments of projects and programs, strategies and methods and their results and effects” (Lewin & SIDA, 1994, p. 5), and considered an activity that measured the value and results of development programmes supported by Sweden. Monitoring, on the other hand, was described as the continuous reporting of how resources were spent and how activities progressed during the implementation of an intervention (Lewin & SIDA, 1994). In the end of the 1990s, the evaluation concept was given a somewhat new definition, where evaluations should be carried out as “systematic ex-post evaluation of the design, implementation and the results of an intervention” (Sida, 1999, p. 83). It was thereby stressed that an evaluation should be carried out once an intervention was finalised, and not while it was being implemented. As in previous SIDA manuals and guidelines, evaluations should include a deeper and broader analysis of the activities. There was also a renewed and intensified emphasis on the relations between activities and the

³² In the early 1990s, the Swedish Government requested all Government Offices to adopt or reinforce an RBM approach in their management structures (Swedish Government, 1989), which was also reflected in Swedish development cooperation (Swedish Government, 1993).

effects of an intervention, which should also include long-term effects and contextual aspects (Sida, 1999). This emphasis revived the recognition of the role of M&E in planning processes. To put it differently, the direction, the size of the contribution, and the allocation of resources should be based on experiences from earlier development cooperation. It was further recognised that the aid effectiveness could increase if the development objectives were clearly defined and if the results and performance requirements were taken into account when the development intervention was formulated (Swedish Government, 1993).

Evaluations were ascribed three major purposes: 1) to improve development strategies, projects, and programmes; 2) to increase knowledge about development mechanisms and the effectiveness of strategies; and 3) to report the results of Swedish development assistance (to Swedish Government offices and to the general public in Sweden) (Lewin & SIDA, 1994). The motives for carrying out evaluations, as stated in the late 1990s, were to improve the quality of development cooperation and serve as instruments in the administration of projects towards the attainment of established goals and objectives (in line with RBM). Accountability was highlighted for the first time as an important aspect in M&E exercises (Sida, 1999, p. 4).

Reporting results: what to report and how

RBM influenced all stages of development cooperation in the 1990s, from the planning stage to the finalisation of interventions (SIDA, 1990). Goal hierarchies with specified development objectives, sector objectives, inputs, activities, and outputs, including checklists for baseline studies, should be established before an intervention was commenced. One risk identified by means of evaluations had to do with their application. Instead of serving as a means to assess the real problem, evaluations could be misused backing up and legitimising decisions previously taken (that is to say, evaluations could be misused in order to prove that the right thing was done (Lewin & SIDA, 1994).

Results and ownership

In the early 1990s, SIDA's guidelines stated that monitoring should be adapted to the recipient country's rules and routines for reporting as much as possible. In addition, the evaluations should concern a project's or programmes long-term effects on development. Therefore, it would be suitable to evaluate the interventions several years after they had been implemented (SIDA, 1990). The evaluation unit at Sida, i.e. the Unit for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME), was transformed in the 1990s: instead of conducting many smaller evaluations, the unit should conduct fewer and more comprehensive evaluations.

According to informants, the PME was a strong unit at Sida at the time, and Sweden was also considered a prominent actor within M&E of international development cooperation (SEI2, 12/11/2012).

As the objectives and motives with the M&E changed in the mid-1990s, the roles of partner countries roles in monitoring exercises were given less attention compared to any of the previous documents. In the 1970s, development partners were considered to have the main responsibility for M&E (in the 1970s), but now SIDA stated that in each evaluation it “aims to include at least one evaluator from the recipient country” (Lewin & SIDA, 1994, p. 29). The 1993 Government Bill stated that the objectives of the M&E were twofold; firstly, development assistance should be spent in countries and sectors where the development effect was as great as possible; secondly, costs for administration should be minimised. The government also emphasised the importance of reporting development results with the establishment of a committee for analysis and evaluation of Swedish development cooperation that should contribute to more effective cooperation (Swedish Government, 1993). Towards the end of the 1990s, Sida’s responsibility for control was specified in “Sida at Work” (Sida, 1999), which stated that Sida was responsible for assuring Swedish state authorities and the general public that Swedish development assistance was spent in a satisfactory way, which implied that results should be reported in relation to Swedish development interventions. Sida was in charge of monitoring Swedish development assistance and making sure that it was spent in an effective and efficient way (Sida, 1999).

5.2.4. The years 2000 to 2010: stronger focus on results, aid effectiveness and accountability

Brief background and definitions of results – why report on results?

The Government Bill *Shared Responsibility: Sweden’s Policy for Global Development* (the PGD), adopted in 2003, has dominated Swedish development cooperation in the 2000s. More than any previous Government Bill, the PGD stressed the importance of results and effectiveness, including increased transparency and accountability in international development cooperation. With the PGD, the Swedish Parliament declared that Sweden had an increased responsibility to show the results of its development cooperation, especially when it came to the actual effects of development assistance on poverty in poor countries. With the PGD, the interest for RBM intensified, which was also in line with international trends following the adoption of the Millennium Declaration (Swedish Government, 2003). In the 2000s, economic development at macro level became a major concern in international and Swedish development

cooperation once again. This focus has arguably led to evaluation reports less concerned with causality and attribution to specific interventions due to the nature of the required analyses, i.e. it was difficult to trace causality and to attribute achievements made on macro-economic level to specific interventions. The increased interest in results in Swedish development cooperation that arose a couple of years into the new millennium, according to one informant, was a consequence of the neglect of results in the early 2000s (SEI1, 27/11/2012)., Sweden continued to be in the forefront as regards evaluations of development cooperation throughout the 2000s, and the country also became one of the first donors who increased their focus on results in line with what came to be known as the results agenda (Vähämäki, 2015).

There were no major changes as regards the definition of results in the early 2000s: results continued to be associated with M&E activities. The evaluation concept is somewhat broadened, and it includes the process of determining the merit, worth, and value of a development intervention (Molund, Schill, & Sida, 2007). Sida's evaluations should be based on five criteria for evaluating development assistance, defined by the OECD/DAC (2002a): effectiveness, impact, relevance, sustainability, and efficiency of development interventions (Molund et al., 2007). Sida should monitor and evaluate its development cooperation for two main reasons: learning and accountability. Accountability was described as the relationship between two parties, in which one party has delegated a task to the other party. The latter was obliged to report to the former about the implementation and the results of the task (Molund et al., 2007; Sida, 2005).

Reporting results: what and how to report

Results should be sought either at output, outcome, or impact levels, or in relation to processes, and Sida should carry out two main types of evaluations: process and impact evaluations (Molund et al., 2007; Sida, 2005). The 2005 manual states that Sida did not have any interest in reporting activities (Sida, 2005). In Sida's manuals and guidelines, it was recognized that Sida needed to develop its methods for measuring outcome and impact results, as well as refining the methods for baseline analyses and improving monitoring mechanisms for the identification of measurable and relevant performance indicators (Molund et al., 2007). The PGD suggested that an independent agency for development evaluation should be created in addition to Sida's in-house evaluation unit (Swedish Government, 2003). The Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV) was established in 2006 with that purpose. However, the agency was closed down in 2012 after being alleged for insufficient quality and production of evaluations (e.g. Statskontoret, 2012). In order to find out more about

what results Swedish development cooperation had contributed to, a number of thematic results reports were published by the government between 2008 and 2012. These reports addressed different themes in Swedish development cooperation such as democracy and human rights; environment and climate change; and gender equality. In addition, annual results reports were presented in the Budget Bills (Swedish Government, 2014a).

The Swedish Government and Sida adopted a great number of policies and guidelines between 2000 and 2010, with a wide range of goals and strategies that stated how Swedish development cooperation should be carried out. According to OECD/DAC, this led to “a complex array of policies and themes” (OECD/DAC, 2009, p. 25), and Sweden was criticized for being engaged in too many partner countries and too many sectors, an engagement that impeded the M&E of Swedish development assistance (OECD/DAC, 2005b). As a response, the Swedish Government adopted a new policy structure for its development cooperation in 2009-2010, replacing old policies and strategies with nine thematic policies (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2008). In addition, a process was initiated in 2007 to reduce the number of Swedish partner countries from 125 to 30, and in these countries Sweden should not be involved in more than three sectors (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2007).

Results and ownership

The PGD emphasised the importance of common values, i.e. values shared by Sweden and the partner country. Sweden should only cooperate with partner countries whose governments aimed to promote sustainable poverty reduction and increase democracy and human rights (Swedish Government, 2003). A Sida document also explains that “development intervention’s objectives and intended results shall contribute towards the achievement of strategy objectives, or equivalent, adopted by the Swedish Government” (Sida, 2005, p. 5).

Development was described as a combination of complex processes, which makes it difficult to measure an individual donor’s contribution to these processes. However, the PGD deemed it possible to measure the total effect of all contributions and interventions in a specific country without attributing it to a specific donor. The PGD did not mention explicitly that partner countries should participate in the M&E of development cooperation, although it recognized that partner countries needed to improve their capacity for analysis, evaluation, auditing, and RBM (Swedish Government, 2003). After Sweden adopted the Paris Declaration in 2005, partner countries’ participation in M&E processes was once again brought to the fore. Sida should work to strengthen partner countries RBM systems and use their assessment frameworks for

monitoring whenever it was possible (Sida, 2005). Combining ownership with results requirements was considered a challenge in Sida's guidelines. If Sweden's development cooperation should depart from partner countries' M&E activities, a key issue was whether or not the recipient government should be accountable to its own citizens. Besides, in order to achieve real partnership in evaluation processes, partner countries needed to strengthen their capacities for M&E and create political and administrative cultures conducive to M&E activities. Donors, on the other hand, must support these efforts and seek to reform existing practices so that they could serve the interest of their partners in a more satisfactory way (Molund et al., 2007).

5.2.5. The 2010s: a brief note

The demand for results has intensified in the 2010s and the Swedish Government's aim has been to create a 'results culture' by the means of increasing its results requirements (Swedish Government, 2012a, p. 20). In the 2013 Budget Bill, the Swedish Government provided an explicit definition of 'results'. The Budget Bill stated that results refer to both performances in, and effects of, Swedish development assistance: performances include both direct services and products financed by the development assistance, while effects refer to short and long-term changes that have taken place as a result of specific contributions (and performances). The government also recognised the challenge of measuring qualitative results of development cooperation, and pointed out that it can take time before evidence of results can be captured. The main motives for the increased focus on results were to inform decision makers about the direction of the future development cooperation and the distribution of development assistance, as well as to inform citizens in Sweden and in the partner countries about the results of development cooperation (Swedish Government, 2012a). Sida continues to emphasise the importance of M&E. The 2012 manual defined monitoring as a continuous collection of data on specified indicators with the aim of providing stakeholders with indications of progress and achievement of objectives. Evaluations, on the other hand, were referred to as more systematic and objective assessments of a development intervention (Sida, 2012b).

In 2011 and 2012, the Swedish Agency for Public Management published two reports concerning results reporting in Swedish development cooperation. Both reports strongly criticise the management and administration of the results agenda, among other things with reference to a complex results management system that lacks a clear goal hierarchy. The reports also pointed out that the great number of guiding documents, makes it difficult to interpret the government's intentions and ambitions (Statskontoret, 2011). The Swedish Agency for

Public Management heavily criticised SADEV's effectiveness and management (Statskontoret, 2012), and the agency was closed down in December 2012. SADEV has been partly replaced by an *Expert Group for Aid Studies* (EBA) (Expert Group for Aid Studies, 2016a).

5.3. Conceptualisation of results amongst actors within Swedish development cooperation

5.3.1. Introduction

As described previously, the findings presented in this section are based on interviews with Swedish stakeholders. The interviews were carried out mainly with staff of the Swedish MFA and Sida, but also with representatives of Swedish INGOs. The first set of interviews was conducted in November and December 2012; the second, from April to September 2015. The main goal of conducting interviews in two periods was to capture whether, and of so how, stakeholders had changed their conceptualisation of results, given that Swedish development cooperation was reformed during this period and that it usually takes time for a new issue, such as the results agenda, to become institutionalised. The results debate was rather intense in 2012; the government and the MFA stressed the importance of an increased focus on results, while implementing partners claimed that the focus on results was already strong and did not need to be reinforced on the development agenda. This disagreement led to strained relations between the MFA/government, and Sida. The results debate and the consequences of the different approaches to results dominated the interviews carried out in 2012. When the second round of interviews was conducted, the situation had changed significantly. In 2013, the Minister for development cooperation, Gunilla Carlsson, resigned (see Parliamentary Committee on the Constitution, 2013, 2014), and Hillevi Engström took her place. After the elections in 2014, a new Swedish Government was elected and the previous central-right Government gave way to a government formed by the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party. Although the focus on results has remained in Swedish development cooperation since then, the change of ministers and the later change of governments have led to a more relaxed approach to results and transparency, as well as to improved relations between the MFA and Sida (SS6, 21/05/2015; SS9, 05/05/2015; SS10, 22/04/2015). In 2015, the results agenda had become more institutionalised, and the discussions about it were not as lively as they had been three years earlier.

5.3.2. *The demand for results in Swedish development cooperation in the 2010s*

Results requirements in Swedish development cooperation

All informants representing Swedish stakeholders stressed the importance of reporting results for improved development effectiveness and increased transparency. However, different actors within Swedish development cooperation had different understandings of how, and what kind of results, had been reported before the results agenda was introduced in Swedish development cooperation in the early 2000s. Informants representing Sida and Swedish INGOs stressed that the demand for results was not new; reporting results by means of M&E activities was and had always been a vital aspect of Swedish development cooperation. The interpretation of the government's results requirements was not that the focus on results had increased or changed; rather, the change concerned how and what kind of results should be reported by Sida to the MFA and the government (the MFA and the Government are referred to hereafter as *the Government*). According to Minister Carlsson, the results agenda should lead to a reform of Swedish development cooperation: results requirements should guide everything in which Sida and other stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation were engaged in (G. Carlsson & Government Offices, 2012). In a speech held in January 2012, Minister Carlsson stated the following:

[R]esults should be taken seriously and the discussion about aid should concern the issues it actually concerns: how can we in fact help poor people in lifting themselves out of poverty? It is a shame for all of us who work within the Swedish development industry to have engaged in this project over the past 50 years WITHOUT placing results in focus. (G. Carlsson & Government Offices, 2012, p. 47, capital letters in original)³³

The government's³⁴ management of Swedish international development cooperation was criticised by Sida staff members and by representatives from Swedish INGOs. For instance, at Sida members of staff felt misunderstood and disregarded and excluded by the Government and by Minister Carlsson. Furthermore, Sida informants argued that they had been reporting results and that they had always worked in the best interest of poor men and women in partner countries (SS1, 21/11/2012; SS2, 28/11/2012; SS3, 20/11/2012; SS5, 26/11/2012).

³³ The original Swedish text is: "resultat ska tas på allvar och att biståndsdiskussionen ska handla om det som den faktiskt ska handla om: hur hjälper vi, på riktigt, fattiga människor att lyfta sig ur fattigdom? Det är en skam för alla oss som jobbar i den svenska biståndsindustrin att vi har sysslat med detta i 50 år UTAN att sätta resultat i fokus" (G. Carlsson & Government Offices, 2012, p. 47).

³⁴ The central-right wing government in power between 2006 and 2014.

The general impression that Sida informants had about the Government's, and especially Minister Carlsson's demand for the report of results was that this demand was an indication of their lack of confidence in Sida's work (SS1, 21/11/2012; SS2, 28/11/2012; SS3, 20/11/2012; SS5, 26/11/2012). In addition, there was a certain resistance to change how Swedish development cooperation was carried out, as Sida staff feared that these changes might have a negative effect on the relations with development partners, relations which had taken decades for Sida to establish. As a whole, informants at Sida were not positive to the reforms the Minister and the Government had introduced. One of the main arguments informants at Sida brought forward against these reforms was that the Minister and the Government did not fully grasp the complex context in which development cooperation takes place. Informants referred to the incapacity of understanding the challenges of carrying out M&E exercises. Besides, they also pointed out that good relations between donors and recipients of aid were crucial to pursue effective development cooperation. One expert informant explained as follows:

There is a general idea at the MFA that the old development cooperation was bad and that the whole Swedish development cooperation must be reformed. Everything must be renewed! However, this is done without proper support at Sida and without considering the complex context in which development cooperation exists. No lessons are learnt, and now the same mistakes of the 1960s are made again: Swedish actors depart from Swedish development objectives, rather than the objectives of partner countries. This results in a form of development cooperation in which the Swedish private sector and Swedish civil society organisations have too much influence on how development cooperation is conducted. This is not in line with the Paris Declaration and this development cooperation is not effective. (SEI4, 28/11/2012)

The Government's increased demand for results reporting and its alleged ignorance of previously reported results, was thus claimed to challenge the future of Swedish development cooperation. In addition, the increased demand for development results required more efforts and resources, for M&E and other results-related activities. As a consequence, fewer resources could be invested in the implementation of development cooperation.

The origins of the increased demand for results

Even though Sida informants identified the Swedish Government, the MFA, and Minister Carlsson as the actors behind the increased demand for reporting development results, the origin of this demand was argued to have multiple causes. Some of these are presented below:

Global trends - neoliberal ideologies: Informants from the Government, Sida, and Swedish INGOs commonly ascribed the origins of the results agenda to

the neoliberal ideologies that have dominated much of Swedish and world politics during the 2000s. Neoliberal approaches to development was argued to be inspired by ideas derived from industrial and corporate sectors, where reporting results is considered crucial to maximise effectiveness and efficiency. Informants also claimed that the results agenda was a result of NPM approaches that the Government of Sweden (GoS) had adopted. The financial crisis in 2008 was argued to have increased the interest amongst taxpayers and politicians in the expenditure and investment of public funding. During the 2000s, there has been a general trend in Swedish politics to increase the focus on results, and M&E have become central aspects of Swedish public administration (e.g. Sundström, 2006). A number of Swedish Government agencies were also established in the 2000s, with the sole purpose of analysing or evaluating the results of government policies.³⁵

International agreements on development cooperation: The results agenda and the increased demand for results were presented as part of international agreements, especially of the MDGs, and the agreement reached in Busan (e.g. Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, 2012; Eyben & Savage, 2013; Mawdsley et al., 2014). Sweden is often considered a swift donor in implementing international agreements (e.g. CGD, 2011; DAC, 2000, p. 13), which also seems to apply to the implementation of the results agenda (e.g. Shutt, 2016).

Change of government in Sweden: A new government was formed after the general election in 2006. The previous Social Democratic led government that had been in power for twelve years was replaced by a central-right wing government. Informants at Sida have argued that this central-right wing government was more results-oriented than its predecessor.³⁶ As mentioned previously, a general trend to increase the M&E in governmental institutions has prevailed in Sweden. Therefore, informants argued that there would have been a strong demand for results even with a left wing Government in office, although this demand might not have been as strong as under the years with the central-right wing Government (2006 to 2014) and as with Gunilla Carlsson as the Minister for International Development Cooperation (2006-2013).

³⁵ Examples of such agencies are the Swedish Agency for Health and Care Service Analysis, the Institute of Labor Market and Education Policy, and the Swedish Council on Health Technology Assessment.

³⁶ N.B. This central-right wing government remained in power between 2006 and 2014. Since 2014, the Swedish Government is formed by a coalition of Social Democrats and representatives from the Green Party. The information for this section was collected in 2012, before the change of government.

Gunilla Carlsson, Minister for Development Cooperation from 2006 to 2013: several informants argued that the Minister for Development Cooperation was one of the reasons why the results agenda has had a major impact on Swedish development cooperation. Minister Carlsson, a former auditor, repeatedly stressed the importance of results and orderliness, in which responsibility, transparency, and accountability were key concepts. Informants also referred to a radio interview with Minister Carlsson in which she stated that

Over the past 50 years Swedish development actors have allowed development cooperation to spread, in an uncontrollable manner, to areas beyond its concern. We have not had a tradition of managing development cooperation and we have not ensured that it really goes where we want it to go, and that it does what we want it to do /.../ We have to get away from all talk, all goodwill, all dialogue, and instead we have to start talking about what is happening in the partner countries. How can we contribute on the ground, in the best way? This realisation has finally begun to sink in, and it has taken us so long to realise it because there has not been a demand to look at the results-oriented work within development cooperation /.../ [a results-oriented work would imply] a simplified, obviously improved way to present results and to give feedback and say what we have done and thereby be able to require accountability, from me as well as from the countries we cooperate with. (Radio interview with Gunilla Carlsson Carlsson, in Sveriges Radio P1, 2012)³⁷

The above-mentioned trends and actors have contributed to the increased demand for results in different ways. One informant described the origin of the increased demand for results as follows:

There is an international trend following the Paris Declaration and Accra to increase the demand for results, but there is also a national trend in Sweden to increase monitoring and evaluation. The demand for results would have increased no matter who had been the minister of development cooperation, but without Gunilla Carlsson the results debate would not have been so intense. (SS2, 28/11/2012)

³⁷ The original Swedish transcription is: "Vi har under 50 års tid i Sverige låtit biståndet svälla över alla dess bredder. Vi har inte haft vana av att styra upp, av att kräva att se till att det här verkligen går till det vi vill och det vi tror att det ska kunna göra /.../ vi måste börja komma bort från allt prat, all välvilja, alla dialoger, och istället börja tala om vad sker ute i samarbetsländerna. Hur bidrar vi på bästa sätt på marken? Och det har nu, äntligen börjat sätta sig för att det har inte funnits någon efterfrågan på att titta just på en resultatarbete i biståndet /.../ [ett förbättrat resultatarbete skulle innebära ett] enklare, tydligare bättre sätt att kunna både prestera resultat kunna återkoppla och berätta om vad vi har gjort och också se till att vi därmed ska kunna utkräva ansvar både av mig som ansvarig i Sverige men också av de länder som vi samarbetar tillsammans med." (Sveriges Radio P1, 2012)

5.3.3. Why report on results: motives and arguments

The Swedish Government's motives and arguments

Informants called attention to the unique position that international development cooperation holds in public administration: unlike other political sectors, the money devoted to development cooperation is invested in foreign countries. Besides, in the Swedish case, development cooperation is not directly attached to Swedish political or economic interests. Informants argued that the unique position of international development cooperation was one reason that explain why development cooperation was under greater scrutiny than many other policy areas. In addition, development cooperation is often carried out in contexts where risks are high and environments are unstable, which makes monitoring and evaluation more relevant, but also more challenging (GoS1, 22/11/2012; SEI2, 12/11/2012; SEI9, 22/04/2015; SS7 21/05/2015). According to Sida staff members, the Government and Minister Carlsson communicated that Sida and other development actors should be able to account for every crown paid by Swedish taxpayers to international development cooperation (SEI1, 27/11/2012; SS5, 26/11/2012). According to a Government informant, however, this description does not correspond with the results requirements enforced by the Government or by Minister Carlsson, Rather, the Government communicated that Sida should focus on reporting Swedish contribution to development results without requiring results that were possible to attribute to Swedish development interventions (GoS5, 30/09/2015).

The main argument for the increased accountability requirements was that the relatively strong commitment to international development cooperation amongst Swedish taxpayers would only be maintained if it could be proven that Swedish development cooperation had led (and still leads) to an improved situation for poor men and women in partner countries (SEI1, 27/11/2012; SS5, 26/11/2012). Another motive, presented by informants from the Government was learning: results should contribute to increased knowledge about what works and what does not work within Swedish development cooperation. Efficiency was also considered an important aspect of the increased results requirements (GoS3, 21/05/2015).

Sida's interpretation of the Government's intentions

In 2012, all Sida and Swedish INGO informants mentioned challenges in how to understand the Government's increased results requirements and how to translate them into practice. Informants commented on the differences between what was written in the Government policies on development cooperation

and what was communicated orally by the Government and the Minister for Development Cooperation.

The guidelines that specifies how Sida should report results are not coherent with the possibilities that they have for reporting results /.../ There is a difference in rhetoric; they [politicians and MFA staff members] do not always say what they mean... or they do not know what they mean: impact is sometimes confused with output /.../ In addition, if there was not so much focus on impact, it would be possible to show more results, and the general public in Sweden would probably be happy and satisfied with that. (SEI1, 27/11/2012)

The inconsistencies in instructions passed on by the Government entailed that one of the key challenges was to interpret what kind of results the Government required. One expert informant said: “They [the Government] say they require impact results, but sometimes they want output results” (SEI6, 22/11/2012). There were also differences in relation to how Sida staff members on the one hand, and MFA staff and Minister Carlsson on the other, defined results and understood how the results agenda should and could be implemented (SEI1, 27/11/2012; SEI2, 12/11/2012). Sida informants explained these differences with lack of expertise and experience amongst Government staff:

There might not be any differences in how different actors look upon results, but there are different perspectives on how you can approach a result. Since the MFA staff in general lack experience of implementing development cooperation, Sida is given immature instructions that are not always feasible to implement. (SEI6, 22/11/2012)

In 2015, Sida informants described the communication between the Government and Sida as clearer. It had been clarified, for example, that Sida staff should relate to the written communication sent by the Government, and not to information communicated orally by Ministers or MFA staff (SS7, 21/05/2015; SS8, 21/05/2015). Both in 2012 and in 2015, the results requirements were seen mainly as a means for the Government to increase its control over Sida, rather than as an instrument for improving Swedish development cooperation. Consequently, results were not considered, to the extent possible, as a basis for decisions on how to increase the effectiveness of future Swedish development cooperation. Instead, according to Sida informants, the Government used results to report to the media and the general public what had been achieved with Swedish taxpayers’ money (SS1, 21/11/2012; SS3, 20/11/2012). Minister Carlsson was frequently mentioned in discussions on results, and she was considered the main proponent (and sometimes the only proponent) of the results agenda. The expression “Gunilla Carlsson’s obsession with results” was frequently used in the interviews. Minister Carlsson was also criticised for not possessing enough knowledge and experience of international development

cooperation. The lack of confidence in the Minister's competence contributed to the communication problems between the Government and Sida. According to Sida informants, Sida and the Government did not share the same understanding of what results were and how they could be measured, which led to further misunderstandings related to the fulfilment of new results requirements (SEI1, 27/11/2012; SEI2, 12/11/2012; SEI9, 22/04/2015; SS1, 21/11/2012; SS3, 20/11/2012; SS8, 21/05/2015).

Sida's interpretation of the Government's policies was that results should be reported on outcome or impact levels. An increased interest in qualitative results was also detected, particularly in development cooperation within democracy and human rights. These were requirements that Sida informants considered valid and possible to fulfil. However, the message from Minister Carlsson was that Sida should focus on quantitative results that should be reported within a short-term perspective and possible to attribute to Swedish development interventions. In other words, there was an increased requirement for results that could be captured primarily at output level (SEI2, 12/11/2012; SS7, 21/05/2015).

There are ambivalences in what kind of results the MFA and the Minister want: the Government has reduced their demands on results at impact level. Instead, they want to see the results that can be reached within the strategy period, which at most is outcome result. But, they demand output results in reports, which is closely related with attribution, and are attractive to communicate, to the taxpayers. Sida, on the other hand, argues that Swedish taxpayers understand that Sweden has contributed to the results presented – the results do not have to be attributed to a specific Swedish intervention. (SEI2, 12/11/2012)

Sida informants did not seem to have a clear idea about how and to what extent results should be attributed to specific interventions. Informants from the Government claimed that they did not require attribution in terms of that Sida had to prove that Swedish interventions had *led* to changes in a partner country. Instead, Sida was required to prove that Swedish development assistance had *contributed* to changes (GoS3, 21/05/2015; GoS5, 30/09/2015). The difference between attribution and contribution was, however, not clear to Sida informants (SEI2, 12/11/2012; SS7, 21/05/2015). There was a feeling of resignation amongst Sida informants, especially in 2012. Sida staff considered it as an impossible task to report the results the Government and the Minister requested, since it was not clear what had been requested.

SADEV and UTV will never be able to deliver what the Government wants. It is just a political request, they want to show how Swedish money is spent. There is no method at present that can deliver the results the Government requests. (SEI2, 12/11/2012)

In 2012, Sida informants perceived that the management at Sida had taken the increased demand for results too literally; there was in fact more freedom for the staff to make their own interpretation of the Government's request than the management had assumed. Consequently it was argued that "the reporting results has become a self-imposed difficulty" (SEI6, 22/11/2012). In addition, informants pointed out that instead of dealing with the alleged unclear instructions from the MFA, Sida in Stockholm was argued to just pass on the instructions to the Sida field offices in partner countries, or to the implementing partners. Therefore, the further away one is from the headquarters in the implementation chain, the more one has to deal with the increased focus on results (SEI6, 22/11/2012; SS1, 21/11/2012). In 2015, this approach to results requirements seems to have changed. By then, several Sida informants considered Sida staff members rather free to interpret instructions from the Government. Sida staff had realised that even though the Government defined what results they expected from Swedish development cooperation, staff at Sida had the mandate and responsibility to decide how these results should be achieved (SS8, 21/05/2015; SS12, 21/05/2015).

Sida's motives for increasing its demand for results

Sida informants referred to two main motives for increasing the demand for results: 1) to improve development cooperation by learning from previous results, and 2) to use the increased demand for results as a management tool. The assumption was that when results requirements increase, responsibilities would be more clearly divided between actors, which would in turn increase the likelihood that development interventions were implemented as planned. Increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of Swedish development cooperation seemed to be the main motives for increasing the focus on results amongst Sida informants. Therefore, the main motives presented by Sida informants for increasing the focus on results were to improve the quality of Swedish development cooperation and to increase knowledge about the results of development cooperation by learning from previous cooperation what contributes to development and what does not. Combining learning with the Government's results requirements was, however, a difficult task:

Neither Gunilla Carlsson nor the MFA is interested in learning, even though they say that they want more effective development cooperation. Sida tries to make the best out of learning and management, but it is very difficult to combine the two. Now the focus is on control and accountability, which have become so out of date in Swedish development cooperation. It is like going back to how it was in the 1970s. (SS2, 28/11/2012)

Another informant argued that it is not possible to combine learning with rigid M&E systems where matrixes and indicators are generic:

The more evaluation systems and matrixes you have to fill in, the more mechanical the reporting systems become. When there were no pre-determined evaluation system, you had to reflect on what indicators could be useful for that particular development intervention. But now, when there are pre-established indicators that you have to report on, the process becomes mechanical and you don't have to reflect on your own. This also means that development cooperation becomes less reflexive and does not take into account context-specific aspects. (GoS2, 22/11/2012)

Sida's perceived possibilities to influence the results agenda

Informants claimed that Sida's possibilities to influence the implementation of Swedish development cooperation diminished with the introduction of the results agenda. Sida informants perceived that there was a lack of interest on the Government's part to invite Sida and other development partners to comment on policies and other documents. One example was given from the development of a new Aid Policy Framework that was intensely debated at the time of the interviews (2012). Informants from Sida and Swedish INGOs argued that the Government had not been transparent about the process that led up to the Aid Policy Framework. Most of the information about the new framework had reached them via political leaks, the media, or other development actors (e.g. SS5, 26/11/2012). Even when Sida and Swedish INGOs were invited to comment on the proposals, their comments, according to the informants, were not adhered to:

Sida provides the Ministry with information, but it is the MFA that makes the decisions and they listen more to other actors, such as the private sector. There are no open channels – no interest – to listen to actors that work with development issues. (SS5, 26/11/2012)

5.3.4. Results requirements in Swedish development cooperation

Sida has always relied on guidelines to implement, monitor, and evaluate its development cooperation. Following these guidelines, however, was possible only to a certain extent. Informants attributed this difficulty to the vagueness with which the requirements for reporting on results were often formulated, which sometimes made these requirements impossible to implement. Instead of stating that Sida staff was *required to* report results (*ska* rapportera, in Swedish), the instructions stated that results *should* be reported (*resultat bör* rapporteras) (SS1, 21/11/2012; SS3, 20/11/2012; SS10 22/04/2015). As one informant put it: “There have always been guidelines on how Swedish development cooperation should be implemented and evaluated, but these have not always been followed often because of lack of leadership and competence [at Sida]” (SS1, 21/11/2012).

In addition, Sida has published its own guidelines on how results should be reported (see Chapter 2), and Sida informants pointed out that there had been a culture of reporting results at Sida. Individual staff members were considered to have the expertise to plan and design development cooperation within their area of responsibility, including how the M&E should be carried out. Therefore, some Sida informants took the Government's increased requirements to report results as a token of their distrust of the expertise at the agency (SEI2, 12/11/2012; SS3, 20/11/2012). Sida informants also considered that they already reported the results the Government required, so the question for many staff members at Sida was "to report on what?" (SS3, 20/11/2012). The Government's results requirements had thus damaged the relations between the Government and Sida; the previous feeling of mutual trust had been replaced by distrust and insecurity amongst Sida's staff. Informants feared that, instead of relying on their own expertise, Sida's staff would simply reported what the Government wanted, i.e. results that were not, on the staff's view, necessarily the most relevant for obtaining the overarching objective of Swedish development (SEI2, 12/11/2012; SS3, 20/11/2012; SEI9, 22/04/2015; SS10 22/04/2015).

What kind of results?

All informants mentioned that even before the results agenda was introduced in Swedish development cooperation, Sida aspired to report on qualitative results at outcome, or even impact, levels. However, it was not clear whether outcomes had indeed been reported (e.g. SS10, 22/04/2015). Government informants explained that there had been a change as regards what kind of results the Government requested from Sida. The informants argued that Sida had previously reported output results, but made assumptions regarding development impact based on these outputs. With the new results requirements, Sida had to report evidence of outcome results (GoS5, 30/09/2015; GoS3, 21/05/2015).

The intention with capturing outcomes was mainly to explore the possible long-term development results of Swedish development cooperation. According to several Sida informants, the new requirements on results were accompanied by demands on results that were visible, quantifiable, and possible to measure within the timeframe set by the Government. In order to meet these requirements, staff at Sida felt pressured to abandon their previous focus on long-term qualitative outcome results and replace it by a more quantitative oriented approach. Sida informants argued that these results were possible to measure at output level mainly if they were to be reported within the timeframe set by the Government. However, the Government at the same time required evidence on outcomes and impacts of Swedish development efforts. How to meet the Government's

requirements, i.e. to find development approaches and administrative systems that could combine the different aspects of results required by the Government, were things that Sida struggled with in 2012. Much of Sida's time and resources were invested in interpreting the Government's instructions and introducing the administration systems suitable to meet these instructions. In addition, staff at Sida had to find their position in this new structure. One informant describes it as follows;

Changes of attitudes take time, and they have to take time. There are contradictions between what is communicated in documents and what is orally requested, and it is difficult for agencies to interpret what the Government wants. Maybe a change of attitude will occur after some time and the directives will then match the requests. (SEI2, 12/11/2012)

Sida and expert informants argued that the nature of the requested results influenced how and what results were reported, as well as what kind of development interventions Sida choose to engage in. If, for instance, the Government asked for quantifiable short-term results that were possible to attribute to Swedish development interventions, Sida would be forced to finance projects that delivered this particular kind of results. There was a risk, however, that such interventions would take place at the expense of more long-term development efforts in which results were considered to be more difficult to measure and to attribute to a specific intervention (e.g. SEI2, 12/11/2012; SS2, 28/11/2012):

Sida staff are concerned that interventions that are not so complex, and in which the results are easier to measure will be favoured when the demand for results increase. For example, it is more difficult to see results in interventions that promote democracy than in interventions that promote health. Therefore, health interventions be might favoured, and more complex interventions might lose priority. (SS2, 28/11/2012)

How to report on results?

Over the years, measures have been taken at Sida to implement an RBM system, and a digital intervention system has been launched, where results should be reported at different levels. One of the challenges identified by Sida informants in relation to reporting results had to do with the agency's role in development cooperation. Development partners implemented Swedish development cooperation and should, thus, report the results of Swedish development interventions. Although Sida had adopted an RBM approach, many of Sida's partner organisations had not adopted this approach; they were, therefore, requested to write reports that focused on the activities based on

Logic Framework Approaches (LFA)³⁸ (SEI2, 12/11/2012; SEI6, 22/11/2012; SS5, 26/11/2012). One informant described it as “the LFA is still orthodoxly used at project level and it has been so since the 1990s” (SS5, 26/11/2012). When development partners had not adopted an RBM approach, it was more difficult for Sida to demand specific kind of results, especially as Sida should respect and encourage development partners’ ownership over their own agendas: “[Development partners] do not always have the required systems to report the results required by the donors, which makes it difficult for Sida to report results” (SEI6, 22/11/2012).

Several informants noted that there was a deficiency in relation to how Sida communicated development results to the Government and to Swedish taxpayers. Although Sida had written and published a substantial number of M&E reports, these reports had seldom, or not sufficiently, been communicated to the Government or to Swedish taxpayers. Sida and expert informants underscored the importance of the agency’s role in sharing information about achieved results (SEI1, 27/11/2012; SS1, 21/11/2012; SEI9, 22/04/2015). Sida could, for instance, provide the Government and the Minister for Development Cooperation with information (requested or not) about issues that the agency considered of importance, Sida could demonstrate what the agency was doing and had accomplished (SS5, 26/11/2012). By sharing information, Sida could also inform the Government about what they believed the Government should have prioritized. One informant formulated this as:

many reports on results have been published [the informant points at piles of evaluation reports on the table] and Sida must show what has been done. Instead of engaging in polemics with the Government, Sida should simply send them all the reports. Give them what they want! (SEI2, 12/11/2012)

The lack of communication between Sida and the Government on development results can be traced to the management tradition within Swedish development cooperation: instead of examining critically what has happened, the focus has been directed to the future and the planning of development cooperation:

Efforts have been made to report effects [of Swedish development cooperation]. Everyone wants to see them, but they are difficult to trace. Traditionally the focus has also been on the planning of interventions, on inputs and activities; and not on tracing the effects. (SS1, 21/11/2012)

³⁸ The LFA focuses on inputs, activities, and outputs of interventions. Previously, the LFA was the main approach for planning development interventions, but it has been replaced by an RBM approach in many recent development interventions (e.g. Eyben et al. 2015).

Whose results?

All Sida informants described that there had been an increased demand for Swedish results and noted that, as consequence of this increased demand, the importance of reporting partner country's results had diminished. The increased interest in results that were possible to attribute to objectives in Swedish policy on development cooperation, was ascribed to the Government. Staff at Sida, in contrast, attached more importance to results that could be related to objectives defined by partner countries or partner organisations (c.f. SEI9, 22/04/2015; SS6, 21/05/2015; SS8, 21/05/2015; SS10, 22/04/2015; SS11, 04/05/2015). Informants stressed that it was of importance that the results requirements should have the objectives and agendas of the partner countries and development partners have as a point of departure. However, they also recognized that this was a challenge and that, in the end, it was usually Swedish approaches to development that defined what results to expect from Swedish development cooperation with a specific country (GoS3, 21/05/2015; GoS 5, 30/09/2015; SEI9, 22/04/2015; SS10, 22/04/2015). According to one Sida informant,

When it comes to ownership, the results strategies are Swedish strategies, but this is not different from before: you give where and what you want to give. The crucial thing, though, is that it is Sweden that still decides which results should be achieved. (SS10, 22/04/2015)

There had also been a gradual shift over time as regards who was considered to represent the beneficiaries, from Governments in partner countries to CSOs and other non-governmental development partners. The main reason given for this shift was the failure of Governments in partner countries to deliver the expected results (GoS3, 21/05/2015; SS11, 04/05/2015).

Informants further commented on that it was of importance that all actors involved in development cooperation (such as partner countries, development partners, the Swedish Government, and Sida) felt ownership, and thus responsibilities, in terms of implementing and committing to development processes, including the results agenda (GoS 5, 30/09/2015; SEI9, 22/04/2015; SS10, 22/04/2015; SS12, 21/05/2015). One way of increasing partner countries' ownership over the results agenda would be to strengthen their systems for M&E (GoS3, 21/05/2015; SS10, 22/04/2015). The capacities development partners' had to report results were described as an obstacle; in other words, since some development partners carried out important development interventions but lacked capacity to report results, these organisations would no longer receive funding from Sweden. Furthermore, organisations that were not very effective

or efficient could receive funding if they succeeded in producing trustworthy results reports (SEI9, 22/04/2015; SS11, 04/05/2015)

A final note on reporting on results in Swedish development cooperation

Although the relations between development actors and the negative effects of the results agenda dominated the interviews with informants from Sida and Swedish INGOs, some positive effects of the results agenda were also mentioned. All informants agreed that it was necessary to focus on results and improve the methods to report them. The main challenge identified by the informants had to do with the way the results agenda had been implemented. One positive aspect about the results agenda was that the Government has become more specific about its intentions with Swedish development cooperation. Objectives, division of labour, and responsibilities between actors had been clarified (e.g. SS2, 28/11/2012).

5.4. Summary and analysis: framing results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation

5.4.1. Framing of results and ownership in Swedish development policies

The historical overview presents part of the development thinking ownership and results concepts have been framed in Swedish development cooperation. How these concepts have been framed historically influenced informants' perceptions of results, both consciously and unconsciously. For instance, staff at Sida frequently made historical references and remarked that the reporting results is not new in Swedish development cooperation. In addition, how the Government's new instructions on reporting on results were discussed – and framed – were discussed in the light of how results previously had been framed. The historical outlook presented in this chapter presents, therefore, part of the context that has shaped the framing of results and ownership. The historical outlook presents an analysis of Swedish policies and guidelines on results and ownership, and it demonstrates that there has always been a demand for results. This demand for results has, however, changed and increased over time, from an exclusive focus on reporting and learning in order to improve the planning of future development cooperation to the inclusion of a number of issues related to control and accountability. Consequently, reporting results and results frameworks have gained a more prominent role in Swedish international development cooperation. According to policy documents from the 1960s, partner countries had greater influence over development cooperation both in general terms and in relation to results. Over the years, this emphasis has been accompanied by a stronger demand for results related to Swedish development

objectives and interventions. Consequently, the demand for results that were possible to attribute to Swedish development objectives has increased. To various extent, Sida has considered the partner countries responsible for carrying out M&E, although their interest and capability to do so have generally been limited. Figure 11 presents an overview of the changes in the framing of results in Swedish policy documents between the 1960s and the 2000s.

Timeline	Why have results been asked for?	Whose results have been asked for?	Who has been measuring results?
1960's – mid 1970s: dependency school, first Swedish policy on development cooperation	Learning for increased aid effectiveness. Reporting to Swedish government and tax payers.	Partner countries (impossible to attribute results to Swedish interventions).	Partner countries – Swedish support to capacity building.
Mid 1970s – 1990: mid 1970s: new Swedish policy, oil crisis, early 1980s debt crisis, SAPs	Control for increased aid efficiency. To increase knowledge about partner countries in Sweden.	Partner countries, but development objectives should be in line with Swedish development goals.	Partner countries – Swedish support to capacity building.
1990 – 2000: SAPs, increased focus on institutionalism	To manage aid interventions and aid agencies.	Focus on partner country ownership, but reporting on Swedish development objectives.	M&E should be adapted to the rules and routines of partner countries.
2000 – today: the PGD, international agreements on aid effectiveness	Accountability to Swedish government authorities.	Encouraging ownership and exercising control. Results should be attributed to Swedish development objectives.	Development partners responsible for M&E, with support from Sweden. Evaluations should be carried out in a spirit of partnership.
Concluding remarks	Increased pursuit of results: increased number of reasons to ask for results.	From emphasis on partner countries to focus on Swedish development results.	Development partners responsible for M&E

Figure 11: An historical overview of the framing of results in Swedish development cooperation.

Source: author's elaboration.

During the 2000s, Swedish development cooperation has been strongly influenced by neoliberal approaches, which is reflected in the stronger demand for accountability and aid efficiency. NPM-approaches have also come to dominate the administration of Swedish development cooperation, with emphasis on accountability. Learning, on the other hand, was given less attention. International agreements on development cooperation, in particular the MDGs and the Paris Declaration, have also influenced the formulation

of Swedish development policies, and informants have frequently referred to these documents.

5.4.2. Framing of results among Swedish development actors

The interviews with Sida staff at their headquarters in Stockholm and with Swedish INGOs revealed confusions and uncertainties in relation to what the Swedish MFA and the Minister for Development Cooperation actually required. The interviews also revealed the lack of mutual trust between those in power (the MFA and the former Minister) and the implementers of development cooperation (in this case, Sida and the Swedish INGOs). Although all Swedish development actors seemed to share the same development objective, i.e. *to create preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression*, they had different understandings on what this goal entailed and how it should be reached. This entailed different ways of framing the results agenda, and these ways are sketched out in figure 12.

	the Government	Sida and Swedish INGOs
<i>Diagnostic framing: Description of the problem</i>	Lack of information about the results of Swedish development cooperation: it is unclear if Swedish development cooperation has led to improved situation for poor men and women in partner countries; lack of transparency and accountability.	Lack of knowledge about what works and why: low quality of the reported results (there is information about Swedish development assistance, but it needs to be improved).
<i>Prognostic framing: Solution to the problem</i>	Improved and increased reporting of results, especially quantitative results that were possible to attribute to Swedish development interventions. Focus on outcomes and impacts (MFA), and on outputs and activities (Minister Carlsson).	Increased and improved reporting on results, but sustained focus on development objectives, rather than development results. Focus on outcome or impact, rather than output results. Contribution is more important than attribution.
<i>Motivational framing: Why is this the best way to solve the problem (stated above)?</i>	Increased accountability towards Swedish taxpayers to maintain a strong support for a high Swedish ODA.	Increased development effectiveness to improve the situation for poor men and women in partner countries.

Figure 12: Swedish development actors' framing of the results agenda

5.4.3. The results agenda and ownership: policy arrangements in Swedish development cooperation

Policy discourse - the views and narratives of the actors involved: All development actors in Sweden agreed on the necessity of M&E. However, the MFA and the Minister of Development Cooperation, as well as Sida and the Swedish INGOs, had different ways of framing the results agenda. In other words, they had different understandings of which problems should be addressed by means of the results agenda, how the results agenda would solve these problems, and how the increased results requirements were motivated. The different ways of framing the problems addressed by the results agenda are sketched out in figure 12.

Sida informants stated that the information provided by the MFA and Minister Carlsson as regards results was not clear and contained inconsistencies. Contradictory messages from Government representatives indicated different ways of framing the results agenda within the MFA. In addition, the focus on partner country ownership had been lost in the discussions on results. For instance, development partners had become more excluded from policy-making processes and from the formulation of development strategies, and ownership was not an issue that the Government considered in relation to the results agenda.

Actors and policy coalitions: A change in the relations between Swedish development actors occurred in the 2000s. In the early 2000s, the relationship between the MFA and Sida was seemingly based on mutual trust and on respect for each other's work. However, the division of work and responsibilities between the two parties was unclear, which the many policies and guidelines with unclear status was an indication of. Towards the end of the 2000s, the Government (i.e. the MFA and Minister Carlsson) made attempts to clarify the terms of this relationship, by clarifying that the MFA made decisions about development policies and overall development agendas, while Sida was responsible for the implementation of Swedish development cooperation. Sida took this new working order, along with the increased demand for results, as evidence of distrust on the Government's part. In addition, Sida staff did not trust that the MFA staff at the MFA had the right competence to set the development agenda. At the time for the interviews in 2012, this new work order was not yet fully established and the policy coalitions, although they had been clarified to a certain extent, were still under negotiation. The rules of the game, in other words, were not yet clear to the involved actors: it was not clear, for instance, how much influence the Minister for Development Cooperation

should or could have in the implementation of development cooperation and the results agenda.

Resource allocation and power relations: From the perspective of Sida and Swedish INGOs, there had been a change in how assets were valued. Before the results agenda was introduced in Swedish development cooperation, assets related to knowledge and expertise were highly esteemed, and these were assets that Sida's staff were considered to possess. During the 2000s, the financial assets have become more highly valued. Since the Government decides over the aid budget, the Government also has the power over financial assets. Part of this change in how assets were valued can be traced to the neoliberal ideologies that have dominated development ideologies and theories during the 2000s.

The different understandings of the purpose of the results agenda created insecurity amongst Sida staff members. One of the major contributing factors to this insecurity was the introduction of results agenda was concomitant with substantial changes in the management of Swedish development cooperation. These changes involved alterations of the power relations between Sida and the MFA. Sida lost some of its former influence in decision-making processes: the Government made it clear that only the MFA had the mandate to write policies. Sida had previously been engaged in writing policies without a formal mandate from the Government (i.e. Government agencies should not make decisions about policies, as this should be done by Government Offices). Furthermore, the introduction of the results agenda implied a change as regards what was valued among staff at Sida. Sida staff members often possessed extensive knowledge about the context in partner countries, which was highly valued previously. Knowledge about how to produce economic reports and the like became gradually more important, and informants have argued that this change stems from the influential positions that economists and controllers have come to occupy at Sida. In 2012, when the first round of interviews was conducted, the Swedish development cooperation was under reformation and the new structure was not completely set. In the autumn of 2012, the allegedly mixed messages conveyed by the Government and the different understandings of results entailed that it was not clear for Sida why, what kind of, and whose results the Swedish Government required. Consequently, it was not clear how Sida and its development partners should pursue Swedish development cooperation.

6. Results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents findings from interviews with stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda. It is based mainly on fieldwork carried out in Uganda between February and May 2014. The chapter begins with a brief description of the Ugandan context and a short historical outline, followed by a general description of Swedish development cooperation and relations with Uganda. This description focuses on those aspects of Swedish development cooperation that play a central part in this study, namely, support to democracy, equality, and human rights, including SRHR. The aim with this description is to provide a background to the Swedish support, and to situate this support in a wider context.

The purpose of the chapter is to explore how different actors within Swedish development cooperation with Uganda are framing results and ownership, and how they perceive that the results agenda has influenced partner country ownership.

6.2. Contextualising Swedish development cooperation with Uganda

6.2.1. Introducing Uganda

Uganda is located on the Equator in Eastern Africa. It shares borders with Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, The Democratic Republic of Congo, and Southern Sudan. Although a large part of Uganda's border is lakeshore, the country is landlocked. The country's geography is dominated by the great plateau of East-central Africa, with mountain ranges in the western and eastern parts of the country. The plateau consists mostly of grassland and tropical forest,

and its climate is tropical. In general, the Ugandan soils are very fertile and suitable for agriculture; the eastern areas, however, are drier and more suitable for cattle herding (Ofcansky, 1996). Around 72% of Uganda's population of 39 million people have their main source of income in agricultural activities, and agricultural products account for around half of Uganda's GNP (FAO, 2015; Utrikespolitiska Institutet, 2016).

The monetary poverty in Uganda has reduced rapidly over the last decade. The proportion of Ugandans that live in absolute poverty has declined from 53% in 2006 to 34.6% in 2013³⁹ (World Bank, 2016c). The economic improvements for many Ugandans are attributed to a general economic growth in the country, but also to public investments in infrastructure and targeted governmental interventions (Government of Uganda & UNDP, 2014; Utrikespolitiska Institutet, 2016). Despite the economic development, other important areas still lag behind. For instance, many Ugandans lack access to sanitation facilities and electricity, the Government's education system is poor, and many Ugandan children suffer from malnutrition (FAO, 2015; World Bank, 2016c). Regardless of the poor education system, the literacy rate is comparatively high: according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the literacy rate amongst Ugandan males is 89.6% and 85.5% amongst females (UNICEF, 2013b). English is the official language and, in 2003, around 2.5 million Ugandans could speak English (Lewis, Simons, & Fennig, 2016). Uganda was severely hit by the HIV/AIDS epidemic during the 1980s and 1990s. Numerous Ugandans died from AIDS, and many children lost one or both parents. The epidemic was successfully battled, among other things by means of a combination of political will and openness. Due to the AIDS epidemic and the high fertility rates, Uganda has one of the youngest and fastest growing populations in the world (Musunguzi et al., 2014; World Bank, 2011). Although Uganda has been successful in fighting HIV, AIDS remains the leading cause of death, along with malaria and viral diseases that cause diarrhoea (WHO, 2015). According to the UNDP, life expectancy at birth was 58.5 years in 2015, which is just below the average of 58.9 years in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP, 2015b).

6.2.2. A brief history of Uganda

Like many other countries in Africa, Uganda consists of a mixture of people from different ethnic groups. When the first Europeans arrived in the mid-19th century in the area that is Uganda today, the Bantu-speaking people in the southern parts of the country had been organised into highly centralised

³⁹ Poverty refers here to living below purchasing poverty parity (PPP) USD 1.90 per day (World Bank, 2016c).

kingdoms for centuries. The northern parts were dominated by Nilotic-speaking people who lived in more scattered societies, usually organised around clans (Mutibwa, 1992; Ofcansky, 1996). Political and territorial conflicts between peoples in the north and south, as well as between kingdoms in the south, were common in pre-colonial Uganda. The British colonisers exploited these conflicts when they began their colonisation in the late 19th century. By employing a divide-and-rule strategy that made the Buganda Kingdom in the southern parts of the country their main collaborators, the British successively took control over the territory that is currently Uganda (Ofcansky, 1996). The British administration of Uganda was more of a British protectorate than a colony: instead of establishing a colonial rule as they did in Uganda's neighbouring countries, the British made the Buganda Kingdom the indirect rulers of Uganda (Mutibwa, 1992; Wesseling, 2014). Only a few British settlers came to Uganda, among other things because they were not successful farmers. Indigenous farmers were more effective in producing cotton, tea, and coffee, which were the protectorate's main export products. In 1901, the British completed their construction of the Uganda Railway, linking Lake Victoria and Mombasa on the Kenyan coast. The railroad enabled farmers to transport their products fast and efficiently to one of the most important ports in Africa. The railway contributed to the high economic growth rates in Uganda during the colonial period. By the time of the independence, Uganda was one of the richest economies in sub-Saharan Africa (Ofcansky, 1996).

Uganda became independent from Great Britain in October 1962. At independence, Uganda had a federal constitution with a president, without political power, as head of state. The king of the Buganda Kingdom, Edward Mutesa II, was the country's first president; Milton Obote, the leader of the political party Ugandan People's Congress (UPC), was its prime minister. In 1966, Obote overthrew the King and declared himself president. Obote consolidated his power during the following year by extending the president's power, introducing a new constitution, and abolishing the Ugandan Kingdoms. Obote also launched "the Move to the Left", a programme aimed to establish a socialist-oriented society (Mutibwa, 1992; Ofcansky, 1996). Obote's first years of power were characterised by violence, and many Ugandans were harassed, tortured, and killed (Mutibwa, 1992).

While Obote was abroad in 1971, the commander of the army, General Idi Amin, carried out a successful coup d'état. Amin promised that general elections should be held within five years after he had seized power. Several countries, among them Great Britain and Israel, welcomed Amin as President, as they considered Obote too socialist-oriented. At first, Amin was also welcomed

by Ugandans, who hoped that the new leader would bring an end to Obote's brutal leadership (Mutibwa, 1992; Ofcansky, 1996). However, these hopes were soon dashed and, within months after ceasing power, Amin had killed thousands of people (Meredith, 2005). In 1972, Amin declared his intents to "Africanise" the Ugandan economy and deported all Ugandans with an Asian origin. The Asians dominated much of the Ugandan trade and industry and, as a consequence of the deportation, Uganda's economy collapsed (Mutibwa, 1992; Ofcansky, 1996). Amin also forced all Israelis to leave the country and declared Uganda an Islamic state. Western countries ceased to provide development assistance, and Amin was supported instead by several Arab states that made large investments in Uganda (Kasozi, 1994; Mutibwa, 1992). It is estimated that 300 000 Ugandans were killed during Amin's rule. In addition, many suffered from the economic decay that followed from misrule and wars. The discontent with Amin increased amongst the general public in Uganda, as well as amongst people loyal to Amin. In an attempt to draw attention away from his own failures, Amin invaded Western Tanzania in 1978. However, Tanzanian troops repelled the attack and Amin's army was defeated in 1979. Amin himself fled first to Libya and then to Saudi Arabia, where he died in 2003 (G. Roberts, 2014).

In 1980, Obote returned to Uganda and seized power once again. Several oppositional guerrilla groups were formed to fight Obote in the early 1980s. The National Resistance Army (NRA) led by the former Minister of defence, Yoweri Museveni, was one of them. The NRA was relatively well organised and its outspoken political mission was to bring development and democracy to Uganda (Ofcansky, 1996; Omara-Otunnu, 1992). However, Obote was not overthrown by the NRA; instead, it was the Ugandan army that staged a coup d'état in 1985 and installed General Tito Okello as the new president. Okello had the presidency for six months before the NRA and Museveni defeated his regime in 1986. The NRA victory in Uganda was rather unusual for Africa; it was the first time that a local guerrilla had successfully overthrown an indigenous government (Kasozi, 1994). Between 1980, when Obote seized power, and 1986, more than 300 000 people were killed and Uganda became one of the poorest countries in the world (Meredith, 2005).

In summary, the years between 1962 and 1986 were characterised by violence, instability, and anarchy. The tragedies that took place during the decades after independence can be traced to the colonial legacy. British imperialists exploited ethnic divisions among Ugandans by employing a divide-and-rule policy that made the Bagandans act as sub-imperialists. Although conflicts between different peoples existed even before Uganda was colonised, the British rulers fuelled

these conflicts among other things by turning the previously non-existing Uganda into a nation-state and forcing different people to live in one country. As a consequence, Uganda was extremely polarised by the time it became independent. Amin and Obote took advantage of this polarisation to maintain their power over the Ugandan territory (e.g. Ofcansky, 1996; Wesseling, 2014).

6.2.3. Recent developments in Uganda: the mid-1990s to 2010s

The years after the NRA and Museveni seized power lots of efforts were devoted to peace building and to the transformation of Uganda into one nation state. Several guerrilla groups, however, fought the new regime. The guerrilla wars intensified in the second half of the 1990s, especially with the actions of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a guerrilla group based in northern Uganda. A peace agreement was only reached in 2007, after the International Criminal Court had issued arrestment warrants for five of the Army's leaders, including their main leader, Joseph Kony. At the time this study was conducted, there were no larger conflicts between guerrilla groups and the Ugandan Army (Utrikespolitiska Institutet, 2016).

Museveni has been in power since 1986, and is one of the longest serving presidents in Africa. One of the first decisions taken by Museveni when he came into power was to forbid all political parties. This measure was reinforced with the constitution adopted in 1995. In 1996, the first presidential elections were held since 1980. Museveni won the elections with 74% of the votes. The Ugandan Parliament adopted yet another constitution in 2005 and introduced a multiparty system that made it possible for Museveni to run for the presidency for a third term. Museveni has been re-elected four times since 1996. Although Museveni has come out as a clear winner of all elections, election frauds have been reported and other candidates have been hindered to stand for elections by different means (c.f. Human Rights Watch, 2016, 2017).

There have been a number of incidences of corruption within the political administration of Uganda since the 2000s (Bukuluki, 2013). In 2011, for instance, Vice President Gilbert Bukenya and Minister for Foreign Affairs Sam Kutesa resigned, together with two other ministers, after allegations of fraud and corruption (BBC, 2011). Incidents such as this one have had consequences for international development cooperation in Uganda. High-level corruption was one of the factors that compelled donors to leave the GBS-cooperation in the early 2010s (Canagarajah & Van Diesen, 2006; Sundberg, Petrucci, & Lovasz, 2015). Corruption is widespread in Uganda; it affects a wide range of sectors and governmental institutions, something that the Government of Uganda (GoU) itself has acknowledged. A number of government reforms

have been launched to fight corruption, and other measures have been taken as well, but their efficacy is doubtful (Martini, 2013).

6.2.4. Uganda and international development cooperation

The formal long-term international development cooperation with Uganda took off after the NRA seized power in 1986. Museveni was very reluctant at first to cooperate with the World Bank and the IMF; these institutions, in his view, had too much power in their negotiations with African countries. However, after the fall of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, and in the absence of alternatives, Museveni and the GoU became one of the “most eloquent supporters” of the World Bank and the IMF (Twaddle & Hansen, 1998, p. 7). In the mid-1980s, the IMF and the World Bank carried out a series of structural adjustment operations in Uganda. These programmes focused on macro-economic stability, on the establishment of realistic prices for primary products, and on the privatisation of Uganda’s productive and social infrastructure. The poorest Ugandans, however, did not benefit from these programmes; rather, their situation deteriorated because the GoU could not prioritise health services and education. Civil society came to play a major role in filling in where the government failed to deliver services to the poorest segments of the population (Twaddle & Hansen, 1998). Despite the negative social aspects of the programmes, Uganda was successful in implementing the structural adjustments. In 1998, the IMF and the Worldbank considered Uganda to have fulfilled the necessary conditions under the initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). The country was granted a debt relief of roughly USD 2 billion in the year 2000 (IMF, 1998, 2000).

As a response to the failures of translating the economic reform programmes into real gains for the poor, the GoU developed a Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) in 1997. The PEAP became the overarching policy framework for the GoU, with a strong emphasis on poverty reduction (Canagarajah & Van Diesen, 2006). The PEAP made Uganda a role model for the World Bank’s Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) (Canagarajah & Van Diesen, 2006; Hickey, 2011). The first PEAP was developed on the GoU’s initiative, but the second PEAP was revised in order to also serve as a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) when Uganda applied for debt relief under the enhanced HIPC initiative (Government of Uganda, 2000, 2004). The second PEAP also contained partnership principles that regulated the relations between development actors in Uganda. The PEAP formed the basis of the relations between donors, and several donors developed and signed a Joint Assistance Strategy. Although this PEAP also served as the central guiding document of the GoU’s policies,

the GoU's ownership over the PEAP diminished when donors became more involved in the formulation of the PEAP and in its implementation. The PEAPs were accompanied by systems for M&E, and these systems have become more sophisticated after each revision of the PEAP. M&E systems were mainly donor-driven at first, and placed emphasis on accountability to donors. Over time the GoU acquired more influence over these processes and, consequently, its ownership increased (Canagarajah & Van Diesen, 2006).

Until the late 1990s, most of the ODA to Uganda was given as project support, without any organised coordination between donors. However, the economic growth and the political achievements accomplished by the NRM Government led Uganda to "be regarded as a rare success story in Africa" (Batley, Bjørnstad, & Cumbi, 2006, p. 2). The comparatively transparent and active aid policy the GoU pursued through the PEAP attracted many donors and led to a rapid increase in ODA between 1998 and 2000. Uganda became a pioneer country for GBS in the late 1990s. The objective of GBS is to implement the partner country's own development strategy; consequently, GBS was given in order to make the PEAP possible. According to Batley et al. (2006), there was consensus amongst donors around the broad strategy and the objectives of the PEAP. This implied that donors and the GoU could focus on the implementation of the PEAP and on assessing achievements in relation to the GBS. A donor committee and working groups were formed to enhance donor coordination of the GBS (Batley, Bjørnstad, et al., 2006; Sundberg et al., 2015). In the early 2000s, GBS donors were satisfied with the progress that Uganda had made. Yet there were also growing concerns about the slow democratic process in the country and the failures of the GoU to tackle high-level corruption (Canagarajah & Van Diesen, 2006; Sundberg et al., 2015). In 2010, the PEAP was abandoned in favour of a National Development Plan (NDP). The NDP implied a shift towards a focus on economic infrastructure, mainly related to oil, gas, and minerals. Social service sectors, such as health care and education, were secondary issues in the NDP. Many donors did no longer share the GoU's development objectives and strategies and, as a consequence, they left the GBS cooperation in the early 2010s (Government of Uganda, 2010; Hickey, 2011; Sundberg et al., 2015).⁴⁰ GBS to Uganda decreased from USD 700 million in the financial year 2006/07 to USD 100 million in 2012/13 (Sundberg et al., 2015).

⁴⁰ Sweden left the GBS-cooperation in 2007 (Sida & Embassy of Sweden Kampala, 2007). More information on Swedish GBS-cooperation with Uganda is presented below.

6.3. Sweden's development cooperation with Uganda

6.3.1. *A brief history of Sweden's development relations with Uganda*

The formal Swedish development cooperation with Uganda was initiated in 1986, and it consisted of support to debt relief and rehabilitation programmes (Sida, 2000). However, there were ties between Sweden and Uganda were older: Swedish missionaries had been active in Uganda before 1986 (Wohlgemuth, 2002) and, during Museveni's time as a leader of the NRA, his wife and family lived in Sweden (Göteskog, Salomonsson, & Wood, 2012).

Uganda became one of Sida's programme countries in 1991. Being classified as a programme country meant that focus was placed on long-term development cooperation, rather than on post-conflict measures. Sweden carried out its development cooperation with Uganda during the 1990s by means of the so-called "the Uganda Model". This model implied that a large share of Sweden's ODA to Uganda was disbursed through multilateral actors such as the World Bank and UNICEF, and Sida participated as an active partner in the dialogue with these organisations. This model was adopted for two main reasons: first, Sweden did not have an embassy in Uganda before 1999; and second, Sida had only one representative in the country (Sida, 2000; White & Dijkstra, 2003). During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Sweden considered Uganda a well-performing partner country that, together with its development partners, had been "at the forefront of promoting the aid effectiveness agenda" (Embassy of Sweden, Kampala, 2008, p. 8). Like most donors, Sweden tied its disbursements and performance of ODA to the PEAP. Between 1999 and 2005, Uganda received GBS from Sweden for the implementation of the PEAP. In 2005, however, Sweden decided to stop its GBS after incidents of corruption and uncertainties related to good governance in Uganda (Sida & Embassy of Sweden Kampala, 2007). In July 2007, the Swedish embassy in Kampala became a fully delegated embassy.⁴¹ The implementation of Swedish development cooperation with Uganda became easier, since many decisions regarding Swedish development cooperation could be made in Uganda and not at Sida's headquarters in Stockholm. Because of Sida's stronger presence in Uganda, Sweden's contribution to multilateral organisations in the country

⁴¹ In a fully delegated embassy Sida staff members are responsible for carrying out Swedish development cooperation in line with the cooperation strategies adopted by the Swedish Parliament and for reporting results from Swedish development cooperation. Decisions regarding interventions with a budget of less than 50 million SEK can be made by Sida staff at the Embassy, while decisions regarding budgets that exceed 50 million SEK should be made at Sida headquarters in Stockholm (Expert Group for Aid Studies, 2016b).

diminished, while Sida in Uganda managed a larger share of Swedish ODA (e.g. Embassy of Sweden, Kampala, 2008; Openaid, 2017).

Sida and the Swedish embassy in Kampala have described Swedish development cooperation with Uganda as relatively well functioning (Embassy of Sweden, Kampala, 2008). Nevertheless, the relations between Sweden and the GoU have undergone changes over time, mainly as a result of weak democratic leadership, corruption in the GoU, and violations of human rights in Uganda (Kruse, 2016). An increasing part of Swedish ODA to Uganda has been channelled through CSOs and the private sector, rather than through the GoU, over the last decade (Openaid, 2017).

6.3.2. Swedish development cooperation with Uganda in the 2010s

Swedish strategies for development cooperation with Uganda

Swedish development cooperation with Uganda is currently guided by the *Results strategy for Sweden's international development cooperation with Uganda 2014-2018*, adopted in July 2014 (Swedish Government, 2014b). This strategy was preceded by the *Strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Uganda 2009-2013* (prolonged to July 2014) (Swedish Government, 2009). The 2009 cooperation strategy is of special interest here because it covers most of the period on which this study focuses. The overall objective of the Strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Uganda 2009-2013 was “increased respect for and enjoyment of human rights and democratic principles” (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009, p. 1). The 2009-2013 strategy specifies that the maximum annual country allocation to Uganda should be 290 million SEK, excluding humanitarian assistance and support through Swedish INGOs. Furthermore, it establishes that Swedish ODA to Uganda should be directed to four sectors: democratic governance, including peace and security; the health sector; private sector development, including international trade and financial systems; and research. This study focuses on the first of these four sectors, namely, democratic governance, which relates to democracy and human rights issues. Increased respect for, and enjoyment of, human rights, including the rights of women and girls, were also overarching issues for the strategic dialogue that Swedish actors should pursue in Uganda (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009). Since CSOs have been the main implementers of Swedish support to good governance in Uganda, they are in focus here (Openaid, 2017).

When the interviews for this study were conducted in the spring 2014, Swedish development cooperation with Uganda was dominated by discussions about the Anti-Homosexual Act signed by President Yoweri Museveni in February

2014. The act was condemned internationally for violating human rights and it was strongly opposed by the donor community in Uganda. As a protest against the signing of the act, the Swedish Government decided to cancel all aid transactions to the Ugandan Government, except for the support that was channelled to the research sector. For Sida's staff in Uganda, the act raised several problematic issues, for instance as regards how to position themselves in relation to the Ugandan Government and other development actors, and how to handle the new instructions from the Swedish Government.⁴²

As mentioned above, a significant share of the Swedish support to good governance in Uganda was given to CSOs that implement Swedish development cooperation (e.g. Openaid, 2017). Ugandan CSOs received funding from Sweden's aid budget for Uganda, while Swedish INGOs received funding from the budget for development cooperation for Swedish INGOs and from Sida's field office in Uganda. The money disbursed to Swedish INGOs was reported to Sida's office in Uganda or to the INGOs' headquarters in Sweden (these headquarters would then report to Sida in Stockholm). The Ugandan CSOs reported directly to Sida's field office in Kampala. Both Swedish INGOs in Uganda and Ugandan CSOs interacted with the Sida office in Uganda. Hereafter, both the Ugandan and the Swedish INGOs that cooperated with Sida in Uganda are referred to as *partner organisations*.⁴³ Figure 13 presents an overview of some of the development actors within Swedish development cooperation.

⁴² In a clarifying statement about the Anti-Homosexual Act in July 2014, the Government of Uganda assured that it "remains committed to the protection of the rights of all individuals on the territory of Uganda" (Government of Uganda, 2014b, p. 1). The Ugandan Constitutional Court annulled the Act in July 2014 on the grounds that not enough lawmakers had been present during the voting for the act (Government of Uganda, 2014a).

⁴³ This study makes no distinction between the Ugandan and the Swedish partner organisations, since they operated in similar ways in Uganda and no major differences were noticed in the findings between the two categories. Sida informants in Uganda did not make any distinctions between the Ugandan and the Swedish partner organisations.

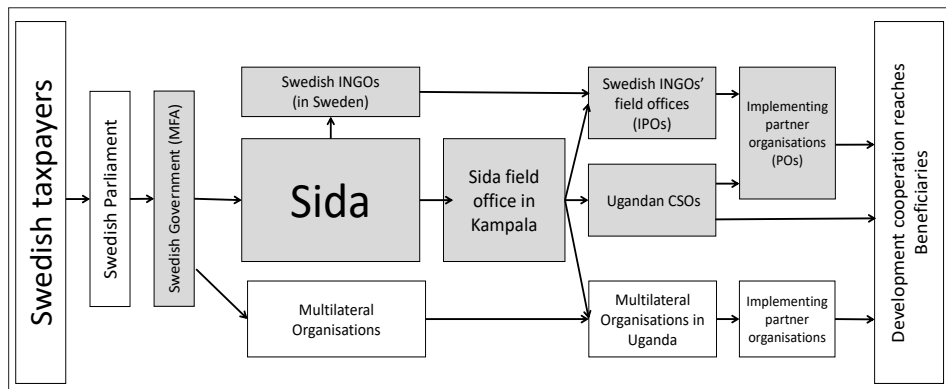


Figure 13: An overview: actors in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda. Highlighted boxes indicate actors that have been interviewed for this study, and arrows indicate flow of ODA.

Source: Author's elaboration.

Monitoring and evaluation of Swedish development cooperation with Uganda

The Strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Uganda 2009-2013 does not mention explicitly how stakeholders should monitor and evaluate it, but it does point out that the strategy should be followed up in line with Uganda's NDP. The results of the NDP should be reported annually, and follow-up activities should include regular budget follow-ups and yearly sector reviews. Uganda's follow-up capacity was assessed as high, given that the existing reporting systems were credible and comprehensive. On the other hand, the strategy also identified challenges, such as the GoU's failure in implementing agreed commitments and interference from leading politicians in the budget process (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009; see also Government of Uganda, 2010). Support to CSOs was described as intensified during the strategy period, but it is not clear to what degree: "Support extended through non-governmental actors, which will be stepped up during the strategy period, will be followed up in the usual way and in accordance with accepted practice" (Swedish Government, 2009, p. 10).

Partner organisations executed their development cooperation in two different ways. Some of the CSOs implemented their own development projects working directly with the beneficiaries (i.e. the poor men and women), while others pursued their development cooperation through other organisations (these organisations are referred to hereafter as *implementing organisations*). The main task of the partner organisation in its work with implementing organisations, apart from providing funding, was to support these organisations in M&E: partner organisations supported implementing partners by assisting them in

defining indicators and in reporting results. The partner organisations were also responsible for writing project proposals to Sida and for reporting results to Sida or the INGOs' headquarters in Stockholm. Some of the partner organisations had M&E experts that supported the implementation of M&E systems of their organisations or of the implementing partners. One of these experts described his/her organisations' cooperation with implementing partners and Sida as follows:

What we basically do is monitoring at different levels. We receive reports from partners⁴⁴ and then we analyse the reports, and send feedback to partners. We also make analyses to be sent to Sweden. I report to our project coordinator based in Sweden. We monitor partners and visit them to discuss a number of issues. Apart from monitoring, we also offer training, assistance, and the set-up of M&E systems, for instance with finding project indicators and to find tools for measuring these indicators. We also support partners in their evaluations, so they are able to see whether the programme responds to indicators. We also make sure that the results values are captured in the M&E and that the partners own the results. Sometimes there are no baselines, or the like, and then the reports are not useful. We support our partners in developing their own indicators and we also try to add value. (UDP3, 04/04/2014)

Sida commissioned an evaluation of the Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organizations 2010-2014 in 2015, and Swedish development cooperation with Uganda was selected as one of the case studies (Scott-Villiers, Ssewakiryanga, Gohl, & Ahikire, 2015). Although the evaluation did not address explicitly how CSOs in Uganda reported results, it did mention that the CSOs focused on minor, temporary problems, rather than on major, more demanding, challenges that poor people in Uganda faced. In addition, the evaluation pointed out that the pressure to report results could make organisations report activities as results:

[W]hen it [a human rights based approach] is accompanied by an orientation towards a results-based approach, its principles can be adopted in a cosmetic way, in conditions where it is not easy to do much else. Under pressure to show results, agencies may measure participation by citizens' passive attendance at self-help groups or committees, and government or NGO accountability may be measured by pronouncements rather than actions. (Scott-Villiers et al., 2015, p. 67)

The evaluation also called attention to the fact that staff trained in M&E were often in high demand and that they often left smaller CSOs to work for larger organisations that could offer higher salaries (Scott-Villiers et al., 2015).

⁴⁴ Implementing partners are referred to here as "partners".

6.4. Conceptualising results and ownership in Swedish support to democracy, gender equality and human rights in Uganda

6.4.1. Conceptualising results

All informants, both from Sida in Uganda and from partner organisations, agreed upon the necessity of scaling up the results reporting in order to understand if international development cooperation works and how it contributes to an effective and efficient development. Informant could answer the question “How do you define results?” as follows:

You will probably get different answers depending on who you ask. (US1, 09/04/2014)

We talk about results in many different ways /.../ Then it becomes a shared vocabulary, or a working language, which is built up around these concepts over time, but what these concepts mean in practice differs from person to person. (US2, 26/03/2014)

In the 2000s, the international development community adopted a common vocabulary to discuss results. This vocabulary was based on the RBM approach, so that results were discussed in terms of performances and achievements at different levels – output, outcome, or impact levels – depending on the nature of the reported results. Informants from Sida used the OECD/DAC’s definitions of these concepts. Whether and how informants from partner organizations used an RBM vocabulary, and the OECD/DAC’s definitions of results, shifted. Some informants had fully adopted this vocabulary and discussed results at output, outcome, and impact levels. Several of the informants also described and problematised their own use of these concepts (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). One informant described results and the organisation’s work in relation to results as follows:

We often require results at outcome level at least, that is, where we intend to measure results. We work a lot with awareness and education. If we teach something, we do not only measure how many people come to the seminars; rather, we assess if they are aware of their rights and then try to do something about the situation. If things are changing, we talk about impact. Output has to do with knowledge but not necessarily behavioural change, whereas outcome results encompass changes in perception, that is to say, changes in the way one handles a situation and takes action to make the Government change. Impact is not easy to measure on a short-term basis. [The organisation’s] projects often run for three or four years, and it is not easy to measure impact within this period. Maybe now the increased focus on results and interest for RBM will make it possible to measure [impact] in the future. (UDP4, 13/05/2014)

Other informants had not adopted this common vocabulary: they discussed results at different levels, but used different concepts. Concepts such as *short-term gains* and *intermediate results* were, for instance, used to describe the outcome results (UDP5, 02/04/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). Other informants used the vocabulary but did not share the OECD/DACs definition of results. They used the terminology and claimed that they reported outcomes, but when they were asked to describe outcome results, they did it in terms of numbers of information meetings, for instance (UDP1, 16/05/2014). According to OECD/DACs definition, a description such as this would be classified as output results (OECD/DAC, 2002a). Although the RBM approach had replaced the LFA within Sida, the LFA seemed to retain influence how partner organisations understood results. The LFA implied a stronger focus on objectives and activities, and less focus on results at outcome and impact level. Some informants had actively abandoned the LFA in favour of the RBM; as they considered the LFA put too much focus on development objectives and activities and not enough focus on results (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014). One informant stated that:

Before it was more LFA, and it does not really mention results, it just mentions objectives. Now it is more learning instead of just 'let's finish the activities!' but not 'what happens then?' The RBM approach is more comprehensive, which means that people always have the end-results in mind. You have a logical chain; you have to consider all the way through on how you are going to achieve the results /.../ It is better to measure results on outcome level because these results are not so easy to reverse. Results at activity or output level could disappear... infrastructure could be demolished or simply not work or not be used as intended. (UDP4, 13/05/2014)

Informants from Sida and from the partner organisations pointed out that their definition of results varied depending on the nature and the scale of the development intervention, as well as on the context in which the intervention was implemented. In addition, as described above, there was a general understanding amongst all informants that development actors had their own definition of what a result was. Nevertheless, *results* were often referred to, as if there was only one way of conceptualising results regardless of the nature of the intervention or of the number of actors involved. The lack of a common understanding about results was considered a problem that could lead to misunderstandings between development actors regarding how interventions should be implemented and reported to Sida and the Swedish Government. Therefore, there was a demand for a discussion about the different definitions of results, as well as for an improved understanding of the different approaches to results. Different development actors were described as having their own definitions of results, but even individuals within the same organisations could

have their own understandings of what a result was. Informants at Sida explained these different understandings and definitions of results to the unclear messages and instructions of the Swedish Government.

6.4.2. Sida's conceptualisation of results

Reporting and measuring results

Once or twice a year Sida's field offices were required to report their achievements in relation to Swedish development objectives to the Swedish Government. Sida was also required to send a final report to the Government by the end of each strategy period. Sida's field offices were also involved in the formulation of the new development strategy (the Swedish Government, 2013a). One informant at Sida in Uganda described their results reporting to the Swedish Government as follows:

The general reporting to the Swedish Government is done in relation to strategies and how Sida's work has contributed to the achievement of the goals, or results, stated in the strategy documents. In addition, the Swedish Government can also assign Sida specific missions to evaluate, a particular area or sector. (US2, 26/03/2014)

In line with the development strategy for 2009-2013, Sida in Uganda was responsible for identifying suitable actors for the implementation of Swedish development cooperation. In other words, Sida in Uganda had to identify development partners that, among other things, pursued development cooperation in line with the Swedish objectives stated in the development strategy. Sida in Uganda was also responsible for requiring and collecting the results of development interventions funded by the agency, compiling them into reports, and sending them to the Swedish Government. The general understanding amongst Sida informants in Uganda was that the Swedish Government required results at outcome or impact levels, rather than output levels. Informants also made a distinction between strategic reporting and reporting on interventions (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). Strategic reporting concerned reporting the results of the cooperation strategy to the Government (when the strategy period was over), while reporting on interventions concerned results reported to Sida in relation to the development interventions (once or twice a year).

We discuss results at all levels in different contexts. If we talk about results at strategy level, we do not include output results; we consider results at outcome and impact levels. We must also be able to measure these results. (US3, 09/04/2014)

According to Sida informants, strategic results were reported at outcome level; it was considered sufficient to report results from interventions at output levels. Reporting output results did not seem to be a problem for the Swedish Government as long as Sida explained why no results at outcome level had been reported:

We have to report [to the Swedish MFA], which means that there are lots and lots of reports on output level, and often we do not have anything to say about outcome. It will take time, but if we keep providing documents and explanations for the reasons why there are no results on outcome level, it is ok...though we still get indications that we should aim for results at outcome level. (US2, 26/03/2014)

Reporting results on output level was comparatively easy, especially because it was possible to report these results during the implementation of an intervention. Sida informants considered outcome results more challenging to report, for these results demanded more sophisticated M&E methods. Although informants discussed the requirements of reporting results at impact level, they considered it as an almost impossible task given that impact can only be traced many years after the implementation of an intervention. One informant claimed that “it is not really possible to measure impact” (US3, 09/04/2014), and another pointed out that impact results could only be traced through research or “very comprehensive evaluations” (US2, 26/03/2014) because several issues could have contributed to the impact results. Nevertheless, the demand for impact results was considered to have a positive effect on development cooperation insofar as it indicated an increased ambition: the objective should be to achieve sustainable results even if these results could not be traced. Sida also had a new computer system for contribution management called *TRAC*, which focused on reporting results. *TRAC* contributed to a more coherent and systematised reporting. When developing *TRAC*, Sida collected all Government policies and analysed how they were supposed to be implemented in the preparation, implementation, and follow-up process of an intervention. These different steps were collected into one procedure. Informants argued that *TRAC* had made it clearer what kind of information they should gather before an intervention was initialised and how information should be categorised (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014).

It is possible to get quite accurate and good information [about an intervention]: what questions should be asked, how the different implementation stages look like, and there are instruction texts that concern different areas taken from policy documents with questions that the development officer has to answer. It is a very concrete exercise. (US2, 26/03/2014)

Informants further argued that the implementation of TRAC made it impossible to use concepts without defining their meaning (US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). One informant claimed that TRAC had contributed to the practical enforcement of the Swedish Government's requirements as regards the results agenda:

The results concepts are defined with the evaluation results as a point of departure, and the Sida managers are given guidance throughout the process of planning, the implementation, follow-up, and completion of projects and programs /.../ and one has been forced to define and specify different concepts and results levels and make sure that it is clear what one is talking about. (US2, 26/03/2014)

Sida informants said that they required results at outcome level from their partner organisations, although mainly outputs were reported. One of the main tasks, and one of the greatest challenges for Sida staff in Uganda, was to assemble the outputs and, if possible, aggregate them into results at outcome level (e.g. US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014).

In addition, one Sida informant in Uganda remarked that the Government required quick and quantifiable results from Sida, but the Government's policy documents did not require quick results; rather, they required sustainable results that could only be measured after some time (US2, 26/03/2014). The expectations on the new results strategy were that it should cover a longer period than previous strategies. Sida staff also pointed out that if outcome results were to be reported in relation to the results strategy, a longer time perspective was required. Informants argued that there was a common understanding between Sida and the Government that it takes long time before results on impact level could be measured (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014). According to informants, results had been requested on an annual basis, and as it is not possible to report outcome results after one year. Therefore Sida in Uganda had mainly reported output results.

Defining results

When asked about how they defined results, Sida informants in Uganda began by giving a description of how they interpreted the Government's results requirements and then proceeded to explain how they understood what a result was. Their descriptions corresponded with staff at Sida in Stockholm definitions of results. There was thus a common understanding amongst Sida informants that they did not agree with the Swedish Government's definition of results (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014). Yet, the same informants claimed that Sida staff members exaggerated the Government's results requirements, which made these requirements even more difficult to implement (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014). One informant said the following:

Many are lost as far as results are concerned! Sida is an expert agency and should use its expertise to implement the Government's policy. One can compare it with the police authority: the Government says that crime should be reduced, but it will not tell the police exactly how to work in order to reduce crime. Sida has a "how-mandate" and should simply work to reduce poverty. (US1, 09/04/2014) ⁴⁵

For this informant, it was clear that the Swedish Government had given Sida a "how-mandate", meaning that Sida had the mandate to decide how development cooperation should be carried out, but not to define the expected result (US1, 09/04/2014). Discussions about the definition of results, and of how to interpret the Swedish Government's intentions with the increased focus on results, were considered key factors to reach a common understanding of how results should be defined within Sida. Discussions that addressed how results should be defined and understood had been carried out both within Sida and between Sida in Uganda and the Swedish MFA. In Uganda, the work with the new Results Strategy had spurred these discussions, especially in relation to what indicators should be used and the best ways of measuring "what actually happened" (US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014).

Why report results?

All informants interviewed in Uganda shared the same objectives for measuring and reporting results: they did it to improve their development cooperation and to ensure that it was implemented in a more effective and efficient manner. However, different actors referred to different motives when they explained why development cooperation should be more effective and efficient. Besides, they also had different understandings of how results could contribute to more effective and efficient development and development cooperation. Sida informants in Uganda explained the Swedish Government's motives for an enhanced focus on results in terms of accountability to Swedish taxpayers. The Swedish Government's argument for why this was important was that Swedish taxpayers had the right to know how their money was spent, which would help secure that the general opinion in Sweden remained favourable to international development cooperation. In relation to accountability, *transparency* became something of a catchword, and Sida informants in Uganda frequently referred to it. The increased focus on results, especially in terms of monitoring, was thought to increase transparency and openness in Swedish development cooperation, since it should increase the possibilities for taxpayers to trace where and how their money had been spent. In addition, Sida informants argued that Swedish

⁴⁵ N.B. This statement was made in 2014. The effectiveness and efficiency in the Swedish police has since then been debated in Swedish media and amongst Swedish politicians (c.f. Beutgen & Brottsförebyggande rådet, 2014).

taxpayers wanted to be assured that their money had been spent in effective and efficient ways. For Sida informants in Uganda, it seemed that the Government promoted primarily efficiency in development cooperation (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). One informant describes it as follows:

I think I understand it from a value-for-money perspective, which can also be seen as an efficiency perspective in which you actually look at more precise measurements. How much you really get from the money you spend within a sector, in this case international development cooperation. If you give this much money, what results do you get? This is the clearest interpretation I can provide of the political instruction. This is what reporting results really means /.../ of course transparency is part of it, you should be able to tell Swedish taxpayers how their money was spent. I think transparency and openness are an important part of this which is included [in the Government's increased focus on results]. That is what it is, definitely. (US2, 26/03/2014)

The Government's focus on results was considered a sign of increased ambition of the Swedish international development cooperation (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014). One Sida informant also claimed that the increased focus on results had led the Swedish Government to become more involved in development cooperation. S/he argued that the increased focus on results should force the Swedish Government to take greater responsibility for the pursuit of development cooperation, since the Government defined results by means of their development strategies. Politicians could be held accountable for the decisions they had made to a greater extent, which was taken as a positive change (US1, 09/04/2014).

Before it was more of an issue for the partner Government, but now the Swedish Government is more specific as regards what it wants to achieve with its development cooperation – which is good! It is good to see that there is political support from Sweden. They [the decision-makers] have the mandate to work for the taxpayers' money and should therefore support what Sida is doing. (US1, 09/04/2014)

One of the main justifications that Sida staff members provided for strengthening the focus on results was to improve the situation for poor men and women: the increased focus on results would contribute above all to a more effective and efficient development cooperation. The management of development interventions was described as more efficient and effective insofar as expectations and responsibilities in relation to, each staff member had become clearer as a consequence of the increased focus on results. It was not clear, however, whether this clarification of responsibilities and expectations was an argument for strengthening the focus on results or whether these clarifications was a (positive) side effect of the increased focus on results. Informants at Sida did not mention learning as a motive to report results (e.g. US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014;

US3, 09/04/2014). When Sida informants were asked about learning aspects, these seem to be associated with learning from mistakes, i.e. when the expected results have not been achieved, rather than with good practices:

Learning is about why the goals were not achieved. What did the contributions lead to - you have to analyse why! Why were the goals reached, or why were they not reached? [Result] is about learning for both donors and recipients of aid /.../ Results-based management is about reaching goals, and if the goals are not reached, this failure has to be analysed. (US1, 09/04/2014)

It should be noted that Sida informants in Uganda talked mainly about the increased effectiveness and efficiency in relation to *development cooperation*, while informants from the partner organisations discussed effectiveness and efficiency in relation to *development* in general.

Internal justification for reporting results

Sida informants stressed the necessity of reporting development results, but the Swedish Government's results requirements was the main reason why the focus on results should be increased. The informants argued that the focus on results had changed over the last years and that the Government's results requirements had become more specific.

Sida informants claimed that the practice of reporting results had evolved from being a mere instrument for improving Swedish development cooperation to having become an issue that dominated the entire development cooperation. According to them, the results requirements guided the overall strategies of Swedish development cooperation, as well as the implementation interventions; from the project proposal to the final evaluation, which could be carried out years after the intervention has ended. Furthermore, Sida informants noticed changes as regards who required results. Previously, the demand for results was described as coming mainly from within Sida, but at the time of the interviews this demand was dominated by requirements from the Swedish Government (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). Informants at Sida in Uganda referred to uncertainties and contradictions in relation to the instructions from the government. The changed character of the results requirement had led to discussions regarding how the Swedish Government's results requirements should be understood, as well as if, and how, previous understandings of results needed to be redefined. Sida informants claimed that they did not share the Swedish Government's reasons behind the demand of results (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014).

One of the main positive effects of the results agenda was that the increased focus on results had led to an improved management of Swedish development

cooperation. This positive effect, however, was not mentioned by Sida informants as the main motive to increase the focus on results. The new working procedures and the improved indicators compelled staff at Sida to define and specify the concepts they used, which facilitated development cooperation. For instance, if an intervention should contribute to non-discrimination, the meaning of “non-discrimination” must be defined, including how it should be achieved, which indicators to use, etc. This also implied that Sida staff working at field offices could be more concrete in their dialogue with the implementing partners (US2, 26/03/2014). Furthermore, the increased focus on results arguably led to a more focused development cooperation, insofar as the expected results were well defined and the roles and responsibilities of the actors involved were clarified. Informants at Sida in Uganda claimed that what Sida required from its staff had become more apparent and that it had become easier to follow the theory of change in interventions. Informants also argued that the increased focus on results had prompted Sida to specify how different policy documents and guidelines related to each other, which made the management system more transparent (US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014).

Challenges with the increased focus on results

One of the main challenges that Sida and partner organisations informants faced in relation to the increased focus on results was to identify indicators at intervention level that could aggregate to a strategic level. These indicators should not only be possible to aggregate; they should also be specific, achievable, measurable, relevant, and possible to reach within the established timeframe.⁴⁶ Since the indicators set the framework for what should be reported, they had also become a central issue in the interpretation of the Swedish Government’s requirements as regards whether results should be of a qualitative or quantitative character. The time perspective was also central: it determined at what level the results could be measured. Another related issue was the challenges in measuring results once the indicators had been identified and the interventions had been implemented. Although all informants discussed these challenges, Sida in Uganda and its partner organisations had different views on them.

For Sida informants in Uganda, the challenges in identifying feasible indicators became evident when they worked with the new Results Strategy for Sweden’s development cooperation with Uganda (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). Sida in Uganda had provided the Swedish Government with a result proposal on which the Results Strategy should be based. The

⁴⁶ These requirements could be associated with the so-called SMART criteria. SMART refers to indicators that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound (c.f. Morra-Imas & Rist, 2009, p. 548).

proposal offered suggestions concerning the results that could be expected from Swedish development cooperation with Uganda, as well as the indicators that could be used to measure these results. These indicators had to be defined in relation to the strategy. However, since many development actors worked with the implementation of the strategy, it was necessary to define indicators that all actors could report on or that could be broken down into sub-indicators to which the implementing partners could relate. During the process of developing the results proposal, the staff at Sida's field office in Uganda had discussions with the Swedish MFA and with Sida's headquarters in Stockholm regarding methodological considerations and the development of feasible indicators. A results proposal had been sent to the Swedish Government, but at the time of the interviews it was not clear how the indicators had been formulated because the strategy had not yet been adopted (US3, 09/04/2014). The GoU had not been involved in the development of the results strategies to the same extent as it had been previously and when Sida informants were asked about to what extent partner organisations had been engaged in this process, this was not clear. It should, however, be noted that the Strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Uganda 2009-2013 states that the follow-up of Swedish development cooperation with Uganda should be based on Uganda's NDP (Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009).

The challenges associated with how Sida in Uganda could interpret the Government's results requirements also had consequences for the identification of feasible indicators. Sida informants considered it difficult to define indicators that measured relevant and qualitative results that would meet the Government's requirements. Although Sida informants emphasised that they requested both qualitative and quantitative results in their development cooperation with Uganda, the general understanding was that the Swedish Government wanted concrete and quantitative results, rather than more vague qualitative results (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). One informant said the following:

Of course it is easier to talk about concrete things because they are measurable, and that is perhaps what the Government actually wants to reach, from a policy point of view, that is, the Government wants to show the [Swedish] citizens that this is what we do, we do something. (US2, 26/03/2014)

Sida informants in Uganda further argued that the nature of the results depended on what sector, programme, or project the results concerned. Some sectors, such as the health sector, had a long tradition of measuring results with quantitative indicators. In such sectors, the informants believed that it could be relevant to develop new indicators to capture qualitative results (US1, 09/04/2014; US2,

26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). In other sectors, no suitable indicators were identified and more work needed to be done to “develop good indicators” (US3, 09/04/2014). Sida informants deemed it more challenging to develop indicators for interventions within the human rights and democracy sectors, since development interventions in these sectors are often concerned with issues that are difficult to capture with predetermined indicators (US3, 09/04/2014). In addition, Sida informants remarked that qualitative indicators were more difficult to define than quantitative indicators:

That is the difficult thing with the qualitative: what is the source and what is the size of the sample? This is different from case to case. You cannot say that these are the criteria that you must follow for these specific indicators. Instead, you should use SMART-indicators, but it is more difficult to use them when it comes to measuring people’s attitudes or behaviour. You cannot always measure people’s attitudes and behaviour with quantitative indicators (US3, 09/04/2014)

Another recurrent challenge in relation to indicators was the issue of generic indicators. Sida informants noticed that some of the indicators defined by the Swedish Government had become more generic and less context-specific, with the consequence they did not measure “the right things”. One informant gave an example from the work with one of Sida’s annual reports:

We have done things, but they do not fit in that box... I think it is a problem when everything has to be very generic; we might miss what we actually did! I did something that should be like this, but it does not really fit in that box – I did not have the same indicators as they had in the annual report and therefore I could not fill it in /.../ this was not only a problem in Uganda, it was a general problem and I think the poor coordinator at Sida had to return several of the reports and ask why they were so empty. (US3, 09/04/2014)

Informants requested greater flexibility, so that some of the indicators should be generic for all partner countries, while other indicators should be more context-specific (US3, 09/04/2014). At a strategy level some informants expected that flexibility would increase with the new results strategy as it was anticipated to only specify expected results, and not how these results should be achieved (US1, 09/04/2014). However, some informants expected that the results strategy would limit flexibility, since indicators should be defined in the beginning of projects or programmes:

We also work with the ongoing programmes, that is, we consider how the results from these programmes can be measured and followed up, or how they can be improved. We have to measure the actual results! You cannot make a reconstruction after the intervention was implemented; it is important that the indicators are correct when new programmes are developed. (US3, 09/04/2014)

Furthermore, Sida informants argued that the increased focus on measurable results limited the kinds of development interventions in which Sida and Sweden should be involved. As results had to be reported, they argued that it had become more difficult to be involved in innovative programmes or projects in which it was more difficult to predict results (US3, 09/04/2014). SRHR-related interventions became particularly challenging, as it was often easier to measure results from health related interventions, such as safe deliveries, than interventions related to rights, such as women's right to their bodies. Sida informants were worried that this would lead to a greater focus on sexual and reproductive health, and less efforts would be devoted to issues related to sexual and reproductive rights (e.g. US1, 09/04/2014).

6.4.5. Partner organisations' conceptualisation of results

Defining and measuring results

As Sida informants, informants from partner organisations in Uganda described their definitions of results as dependent on the nature and scale of the development intervention, as well as on the context in which the intervention was implemented. Partner organisation informants further argued that there were many definitions of results, and some informants remarked that there was no common understanding the meanings of results within their own organisation. The different levels of training amongst the staff in the partner organisations, as well as the lack of staff training in many of their implementing organisations, was mentioned as a possible explanation. Training in M&E was referred to as the central issue for promoting a common understanding of results (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014). Instructions from Sida on results reporting were also unclear; as one informant from a Swedish INGO in Uganda put it, "Sida fumbles, everyone fumbles..." (UDP8, 10/04/2014). The same informant from a Swedish INGO in Uganda also referred to the former Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation when s/he reflected on the definition of results:

Gunilla Carlsson talks about results as output, such as roads, for instance. Sida has another interpretation of the increased focus on results, a more complicated and research-oriented interpretation. Different development actors have made different interpretations, and these different interpretations have muddled the actual meaning of results. (UDP8, 10/04/2014)

A common interpretation of Sida's definitions of results amongst informants that represented partner organisations was that the new conception of results implied a change from something that was possible to measure at activity or output levels to something that could only be measured at outcome or

impact levels (UDP3, 04/04/2014, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). However, in line with the perceptions of some Sida informants, some informants from partner organisations claimed that it was impossible, or very difficult, to measure results at impact level. Results at impact level were seen as an unreachable goal, rather than as a result that could be measured (UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014; UDP9, 10/04/2014). Other informants argued that they reported impact results but referred to them in terms of outputs when they described the reported results (e.g. OECD/DAC, 2002a). One informant was aware of Sida's requirement on outcome results, but claimed that results can only be measured in terms of activities and outputs: "results at other levels are mere assumptions" (UDP2, 13/05/2014).

In general, informants from partner organisations agreed that Sida had become more precise in their results requirements over the last years. One of the informants described the previous results requirement from Sida as follows: "There was a time when it was OK to report on just about anything" (UDP3, 04/04/2014). On their view, Sida had given more specific instructions concerning what kind of results they required (quantitative or qualitative) and at which level the results should be reported. Results reporting was thought to begin not with reporting itself, but with the formulation of indicators in the initial phase of an intervention. Sida had become more involved in the implementation of the development interventions of their partner organisations, which entailed that the agency had also become more influential in the formulation and definition of indicators. Partner organisation informants generally considered the reporting on results a challenging task, and commented that was not always possible for them to meet Sida's requirements.

Increased administrative costs were one of the main challenges associated with the increased focus on results, along with time constraints. Another concern was that other partner organisations reported results without evidence and showed better results than they had accomplished in reality and that some organisations even covered up their misuse of funds. As Sida staff members, informants from partner organisations considered lack of time a problem. Reporting outcome results on issues related to changes in men's and women's behaviour and to rights-based development was considered particularly challenging, given that it often takes time before such changes and results can be measured. Informants also pointed out that the more time elapsed since implementation, the more difficult it was to attribute results to a specific intervention:

It is difficult to show what we have done. Results depend on so many factors. Many struggle to connect activities and goals. How does increased awareness contribute to a transformation in behaviour, for instance? It is difficult to prove after only one year. (UDP9, 10/04/2014)

Informants from partner organisations noted that measuring results had become more expensive, mainly because measuring results at outcome level often required sophisticated methods that cost more and usually required external competence. One informant said the following “you might have to commission a survey, and it costs money. It is a different matter to simply report the number of classrooms built – it is easier, you just report it” (UDP3, 04/04/2014).

There was also an increased cost for writing project and programme proposals when indicators and results must be more specific; this kind of task required more time and effort from the partner organisations. For some organisations, it was frustrating that many of their implementing partners were considered to do relevant and effective development work but lacked the capacity of writing good proposals and reports. These organisations were often small and had very limited budgets. In contrast, other implementing organisations were good at writing proposals and reports but their implementation of development cooperation was not deemed competent (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014). Informants also mentioned that harmonisation and coordination between donors could be improved, which would in turn diminish the administrative burden on partner organisations and implementing partners (UDP3, 04/04/2014). Some informants pointed out that Sida provided them with financial and technical assistance to improve their proposals and reports; these informants did not necessarily experience the increased administrative burden as something negative (UDP2, 13/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). However, other informants experienced that the new systems for results reporting were too rigid and that it sometimes was unmotivated to report on all the results. Furthermore, it was sometimes unclear why results should be reported and if the results reports were reviewed by Sida (c.f. UDP6, 04/05/2014; UDP9, 10/04/2014). M&E officers were on demand and there was a high turnover amongst these officers in the organisations. A dilemma often faced by partner organisations was that when they trained staff members in M&E they often moved on to a better paid job. The UN and the USAID often recruited local M&E officers and paid a lot more than many of the organisations (UDP2, 13/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014).

Some informants from partner organisations expressed frustration over lack of resources to write proposals or report results, as well as over the ‘misconduct’ of organisations that did not report their results accurately. Misconduct could

paid off: these organisations had advantages in the competition for funding because they could demonstrate results. In addition, the results reported by these organisations allegedly legitimised ineffective or even corrupt development interventions.

Why report on results?

Informants from partner organisations mentioned two main motives for reporting results: accountability to the beneficiaries and other actors; and learning to increase effectiveness in development cooperation.

Accountability to beneficiaries: Results were requested not only by Sweden and donors, but also by the CSOs and the beneficiaries of development cooperation (UDP1, 16/05/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014):

Everyone wants to see evidence that their interventions work – they want to see results and to know what works and why it works. And when it does not work, it is even more important to find out why. (UDP4, 13/05/2014)

Informants believed it was possible to combine accountability to donors, including Sida, and accountability to beneficiaries, provided that donors were willing to use indicators appropriate for the development project in question. Donors' generic indicators were generally suitable to donors' development objectives, rather than to the development objectives of the beneficiaries.

Learning to improve development cooperation: Some of the partner organisations had only measured results at output level, but started reflecting on the outcome and impact results of their development efforts. They were often convinced that their development interventions had a positive impact for the beneficiaries, but did not know why or to what extent the interventions worked (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014). They wanted to find out how their interventions contributed to development and thereby use this experience in future interventions. The learning aspect of reporting results in order to improve development cooperation, was hence one of the primary motives for reporting results; the increased focus on results compelled organisations to step back and assess whether they worked in an effective and efficient way. One informant gave an example from an organisation that works with street children:

They [the organization] have been working with street children for 25 years /.../ but have never considered the effectiveness of their work. When I came on board, I helped them realize that it was necessary to focus on the results of the process. If you help children for three years, you must have parameters that measure progress /.../ Could some children go back home⁴⁷ after one year,

⁴⁷ This concerned street children that actually had a home to return to.

or after six months? So I began to work with partners and we developed tools to measure progress at a lower level, that is, to assess the development of each individual child. We developed indicators to measure individual development, so that we can know when it is best for the child to go home. I'm not saying that it won't take four years, what I mean is "when is the child ready to go home?" The programme can be more effective this way, and we also avoid making the child too attached to the center. Take the kid home when he or she is ready – this is what it means to be effective. (UDP3, 04/04/2014)

Partner organisation informants remarked that learning from results concerned both learning to improve ongoing interventions and learning to improve new interventions. However, they also pointed out that different contexts usually require different interventions: what works in one context might not work in another (UDP7, 10/04/2014).

Internal justification for reporting results

Informants from partner organisations claimed that Sida's results requirements were the main reasons to increase the results reporting. Their views differed, however, as regards whether Sida's demand for results had increased over the last years. Some informants noticed an increase in the demand for results (UDP1, 16/05/2014; UDP2, 13/05/2014, 13/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014), while others perceived the demand as constant (UDP1, 16/05/2014; UDP2, 13/05/2014; UDP6, 04/05/2014). Nevertheless, there was a general agreement that a change had occurred in the character of the results required from Sida: Sida had become more precise in what kind of results they required and when the results should be reported. Informants also claimed that they had to assess whether their interventions had worked and were carried out in an effective way to a greater extent than they had done previously.

The increased focus on results was not only a demand from Sida and other financiers; it was an international trend that also manifested itself in the Ugandan society. For instance Uganda's first NDP includes a results framework and an M&E plan (Government of Uganda, 2010). In addition, all actors that invested time and money in development cooperation, including civil society, local administrations, and beneficiaries were described as interested in the results of their investments and efforts. When asked how they defined results, informants from partner organisations explained their organisations' definition first, and then related this definition to how they perceived Sida's and, in some cases, other development actors' definitions of results.

There was a common understanding amongst informants from partner organizations that their reasons for the increased focus on results were different from Sida's. Sida was considered primarily accountable to the Swedish

Government and to Swedish taxpayers, while the partner organisations were accountable to the poor men and women, or to their implementing partners. Informants from partner organisations claimed that Sida in Uganda was mainly interested in development efficiency achieved through increased accountability and transparency, rather than through increased development effectiveness. These informants explained that they also were accountable to Sida, which was considered eligible as they received funding from Sida; in other words, they had to show how they spent Sida's money and what results they had contributed to (c.f. UDP5, 02/04/2014). One of the reoccurring reasons given for why Sida had increased its focus on results was that they were, to a greater extent than before, being held accountable to the Swedish Government and to the Swedish taxpayers (UDP6, 04/05/2014). The demand for accountability, in their view, came directly from taxpayers in Sweden and not only from the Swedish Government or from Sida (UDP3, 04/04/2014). One issue related to accountability was quality assurance: Sweden and other donors wanted to "see the checks and balances" (UDP1, 16/05/2014) in order to reduce the risk of corruption (UDP1, 16/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). Learning from previous development cooperation to improve development effectiveness was, in the informants' view, a secondary motive for the increased focus on results on the part of Sida (UDP8, 10/04/2014).

Informants from partner organisations did not make any direct reference to the increased focus on results as one of the reasons for implementing the results agenda, yet they did approach it as a positive change insofar as it allowed them to show Sida and other donor what their development cooperation had achieved. Some informants remarked that they were aware of the success of their development interventions, but the new results agenda made it possible to provide evidence of their effectiveness.

The increased focus on results contributed to a feeling of recognition from Sida and other donors: by asking what actually happened with the money invested in development interventions, Sida and Sweden showed that they actually cared about what happened in partner organisations and in Uganda (c.f. UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014). Some informants from the partner organisations argued that it had become easier to get an understanding amongst staff at Sida of the importance of reporting results at outcome and impact levels and that reporting results at these levels takes time. Results reporting and specific indicators compelled the partner organisations to define what they wanted to achieve with their projects, which in turn facilitated the management of development cooperation, especially in relation to their implementing partners. The increased focus on results prompted a clearer reflection about the

objectives of a project, from the planning, through the implementation to the finalization of the project (c.f. UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014). The beneficiaries' awareness about what they could expect from the organisation also increased, and this increased awareness can be interpreted as strengthened ownership "It was not like this before, but now they are aware of their rights in relation to development organisations too. The increased focus on results could be seen as something that increases ownership" (UDP4, 13/05/2014).

Challenges in measuring results

All informants from partner organisations stressed the importance of "good" indicators: inappropriate indicators led to frustration among informants because they hindered results reporting or forced informants to report inappropriate results: "Results are not good if they do not measure the right thing, like if the indicators that the donors are requesting results from do not show what has been achieved with the project" (UDP6, 04/05/2014).

Partner organisation informants mentioned one recent evaluation commissioned by Sida. According to them, many incorrect conclusions were drawn due to improper and irrelevant indicators. The indicators on which the evaluation was based were not suitable for the sector the evaluation actually concerned. As a consequence, results could not be reported and the interventions could be considered a failure. Although the evaluation gave misleading information as regards what results had been achieved, the evaluation was nevertheless part of the results reported to the Swedish Government (UDP7, 10/04/2014). Some informants did not detect any pressure on their organisations to report on specifically quantitative or qualitative indicators to Sida (UDP5, 02/04/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). Others, however, attributed the change from reporting on output results to reporting on outcomes to a stronger emphasis on qualitative indicators. And yet other informants assumed that Sida still wanted to see quantitative results: "the donors want to have qualitative results, but at the same time they want to *see* the results" (informant pointing at his/her eyes) (UDP1, 16/05/2014). Sida's inconsistent instructions confused informants, and some of them considered it their duty to inform Sida about the importance of indicators that could capture both quantitative and qualitative results. These informants also considered it their responsibility to show that it was possible to make qualitative results tangible. Reporting on qualitative results required development actors to change their way of thinking about results; in other words, results were not only possible to report in terms of numbers and figures, but also in more descriptive ways (UDP4, 13/05/2014). In the case of some development issues, it was more challenging to find suitable indicators that could capture achieved results. Increased empowerment and changes in attitudes, for

instance, were considered difficult results to measure. Interventions within these areas often had small budgets (and even less money was available to spend on M&E), but they were, nevertheless, considered to deliver good results (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014).

Partner organisation informants considered Sweden a comparatively flexible donor, although this flexibility was limited to the interventions that matched Sida's development framework (UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP6, 04/05/2014). However, informants also noticed that this flexibility had diminished as a consequence of the increased focus on results. If changes in the development environment took place after the indicators and the results had been agreed on with Sida, it was not always possible to change the project plan. Informants argued that the context in which many partner organisations worked was unstable, and beneficiaries' needs could change during the course of the implementation of the interventions. Limited flexibility also had implications for ownership. If the circumstances changed, the implementing organisations and the beneficiaries did not feel that they could change their development cooperation. Although partner organisations could often make changes after consultations with Sida, the organisations were not assured that they could make these changes. For example, if there was a natural hazard in a community where a partner organisation was active, it should be possible for the partner organisation to adjust the development intervention to better suit the new situation (UDP3, 04/04/2014). One informant said the following:

Yesterday a storm destroyed many houses, and yet we continue with the same [school] project as before, and the community does not understand us. They say 'you have money and you cannot help us [to rebuild our houses]?' I think we need to incorporate flexibility into the projects. For example, sometimes you have a child that has been abused and needs medical care, but that is not what you do...you work only with education. But this child will not benefit from school if she is sick or has been abused! We need to have that kind of discussion with [the donors]. (UDP3, 04/04/2014)

Partner organisations applied different strategies to increase or maintain flexibility in their interventions funded by Sida. For instance, some of them had a dialogue with Sida in the initial phase of the development interventions to negotiate flexibility, which could entail the possibility of changing indicators and strategies if the context changed. One informant said the following:

We make sure that we have a discussion with our partners when a proposal is submitted so that it is possible to discuss /.../ and improve indicators over time. Many donors are not open for these kind of discussion. When they call for proposals, they give you 20 to 30 days to write the proposal with specific

indicators. One will have to stick with these indicators even if they are not appropriate from the beginning. (UDP3, 04/04/2014)

Another informant said that his/her organisation had not met any resistance from Sida when they wanted to change indicators in their development interventions: “if the project changes over time it is not a big issue to change the indicators. In order to get good results it is necessary to have a great extent of flexibility” (UDP6, 04/05/2014).

6.4.4. Sida's conceptualisation of ownership

Defining ownership

All informants, both from Sida in Uganda and from partner organisations, agreed on the importance of ownership in development cooperation and the concept was widely used amongst development actors. Contrary to the discussion about results, the ownership concept was not considered problematic or disputed. However, when asked what ownership means, informants gave different answers, and in some cases, the term partnership was used as a synonym for ownership.

Sida informants in Uganda argued that ownership was an important and frequently used concept in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda. Although, the concept itself was considered unproblematic; the challenge was how to encourage ownership, especially in relation to the increased focus on results. Sida informants in Uganda also had a clear definition of the ownership concept. When asked how they defined ownership, they described it as closely connected with the so-called *dialogue* and with the involvement of other development actors in decision-making processes. When asked why ownership was important, they referred to the agreements made in the Paris Declaration, which stated that development cooperation becomes more effective and context-specific when partner countries or organisations owned their development processes (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014, see also OECD/DAC, 2008b). Dialogue was an instrument for increasing ownership amongst partners, which departed from the idea that ownership increased when partners were involved in decision-making processes. Even though informants frequently mentioned dialogue as an instrument in the implementation process, they were not able to give a clear definition of what dialogue is or how it was guaranteed that development partners were invited to take part in it.

Sida and partner country ownership

When Sida informants discussed the ownership concept, they often referred to a *partner country ownership*. In general, partner country refers to the Government in the partner country, but actors such as development partners and external actors, including the private sector and civil society, could also be representatives of a partner country (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). One Sida informant argued that a general shift had occurred in Swedish development cooperation as regards whose ownership the Swedish Government referred to in its development cooperation: from mainly concerning ownership of the Government in the partner country, to poor men's and women's possibilities of taking the lead in their own development processes. Informants considered this shift a problem because Sida, in their view, should be concerned mainly with development at system level, and not with changes at an individual level.

What ownership means has changed over time. /.../ ownership was about poor countries, but now it is about poor people. Over the last seven or eight years, ownership has been about oppressed people and individuals – not about the country. /.../ This shift from focusing on the country to focusing on poor people creates a dilemma when you work at Sida – to prioritise individuals rather than systems; working with individuals is charity. (US1, 09/04/2014)

Nevertheless, the government in a partner country seemed to be the most important implementing partner for informants at Sida in Uganda. Even though the Swedish development relations with Uganda was strained, Sida staff tried to maintain their relations with the GoU. As noted above, Sida also emphasised that it was important to involve different kinds of development actors in decision-making processes. External actors who were not directly involved in Swedish development cooperation, such as representatives from CSOs, the private sector, and local Governments, could also be consulted when decisions on a development intervention were made. This was argued to increase the ownership amongst these actors (US2, 26/03/2014).

When asked whose ownership they referred to, Sida informants explained that they did not refer to partner organisations (US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). However, in their discussions about the implementation of Swedish development cooperation, informants stressed the importance of involving partner organisations. They also pointed out that development interventions were based on partner organisations or beneficiaries' initiatives and that partner organizations were defining the expected results and the indicators with support from Sida. When asked to specify who is the owner of the development results, one informant at Sida in Uganda stated that the ownership of Swedish development cooperation lies with the Swedish

Government because it is the Swedish Government who provides funding (US3, 09/04/2014).

Sida and Swedish relations with the Ugandan Government

After corruption scandals and the adoption of the Anti-Homosexual Act, Sida and the Swedish Government no longer considered the Ugandan Government an appropriate actor to represent poor men and women in Uganda. Instead, Sida and the Swedish Government considered CSOs more suitable, given that they worked more closely with their beneficiaries and arguably had the beneficiaries' best interest in mind. Many CSOs were, for instance, argued to adhere to international and regional agreements on human rights and democracy, while the Ugandan Government did not (US2, 26/03/2014). The Ugandan Government's ownership in Swedish development cooperation has thus decreased, and Sida in Uganda was forced to find other ways of encouraging ownership. The development plans of a partner country set the framework for the Swedish Results Strategies and, thereby, for the overall Swedish development cooperation with this country. Swedish development strategies should, thus, be based on the Ugandan development plans, despite the strained relations between Sweden and Uganda (US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). One way for Sida to influence the Ugandan Government was to cooperate with CSOs that advocated human rights and other issues (US2, 26/03/2014). Nevertheless, the Ugandan Government was still considered the most important actor in Swedish development cooperation. When asked whose ownership an informant at Sida in Uganda was referring to, the following answer was given:

Since the [partner] government is the most important actor in the development of a country, the government should be in charge of protecting interest of its own citizens. We devote a lot of time to this issue, since [ownership] is something one often refers to. We also discuss local ownership, the citizens' ownership, and the recipients' ownership, which is the beneficiaries' ownership. This is also an important prerequisite to ensure that development takes place. We discuss ownership in relation to our role as donors and the power we have as donors—although we do not use that concept [power] – and the role we play in the country, and what is constructive and what is destructive [for development] (US2, 26/03/2014)

The Ugandan Government had not been involved in the formulation of the new results strategy to the same extent as it had been in formulation of the previous development strategy. For one informant, this lack of involvement was positive, since the Ugandan Government had previously had too much influence over decisions that concerned the sectors in which donors should be involved:

In the previous cooperation strategies, Sweden and other donors more often than not had to take on sectors that the Ugandan Government did not want to prioritise. The health sector is one example: the donors became responsible for way too many things that the Government did not worry about. (US1, 09/04/2014)

This informant also called attention to the importance of encouraging ownership of Sida's partner organisations to avoid aid dependency. This measure was considered particularly important in the Ugandan case, since Sweden could change or even cancel all its development cooperation for political reasons. In the event of a cancellation, the partner country and the partner organisations should have enough ownership over development processes in order to proceed with the interventions without support from Sweden (US1, 09/04/2014). Dialogue was claimed to be an important instrument in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda: it was a means to promote partner country ownership by involving government representatives in Swedish development cooperation and to exert influence over Ugandan policies. After the adoption of the Anti-Homosexual Act, for instance, Sida in Uganda has been working for the rights of homosexuals through the dialogue (US3, 09/04/2014).

Combining the development objectives established by Sweden and those established by the Ugandan Government was a challenge for staff at Sida in Uganda. Many discussions took place during the preparation of the new results strategy, among Sida staff and between Sida in Uganda and the Swedish MFA. It was necessary to strike a balance between Swedish development objectives and Ugandan objectives, and these differed in a number of aspects. When the new results strategy was developed, Sida in Uganda invited to a meeting with "concerned partners" (the informants could not account for who these partners were). However, no Ugandan stakeholders (representing the Ugandan Government or CSOs) were involved in the formulation of the so-called entry values upon which the results strategy was based (US2, 26/03/2014; see also the Swedish Government, 2013a). The process of formulating the new development strategy was described as follows:

There is no consultation before the [Swedish] Government makes the decision about the entry values, which the results strategy is based upon. Of course, since we are talking about ownership, this lack of discussion could be considered something remarkable. There is, so to speak, no contact before the entry values are submitted to the partner countries. (US2, 26/03/2014)

The new Guidelines for Results Strategies (the Swedish Government, 2013a) does not include dialogue as an instrument for implementing Swedish development cooperation, which the previous guidelines did (Government Offices and the MFA, 2010). When Sida informants in Uganda were asked about the

possible reasons why dialogue had been excluded, they reacted with surprise; informants had not noticed that the dialogue was not mentioned and they did not know why it was not mentioned as an instrument “It is very difficult to have a development cooperation in which you make a difference without dialogue” (US3, 09/04/2014). One informant referred to the difficulties in measuring the results of a dialogue as one possible reason for its absence in the guidelines. Another explanation referred to the statement made by Minister Carlsson, concerning that Swedish development should be based on “less talk and more action” (US3, 09/04/2014). This informant also dismissed the assumption that it was redundant to mention dialogue in the results strategies when Sweden and Sida pursue dialogue anyway (US3, 09/04/2014). Some informants from partner organisations also claimed that they had not been involved in a dialogue with Sida during the process of writing the new results strategy (UDP6, 04/05/2014).

Sida and the ownership of results

Sida in Uganda deemed it a challenge to combine an increased focus on results and ownership. As a donor, Sida has the power to set the agenda for development cooperation and does so, both intentionally and unintentionally, at the expense of the development partners’ ownership over its development processes and agendas. Sida informants in Uganda feared that the increased focus on results would extend Swedish influence in development cooperation, and that Sweden and Sida were creating the wrong development incentives by defining what results to expect, without enough involvement and participation by the development partners in this process. An ongoing discussion seemed to take place at Sida in Uganda about the (unequal) power relations between the agency and its development partners. One frequently discussed issue concerned the extent to which Sida could pursue a Swedish development agenda when this agenda did not comply with Ugandan development plans or with the goals and interventions of its partner organisations (e.g. US1, 09/04/2014; US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014).

Sida informants argued that their partner organisations were responsible for defining results and formulating indicators, which could have implied a significant degree of ownership amongst them. However, the formulation of indicators should be done in consultation with Sida and if there was something that Sida wanted to adjust, or clarify, Sida had the possibility to do so. Sida had, therefore, a great deal of influence over the definition of results and the formulation of indicators (US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). Indicators should be based on agreements between Sida and the implementing partner: “partner ownership is an important aspect in the agreement between partners”

(US3, 09/04/2014). Since the implementing partners were responsible for the implementation of development cooperation, they were also responsible for achieving and reporting results (US1, 09/04/2014). Sida informants in Uganda described a change in whose results were asked for: the focus on beneficiaries had been replaced by a focus on results that should be reported in relation to the objectives specified in Swedish policy documents (US2, 26/03/2014).

Informants from Sida in Uganda stated that they were primarily accountable to the Swedish Government, since they work on a mission from the Government and, therefore, should be reporting results in line with the government's priorities (US1, 09/04/2014). A frequently mentioned issue was the change from reporting on contribution (i.e. reporting on how Sweden contributed to development), to a stronger demand for attribution, in which achievements should be described as a result of Swedish development efforts. As most of the development projects and programmes that Sweden supported were co-financed with other donors, reporting on attribution was considered difficult, or even impossible, in most of the interventions. Sida informants expressed concerns about the increased requirements on results that could be attributed to Swedish development efforts, and for instance, smaller projects that were easier to report and to attribute the results to had received more attention (US2, 26/03/2014; US3, 09/04/2014). Although there was an understanding for the interest in attribution, it was also recognised that it was not an issue that promoted development in itself. One informant puts it:

The Government and the national audit office believe that it is important to show what we have accomplished with the money that we received. So if the general public in Sweden wants to see results, it is reasonable to do it. As far as the actual effects in the country are concerned, it makes no difference whether we talk about contribution or attribution – it is the effect itself that matters, and not where it comes from. Whether it is American or Swedish money is irrelevant: what matters is that money is spent where it should be spent. (US3, 09/04/2014)

6.4.5. Partner organisations' conceptualisation of ownership

Defining ownership

Informants from partner organisations remarked on the importance of ownership in development cooperation. Several informants described ownership in terms of *a feeling of ownership* primarily amongst the beneficiaries, but also amongst their implementing partners and in their own relations with Sida. This feeling of ownership was described as a feeling of control over the development process and the development cooperation, comprising control over the formulation

of development objectives, the design of development interventions, and the results achieved (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). Some informants further emphasised that this feeling of control also implied that development cooperation was not determined by external demands, and that no one was forced to participate in development interventions (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). One informant describes ownership as follows:

In my view, I guess, ownership has to do with /.../ participation in the process of formulating the project document. These projects and [development] issues should come from them [the beneficiaries]; these are issues that they have come up with. They should feel that these issues are relevant for them. I think that's how we look at it: it's a bottom-up approach. (UDP5, 02/04/2014)

Informants from partner organisations argued that development cooperation is more effective and more sustainable when beneficiaries, implementing partners or partner organisations have control over development cooperation, since these actors often have greater knowledge of the context and the needs of the beneficiaries. If partner organisations or implementing partners are not involved in the formulation of the project documents, interventions that were not relevant for beneficiaries could be put into practice, or wrong priorities could be made (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014). One informant described it as follows:

Those who work at the headquarters in capitals like Nairobi, Kampala, or Dar es Salaam think that they know the situation in the communities, so they go to the communities and say 'we got this project with these priorities for you'. But these priorities may not be real priorities for people in the community. This kind of thing impacts on the results of the project. (UDP5, 02/04/2014)

In addition, informants from partner organisations argued that if development actors experienced a feeling of ownership, they were more likely to be devoted to the development work. This involvement would in turn increase effectiveness and the likelihood that interventions would continue even after funding had ceased (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP5, 02/04/2014). One informant gave an example of what could happen when there was no feeling of ownership in development. The intervention concerned the construction of a borehole in a Ugandan village. The community was supposed to maintain the borehole after its construction. The construction broke down after some time, and no one repaired it. Since the community had not been involved in the construction of the borehole, they did not know how to repair it. Besides, they manifested no interest in repairing it because they did not feel that the borehole belonged to them (UDP3, 04/04/2014). All informants agreed on the advantages of increasing ownership amongst implementing partners. The only concern raised

was that increased ownership amongst partner organisations and implementing partners could have a negative impact on donors' feeling of responsibility and commitment to development cooperation. As a precaution against donor withdrawal, some informants from partner organisations pointed out the importance of not becoming too dependent on aid or on one donor (c.f. UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014).

Partner organisations and their relations with Sida in Uganda

When informants from partner organisations discussed ownership, they referred to it primarily in terms of the involvement of beneficiaries and implementing partners in decision-making processes. When asked whose ownership they referred to, all informants claimed that it was the beneficiaries'. Beneficiaries should have ownership over results, while their implementing partners were encouraged to define development objectives and to take part in the definition of indicators. As regards their relations with Sida, informants from the partner organisations claimed these were quite straightforward; they felt that they had ownership over the development interventions funded by Sida. One informant described ownership and the relations with Sida as follows:

We own the programme /.../. Sida's funding is not conditional; it is fair and unconditional. . The only time Sida interfered with what we were doing was when, they wanted us to scale up. That is the only time when they impeded our ownership, but that only meant that we should increase our coverage. (UDP3, 04/04/2014)

Sida's interference in the implementation of development cooperation was considered justifiable, given that the agency and Swedish taxpayers provided funding for the interventions (UDP1, 16/05/2014; UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP6, 04/05/2014). Even though informants described ownership as a fairly simple issue, a potentially problematic aspect related to it concerned who was in charge of defining and reporting on indicators, which are further discussed below.

Partner organisations and ownership of results

Informants had different views on the increased focus on results and how it influenced partner country ownership. Sida informants in Uganda reflected upon possible negative effects that the increased focus on results could have on ownership. In contrast, informants from partner organisations also addressed possible positive effects. For instance, one informant claimed that the increased demand for results and accountability had boosted the feeling of ownership; recognition of the organisation's development efforts had increased and with that the staff at the partner organisation felt empowered (UDP4, 13/05/2014). Whether the increased focus on results had influenced development cooperation,

and how it had done so, depended on who defined results and on the extent to which the definitions of results provided by Sida, the partner organisations, and the implementing partners correlated. One informant said the following:

I am not sure whether ownership has increased as a function of the focus on results. What kind of results are we talking about? The results we can see or the results we report? For instance, what the organization considers as a result, what the donor sees as a result or if it is the kind of results the community wants to see. (UDP3, 04/04/2014)

When informants from the partner organisations were asked to whom they were accountable, all but one answered that they were accountable to their beneficiaries. The partner organisations claimed that the needs and interests of poor men and women were in focus in their development cooperation. Beneficiaries should, therefore, be involved in the formulation of development objectives (UDP1, 16/05/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014). Informants also referred to their accountability to Sida and other donors. One of the informants (from a Ugandan CSO) mentioned that the CSOs s/he represented were also accountable to the Ugandan Government (UDP1, 16/05/2014). The partner organisations seemed to consider their role in relation to the government's strategies as supportive and complementary, but they also pointed out that they have a duty to ensure that the government is accountable to its citizens. Therefore, the CSOs had to be updated on the development plans of the Ugandan Government.

Partner organisations claimed that the needs and interests of beneficiaries were the focus of their work, but they also had to take into consideration the results required by Sida and other donors in order to receive funding. This dependence was frustrating, since donors' requirements did not always match the goals and development plans of the partner organisations (c.f. UDP2, 13/05/2014; UDP3, 04/04/2014). Being aware of Sida's priorities, the partner organisations adjusted their projects and programmes in accordance with the agency's focus areas (UDP1, 16/05/2014; UDP2, 13/05/2014; UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). The following quotes provide examples of what the partner organisations did to adjust their development objectives to suit Sida's requirements:

We look at Sida's strategies, then we listen in on how they think and, finally, we make sure that our plans match Sida's. (UDP7, 10/04/2014)

When we develop our programmes and projects, we look at Sida's strategic plan, which includes broader national priorities. So Sida's priority is capacity building, we adopt it as our priority too. (UDP1, 16/05/2014)

Sida is asking for its own results and [The partner organisation] defines results together with Sida, but it is Sida that defines the priorities, and it is the results required by Sweden, or by Sida that guide development cooperation. Sida only funds projects that are in line with their specific priorities. (UDP2, 13/05/2014)

Donors from different countries were said to pursue very different kinds of development cooperation, and to interfere in the definition of development objectives and indicators to different degrees. Donors such as the USAID and Japan, were described as exerting greater influence over development cooperation than donors such as Denmark and Sweden, for instance. This was reflected in how the ownership of results was perceived: informants from partner organisations felt that they owned the results achieved in the development cooperation funded by Sweden to a greater extent than they did in development cooperation funded by the USAID or Japan (UDP2, 13/05/2014). One informant said the following: “Sida is very keen on making sure that their partners feel that they own the results of development cooperation, but they also require results that can be related to their strategies” (UDP6, 04/05/2014).

Similar to Sida staff, informants from partner organisations referred to dialogue as an instrument for discussing development issues with the donor. Dialogue was generally considered positive, but what it meant in more precise terms was unclear. During a discussion about dialogue, one informant asked: “What does dialogue really mean?” (UDP8, 10/04/2014). The increased demand for results was argued to have improved Sida’s dialogue with its partner organisations; Sida had become more concerned, and thus involved, in the formulation of indicators and in the definition of results (UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP6, 04/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). Whether Sida required results that could be attributed to a specific intervention was unclear, but informants remarked that it seemed to be enough to report on an intervention’s contribution to a result. They did describe the issue of attribution as problematic, however, in particular as regards the attribution of results to a specific organisation when several actors had been involved in the same project (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014).

According to the partner organisations, it was mainly their implementing partners that defined the results and set the indicators for how results should be measured. Yet they, in collaboration with Sida, supported the implementing partners in this process (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP6, 04/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). The process of defining development objectives and indicators was described as follows:

They [the implementing partners] come up with projects presented in a project document. Then we merge the documents into one programme document. The

programme document is developed together with the [implementing] partners, and the indicators are also determined at this level. (UDP5, 02/04/2014)

The importance of implementing partners' ownership was manifested when the partner organisation emphasised that the implementing partners should be involved in the selection of indicators and in the M&E of the projects (UDP3, 04/04/2014; UDP4, 13/05/2014; UDP6, 04/05/2014). However, some partner organisations established indicators without consulting their implementing partners; they often did so when generic quantitative indicators were set up by INGO or Sida. For one informant from a small partner organisation, in the best-case scenario development workers would set indicators directly with beneficiaries. There was, however, seldom time or resources available to do this, since a great deal of the resources in the partner organisations were devoted to writing proposals. Some informants pointed out that one of the risks when implementing partners were not involved was the establishment of indicators that suited the partner organisations, rather than the beneficiaries (UDP3, 04/04/2014). Others stated that they worked with the implementing partner throughout the process, and that implementing partners could influence what indicators to use (UDP4, 13/05/2014, 02/04/2014; UDP6, 04/05/2014; UDP7, 10/04/2014). Even when implementing partners defined results, they appeared to have limited possibilities to change them during the implementation of the intervention. One informant even claimed that partner organisations did not have the mandate to change the indicators during the implementation of an intervention "even when the partners themselves decide what should be achieved, they cannot change the indicators during the course of the implementation of a project" (UDP3, 04/04/2014).

6.5. Summary and analysis: framing results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda

6.5.1. Framing of results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda

Both Sida informants in Uganda and informants from partner organisations agreed that there were differences in how development actors' in Swedish development cooperation in Uganda understood, results. These differences was considered problems for they led to different expectations concerning results and to different approaches to results reporting. The interviews also revealed differences in framing results. These are presented in figure 14.

	Sida in Uganda	Partner organisations in Uganda
<i>Diagnostic framing: Description of the problem</i>	Primary: a request from the Swedish Government (and thus not a problem as such). Secondary: the need to make development cooperation more effective and efficient to improve the situation for poor men and women.	A need to make development cooperation more effective to improve the situation for poor men and women.
<i>Prognostic framing: Solution to the problem</i>	More reporting on results, preferably results on outcome level. Improved accountability. Improved management of development cooperation.	Increased focus on outcome results; learning what works and why to improve future development cooperation.
<i>Motivational framing: Why is this the best way to solve the problem (stated above)?</i>	Increased accountability to the Swedish Government and Swedish taxpayers: To maintain a positive attitude to international development cooperation amongst the general public in Sweden.	Increased development effectiveness and efficiency through learning from results. Improved situation for poor men and women in Uganda.
<i>Framing rationale: Internal justification to implement the identified solutions</i>	Increased development effectiveness and efficiency through learning from results. Improved situation for poor men and women in Uganda.	Demonstrating for donors that their work was important in order to get funding.

Figure 14: Framing of results: Sida and partner organisations in Uganda.

As regards ownership, there were differences between how staff at Sida and representatives from partner organizations were framing ownership, and this was also recognized by informants. However, these differences were only prominent at a general level; it did not seem to any major differences amongst staff at Sida or amongst representatives from partner organizations in how they were framing ownership. Sida staff in Uganda described ownership mainly in terms of having a dialogue with development partners. The differences in the framing of ownership are presented in.

	Sida in Uganda	Partner organisations in Uganda
<i>Diagnostic framing: Description of the problem</i>	Lack of development effectiveness	Lack of development effectiveness
<i>Prognostic framing: Solution to the problem</i>	Dialogue with development partners and, to the extent possible, with the Ugandan Government. Take Ugandan development policies in consideration.	Partner organisations, implementing partners, but mainly poor men and women, should have increased control over development objectives and possibilities to formulate development objectives. Donors also need to feel ownership and responsibility for development cooperation.
<i>Motivational framing: Why is this the best way to solve the problem (stated above)?</i>	Reference to Paris Declaration: Development partners had better conditions to pursue effective development cooperation.	Implementing partners and beneficiaries had more knowledge about context and, therefore, about what was necessary to support development.
<i>Framing rationale: Internal justification to implement the identified solutions</i>	Ownership was not controversial and all informants agreed on encouraging ownership.	Ownership was not controversial and all informants agreed on encouraging ownership.

Figure 15: Framing of ownership: Sida and partner organisations in Uganda.

Informants acknowledged different conceptions of ownership, however these differences were not considered a challenge in the implementation of development interventions. It further seems that the issue was not something that were frequently discussed amongst the informants.

6.5.2. The results agenda and ownership: policy arrangements in Swedish development cooperation with Uganda

Policy discourse – the views and narratives of involved actors: In Swedish development cooperation the results agenda has commonly been referred to in terms of an increased demand for results. However, informants from partner organisations and from Sida in Uganda did not share this description. Instead, they considered that the results agenda had implied a change in the focus on results; more specifically, the change concerned why and what kinds of results were asked for, and how results should be reported. One of the major changes was the focus on outcomes and impact results, rather than on results reported as outputs (or even activities). All informants, both from Sida in Uganda and from partner organisations, overarching development objective, namely, improving the situation for poor men and women. However, they considered themselves accountable to different stakeholders; while informants from partner

organisations considered that they were primarily accountable to the poor men and women in Uganda, Sida informants were mainly accountable to the Swedish Government and to Swedish taxpayers. As the Swedish policy stated that Swedish development cooperation should work in favour of the poor men and women, it could be argued that this differing view of accountability did not necessarily imply a contradiction (between being accountable to Swedish stakeholders or to poor men and women in Uganda). However, the focus on Swedish stakeholders could have affected ownership, since development partners did not have the same possibility to participate in and thus of influencing decision-making processes. Partner organisations responsibilities for carrying out development cooperation and for delivering the results set in Swedish policies by the Swedish Government, represented by Sida in Uganda had increased.

Actors and policy coalitions: Sida in Uganda appeared to have distanced themselves from its partner organisations. For instance, Sida informants could not specify to what extent their partner organisations had been involved in the development of the new results strategy.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, partner organisations described Sida as more involved in dialogue with its development partners than other donors. Sida staff in Uganda seemed to work closely with the Swedish MFA. It should also be noted that, although the Swedish Government's demand for results was mentioned as one of the main reasons for why results were required, the staff at Sida did not fully share the Government's description of the problem. This disagreement could explain in part why Sida in Uganda considered the implementation of the results agenda challenging.

The rules of the game were not very clear for Sida informants, and it was not clear how the Government's results requirement should be understood and implemented by Sida in Uganda. Sida staff members awaited the adoption of the new results strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Uganda. They expected that the new strategy would clarify how the reporting of results should be carried out.

Informants from partner organisations expressed uncertainty as regards flexibility in development interventions, but the reporting of results seemed to be a relatively straightforward task. The main challenges mentioned were to find the resources to report on the results and to identify the right indicators.

One of the changes introduced by the results agenda concerned the procedures and protocols for reporting results. The procedures had become more specific,

⁴⁸ In addition, none of the informants from the partner organisation had been invited to participate in this process.

with more rules and regulations that determined how results should be reported, which in turn led all actors to experience an increased administrative burden. However, the perceived differences with reference to how results should be understood seemed to be greater than the actual differences. Most informants, for instance, agreed on the necessity of reporting results at outcome level. In addition, most development actors were aware of and respected other actors' framing of results; Sida appreciated its partner organisations' interest in learning and respected their need of flexibility; and the partner organisations accepted that Sida increased the demand for results since the agency was accountable to the Swedish Government and to Swedish taxpayers.

Resource allocation and power relations: The cancelation of most of Swedish development cooperation with the Ugandan Government in the spring 2014 led to changes in resource allocation. Several partner organisations received more money to spend, money which would have been allocated to the Ugandan Government. As a consequence, the partner organisations' possibilities of influencing development cooperation also increased. The partner organisations were considered to represent poor men and women to a greater extent than the Ugandan Government. Informants from the partner organisations also experienced that the increased demand for results was a token of donors' interest in their work. This interest was an empowering factor that could contribute to an increased feeling of ownership. Informants from partner organisations did not consider reporting to the Swedish Government and Swedish taxpayers something negative or detrimental: they did not find it surprising, in other words, that these actors wanted to know how their money was spent.

Partner organisations in particular associated the increased reporting requirements with future funding: if they did not report results, regardless of having achieved results or not, they would not receive funding in the future. Systems and competence for M&E were described as prerequisites to receive future funding.

7. Results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique

7.1. Introduction

This chapter presents findings from interviews with stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique. It is mainly based on fieldwork carried out in Mozambique in November and December 2015. The chapter begins with a brief description of the context in Mozambique and with a short historical outline. A general description of Swedish development cooperation and relations with Mozambique follows. This description focuses on the aspects of Swedish development cooperation that play a central part in this study, namely, GBS and support to democracy, equality, and human rights. The aim with this description is to provide a background to the Swedish support, and to situate this support in a wider context.

The purpose of the chapter is to explore how different actors within Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique are framing results and ownership, and how they perceive that the results agenda has influenced partner country ownership.

7.2. Contextualising Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique

7.2.1. Introducing Mozambique

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world; around 70% of its population of 25,6 million live in poverty⁴⁹ (UNDP, 2015c). Since the civil war (the so-called ‘destabilisation war’) ended in 1992, however, Mozambique has experienced a remarkable economic progress. The country’s Gross Domestic

⁴⁹ Poverty refers here to living below purchasing poverty parity (PPP), that is, USD 1.25 per day. PPP is measured in constant 2011 international dollars converted into PPP (UNDP, 2015c)

Product (GDP) has increased with an average of 7% annually over the last two decades (World Bank, 2015; see also IMF, 2016). An increased number of manufacturing industries, spurred by privatisation of public companies and trade liberalisation, as well as foreign investments in sugar plantations and in coal and natural gas, have contributed to economic growth (Castel-Branco, 2014; IMF, 2016). Despite the country's economic growth, the Government of the Republic of Mozambique (GoM) has not been successful in reducing poverty or providing broader social and economic development: between 2003 and 2009, the number of poor people had only been reduced by 4% (World Bank, 2015; Hanlon & Smart, 2008; Castel-Branco, 2014). Mozambique is still found amongst the poorest countries in the world according to economic standards and levels of human development⁵⁰ (UNDP, 2015c). The economic situation has deteriorated even further lately as a consequence of increased inflation and the depreciation of the country's currency, the metical, against the U.S. dollar. Low commodity prices, drought, conflicts, and the discovery of hidden debts are the main reasons for this economic downturn (World Bank, 2016b).

Mozambique has a rather diversified economy based, among other things, on agriculture, trade, industry, and tourism. Agriculture is the main source of income for around 80% of the Mozambicans, and many depend on subsistence farming. The agricultural sector makes up for approximately one third of the country's GDP. Modernisation of the agricultural sector is a key issue for the Mozambican Government, as well as for many donors (Cunguara & Hanlon, 2012; Tarp, Arndt, Jensen, Robinson, & Heltberg, 2002). Mozambique has large deposits of coal, natural gas, and oil currently exploited by national and international companies. Huge expectations are placed on these resources and their potential to boost the country's economy. It is estimated that Mozambique could become Africa's third largest producer of natural gas, after Nigeria and Algeria (Utrikespolitiska Institutet, 2015).

Many Mozambicans suffer from poor access to health and education facilities. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 30% of the population is unable to access health services, and only 50% of Mozambicans have access to "an acceptable level of health care" (WHO, 2017). Life expectancy at birth in Mozambique is, on average, 55,5 year, which is low in comparison

⁵⁰ The UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Mozambique as number 180 out of 188 countries. The HDI is based on three dimensions of poverty: 1) life expectancy; 2) education among adult population and access to school amongst children; and 3) standard of living measured by Gross National Income (GNI) per capita converted using PPP (UNDP, 2015c, p. 2).

with 58.8 years in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP, 2015c). Literacy rate is also low: only around 50% of the adult population (i.e. 15 years and older) can read and write (UNDP, 2015c). However, the literacy rate is increasing following improvements in the access to education over the last decades. This access is more limited in the northern part of the country (e.g. Hanlon & Smart, 2008; UNICEF, 2013a). Portuguese is the official language in Mozambique, but only around 6.3 million (or around 25%) of the population speak Portuguese (Lewis, Simons, & Fenning, 2016).

7.2.2. *A brief history of Mozambique*

Colonialism and the fight for independence

As the rest of the African coast facing the Indian Ocean, Mozambique has been a place for gold, slave, and ivory trade with Arabic traders for centuries. The first Portuguese came to the area in 1498, with the aim of creating maritime bases for the trade between Europe and Asia and also trading gold, ivory, and slaves (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995; Ohlson, Stedman, & Davies, 1994). After the Berlin conference (1884-85), when European powers divided Africa among each other, Portugal remained with present day Angola and Mozambique in Southern Africa and the current borders of the two countries were established (Stock, 1995). From the 1930s to the 1970s, two factors had great influence over the country's economy. The first one was the role that Mozambique played in relation to other countries in the region by supplying migrant workers and providing transport links for foreign trade, which made up approximately half of Mozambique's foreign revenues. The second factor was the country's export of raw materials, mainly agricultural products, copper, and other metals. Mozambique became an overseas province of Portugal in 1951; before that, non-Portuguese trading companies had been responsible for the greater share of the country's economic exploitation (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995). After the Second World War, many Portuguese left their home country to settle in Mozambique as farmers. However, despite Portugal's policy of establishing large farming settlements, a majority of the settlers ended up in towns where they took most of the employment opportunities (Chabal, 1996). Around 225 000 Portuguese settlers lived in Mozambique in the early 1970s (e.g. Tarp et al., 2002). Most Mozambicans never became Portuguese citizens; instead, they were legally defined as *indígenas* (i.e. natives), and subjected to complex juridical and administrative controls. Mozambicans who adopted Portuguese values and habits in line with the country's common law could become *assimilados* and acquire more privileges than *indígenas* (Harris, 1958). The control over the *indígenas* increased, and dissidents who opposed the Portuguese rule were

persecuted. As the situation in Mozambique worsened as a consequence of oppression and forced labour, many Mozambicans migrated and settled in neighbouring countries (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995; Egerö, 1990).

Despite the persecution of dissidents, protests against the colonial power increased and the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Frelimo) was formed in 1962 to fight the colonial rule. Initially, Frelimo intended to achieve independence by peaceful means but, in 1964, the peaceful approach was abandoned and an armed struggle commenced, the so-called *war of liberation* (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995; Egerö, 1990). Frelimo was politically, economically, and militarily supported by the Soviet Union and its allies and in 1974 it controlled more than one third of the country. At the same time, the political situation in Portugal changed radically as a result of the “carnation revolution”. The carnation revolution was initially a military coup, but a public campaign took over and led to the fall of the dictator and to Portugal’s withdrawal from its colonies. The liberation of Mozambique was not a direct result of the war of liberation, but rather a consequence of the overthrow of power in Portugal (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995; Chabal, 2002b; Tarp et al., 2002).

Colonial legacies and the war of destabilisation

Mozambique became independent on the 25th of June 1975. During the transition period and the first year of independence, about 200 000 Portuguese, which amounts to around 90% of the settlers, left the country. When the settlers left, the country was drained of much of the knowledge essential to its administration and industrial sector (Tarp et al., 2002). The Portuguese administration was authoritarian, bureaucratic, and ineffective. They did not allow native Mozambicans to have any political representation. As a result, very few Mozambicans had experience of political work after independence. As Chabal (2002a, p. 48) puts it:

Portuguese colonial rule was not overly favorable to the construction of the independent nation /.../ It generally accepted that the transition to independence was easiest in those colonies where the political, social, economic and technical infrastructure was the most developed /.../ On all these accounts the Portuguese colonies were deficient.

Wesseling (2014, p. 172) describes the Portuguese way of ruling their African colonies as an “uneconomic imperialism”, meaning that they did not search for raw materials or other commodities in Africa. The possession of colonies was important mainly in terms of prestige. The Mozambican colony was mismanaged with huge problems with corruption (Wesseling, 2014). The Portuguese left behind a country without a functioning educational system,

with inadequate infrastructure and industry, and with an almost non-existing health service. Consequently, only 10% of the adult Mozambicans could read and write by the time of the Portuguese withdrawal (Ohlson et al., 1994; Tarp et al., 2002). The first years after independence was a period of crisis management, but this was also a period of optimism in relation to the future of the country. After independence, Frelimo became the ruling party and its leader, Samora Machel, became the president. Inspired by Marxist-Leninist principles, Frelimo formed a one-party state with highly centralised decision-making procedures. The Government-controlled industry was supposed to promote economic development in Mozambique, while the agricultural sector was assigned a more passive and supportive role. All banks, schools, and health centres were also nationalised in line with the annual central state plan, *Plano Estatal Central* (Tarp et al., 2002).

At the time of the independence, Frelimo did not encounter any major opposition within Mozambique. However, in the end of the 1970s the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (Renamo) was formed, supported by Rhodesia and later South Africa. Renamo did not appreciate the liberation of Mozambique and Frelimo's Marxist-Leninist policy. Their intentions were to destabilise Mozambique, remove Frelimo from power, and install a more western-oriented liberal approach to economics and policies. Renamo carried out attacks from bases in South Africa, targeting primarily social and economic infrastructure such as important roads and railways. The conflicts between Frelimo and Renamo escalated and led to civil war, the so-called "war of destabilisation", in 1980. Schools, hospitals, and railways were sabotaged, and large parts of the countryside were under Renamo attack; people fled their villages and the food production decreased (Newitt, 2002; Newitt, 1995; Sidaway & Simon, 1993; Tarp et al., 2002). In October 1992, Frelimo and Renamo signed a peace agreement. By the time the war was over, approximately one million people had been killed and several million Mozambicans had fled to the neighbouring countries or were refugees within Mozambique (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995; Newitt, 1995; Tarp et al., 2002). In the early 1990s, Mozambique was one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world; around 90% of the population (of 18 million then) lived in poverty. To prevent mass starvation, Mozambique depended on external aid (Meredith, 2005, p. 609).

7.2.3. Recent developments in Mozambique: from early 1990s to 2010s

After the devastating war, the peace-process in Mozambique was quite smooth. The first multi-party election was held in 1994. Frelimo received a majority of the votes and Chissano became the first elected president in Mozambique after

the civil war. Frelimo has remained the largest party in parliament since then, challenged by Renamo and, more recently, by the Movimento Democrático de Moçambique (MDM). National elections have been held every fifth year since 1994. Although international observers have deemed the overall outcomes of the national elections in Mozambique a reflection of the will of the people, the electoral processes have been repeatedly criticised (Freedom House, 2015b). Frelimo has strengthened its power over the years, among other things it has fortified the ties between the party and the government and restricted democratic processes by excluding the opposition from decision making (Freedom House, 2015b). The relations between Frelimo and Renamo have deteriorated due to the political situation; in 2013, the Renamo leader, Afonso Dhlakama, threatened to use violence if Renamo was not given more political and economic influence. Violence broke out between armed Renamo supporters and the police, Renamo attacked roads and railways, and numerous casualties ensued (Wiegink, 2015). A new peace agreement was reached in 2014 and Renamo's influence in the country's governance increased. In the 2014 elections, Renamo received 37% of the votes, twice the proportion of votes they had received in the 2009 elections. Although Frelimo remained the largest party in parliament, it lost many of its seats and has been unable to make any constitutional changes without support from other parties (Hanlon, 2015; Freedom House, 2015b). Renamo got a majority of the votes in several provinces and initiated negotiations on increased independence in some of the Northern provinces. Several clashes between Renamo and the police have occurred over the last years, and casualties have been reported (Utrikespolitiska Institutet, 2015; see also Hanlon, 2015).

Criminality has increased in Mozambique over the past decades. Drug trade, kidnappings, money laundering, and prostitution have become major problems and provoked mafia-like conflicts. In 2000, journalist Carlos Cardoso was shot dead in the street, an incident that gained a lot of international attention. At the time of his death, Cardoso was investigating frauds related to the privatisation of Mozambique's largest banks that amounted to hundred million dollars, and high-level politicians were accused of involvement in Cardoso's murder. Witnesses accused president Chissano's son, Nhymoine Chissano, of having ordered the murder (Hanlon, 2004a). Corruption in Mozambique is widespread and involves actors at all levels, including top politicians (Transparency International, 2014).

7.2.4. Mozambique and international development cooperation: a brief historical outline

The different phases of the history of international development cooperation in Mozambique could be described as follows (e.g. Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013):

Post-independence period (1975-1982): After independence from Portugal, foreign assistance to Mozambique came mainly from the Eastern bloc, the Nordic countries, and Italy. Most of it came as project support and technical assistance, and it aimed to cover increased costs for imports mainly due to increased prices on oil (Batley, Bjornestad, & Cumbi, 2006; Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013; Hanlon & Smart, 2008).

Armed conflict (1983-1992): Mozambique's economy collapsed in the 1980s as a consequence of the intensification of the civil war and a combination of falling exports and increased imports, which was in part a consequence of increased oil prices. The collapse of the economy coincided with some of the worst droughts in the country's history, and Mozambique was forced to turn to the international community for assistance (Tarp et al., 2002). Mozambique became a member of the IMF in 1984 and, in 1987, the first SAP was introduced after external pressure from Western donors who wanted Mozambique to adopt a more liberal and capitalistic approach to development (Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995). After becoming a member of the IMF, the number of bilateral and multilateral donors increased. The number of INGOs also increased in this period; only seven INGOs operated in the country in 1980, but 180 were in operation in 1990 (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006; Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013). Mozambique became highly dependent on aid. When the country's aid dependency peaked in 1992, ODA made up 87% of the Gross National Income (GNI) (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006).

Peace agreement and multi-party elections (1992-1996): Food aid declined between 1993 and 1994, but the support to cover costs for imports and balance of payment remained. Donors made major investments in rehabilitation projects, especially in rebuilding infrastructure that has been destroyed during the war. Multilateral donors including the UN came to play important roles in coordinating donors (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013). Since the early 1990s, the IMF and the World Bank have had great influence over Mozambique's economic policy by means of SAPs and PRSPs. These documents focused on market economy and privatisation of government-owned industries, which led to the privatisation of national banks and of a large share of the agricultural sector (Tarp et al., 2002). The SAPs largely

neglected social aspects of governance, such as the provision of health care and education. Furthermore, they led to the abolishment of government subsidies and the dismissal of civil servants, which opened up Mozambique for foreign industries and forced many domestic industries to close down. These programmes arguably engendered the absence of social development and the widening gap between the few rich and the many poor (Cunguara & Hanlon, 2012; see also Abrahamsson & Nilsson, 1995). The IMF and World Bank have changed some of their policies in relation to Mozambique over the last years, and a greater share of the budget is now devoted to the social sector (Utrikespolitiska Institutet, 2015).

Increased bilateral involvement and focus on sector aid (1996-2002): Bilateral ODA more than doubled between 1996 and 2002, while multilateral ODA remained the same. The contribution to current expenditures increased in this period, in particular as regards specific provinces. Besides, a shift from project to sector aid took place. The so-called Common Funds, for instance, were established to support entire sectors and political reforms (Batley, et al., 2006; Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013).

Strengthening government processes (2002-2014): GBS was introduced in the early 2000s within the framework of the Joint Donor Program for Macro-Economic Support. Ten donors were initially engaged in the GBS programme, but the donor group expanded rapidly and, in 2004, it involved 15 donors. These donors and the GoM agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding the implementation of the GBS in 2004. In 2009, when the second MoU was signed, 19 donors were involved. It should be noted that the GBS has been supplemented with large shares of institutional support to assist the GoM in fulfilling the commitments made in the MoU (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006; Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013). The number of INGOs involved in development cooperation also increased from 180 in 1990 to 330 in 2010 (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006). According to the GoM, however, the INGOs' contribution to the flows of ODA is quite limited (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013). Since its introduction, the GBS has exerted strong influence over development cooperation (Hanlon, 2015). The forthcoming section on GBS addresses the more recent development cooperation in Mozambique.

7.3. Sweden's development cooperation with Mozambique

7.3.1. *A brief history of Sweden's development relations with Mozambique*

Swedish cooperation with Mozambique was initiated in the 1960s, before Mozambique's independence from Portugal. Swedish political parties, mainly the Social Democratic Party and the Liberal Party, as well as several Swedish INGOs, were engaged in the liberation movements in Southern Africa (Sellström, 2002). Sweden's historical engagement in the country is still influencing the development relations with Mozambique. For instance, several informants pointed out that they considered Sweden a reliable and long-term development partner. One expert informant described the relations between Sweden and Mozambique as follows: "Sweden is a long-term development partner and has been in Mozambique since before the independence, together with the three other Nordic countries. The [Mozambican] Government is aware of this long-term engagement and highly appreciates it" (MEI2, 27/11/2015).

Sweden initiated its formal development cooperation with Mozambique in 1975, after the independence from Portugal (Sellström, 2002). At first, Swedish aid was given as humanitarian assistance, financial support to the import of necessary commodities, and as sector support to education and agriculture. The Nordic countries established a joint agricultural programme to support Mozambican farmers in 1977. Support to the agricultural sector decreased in the early 1980s, and more money was devoted to infrastructure and industrial support instead. In addition, a great share of Swedish ODA was given as emergency assistance (including food aid) and debt relief (SIDA & Hermele, 1988). Between 1985 and 1991, the civil war years, Swedish aid was given mainly as emergency assistance. Technical assistance also increased in the 1980s, and Swedish staff such as teachers and healthcare professionals were sent to Mozambique (SIDA & Westman, 1983). Sweden introduced a new form of development assistance in the early 1990s to support the Public Administration in Mozambique. Support was directed towards different levels in the Mozambican society through the Ministry of Finance, the state's staff administration, and local authorities (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2015).

When the peace agreement between Frelimo and Renamo was signed in 1992, Sweden supported international efforts for reconciliation and for the promotion of democratic development in Mozambique. Over time Swedish development cooperation has become less focused on post-conflict issues and more focused on poverty reduction (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2015). In 1997, the IMF

considered Mozambique eligible for the HIPC initiative. When Mozambique had completed the initiative in 2001, the country's debts had been reduced by 75%. Sweden was an active supporter of Mozambique's HIPC process and of the implementation of Mozambique's national Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (PARPA)⁵¹ (Johnston & Sida, 2003). In the late 1990s, Sweden and Sida identified the political situation in Mozambique and the country's weak public sector as the most significant hindrances to development. In its annual country report in 2001, Sida summarises the situation in Mozambique as follows:

Mozambique's weak public sector is a limiting factor for both the country's development endeavours and for development cooperation. The public sector is suffering from a lack of well-educated civil servants, and has difficulty in competing with the private sector and also with donors, with the result that key people leave the public sector for better paid work. The public sector's efficiency is further weakened by its political link to Frelimo, the party in Government, and by its economic links to the private sector. Political power in Mozambique is to a great extent intertwined with economic power and economic advantage. (Sida, 2001, p. 10)

Support to capacity building within the public administration also became a priority in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique (Sida, 2001).

7.3.2. Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique in the 2010s

Swedish strategies for development cooperation with Mozambique

Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique is currently guided by the *Results strategy for Sweden's international development cooperation with Mozambique 2015-2020*, adopted in June 2015 (Swedish Government, 2015). This strategy was preceded by the *Cooperation strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique 2008-2012*⁵² (Swedish Government, 2008). The cooperation strategy from 2008 is of special interest here, since it covers most of the relevant period for the study (i.e. 2006-2014).

The Cooperation Strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique 2008-2012 identifies GBS as an important aid modality to support the GoM in the implementation of their budget and strategies for development. Sweden and Mozambique signed a four-year agreement on GBS in 2014. This agreement establishes that the Swedish GBS support should be

⁵¹ PARPA I and its successor, PARPA II, are further discussed in the section on Ownership and General Budget Support.

⁵² This strategy was prolonged until 2015 (Swedish Government, 2015).

USD 37 369 651 in this period. However, the GBS would only be delivered if the GoM fulfilled the commitments it had made in the agreement. The Swedish GBS to Mozambique is described as

an unearmarked contribution to Mozambique's state budget for the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy. The objective is to strengthen public infrastructure and services for poverty reduction in a way that ensures Mozambican ownership and strengthens country systems. (Openaid & Swedish Government, 2015c)

The GBS was aimed to support democracy, gender equality, and human rights issues in Mozambique. There was, however, another programme to support these sectors through INGOs and Mozambican CSOs. This programme is called "AGIR" (Portuguese abbreviation for *Programa de Acções para uma Governação Inclusiva e Responsável*)⁵³ and involves four INGOs that, in turn, support Mozambican CSOs (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2016). AGIR's overall objective is

[to] support Mozambican civil society organizations, strengthening their capacity for and impact on improving transparency, accountability, citizen's participation, access to information, respect for human rights, and gender equality. (Kelpin, Johnsen, Macuane, Christophos, & Rothman, 2013, p. 22)

The programme commenced in 2010, and its first phase (AGIR 1) ended in 2014. The second phase (AGIR 2) was initiated in January 2015, and it will last until the end of December 2020. The Embassy of Sweden in Maputo is the lead donor in the programme, and Denmark, the Netherlands, and Norway also provide funding (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2016). The four INGOs generally referred to as intermediary partner organisations (IPOs) are Diakonia, IBIS, Oxfam Novib, and We Effect. Each IPO is responsible for the management of one of the AGIR sub-programmes, which cover four thematic areas. In AGIR 1⁵⁴, the IPOs were responsible for the following sub-programmes (Kelpin et al., 2013):

- I. Diakonia (a Swedish organisation): participation and legal accountability, including monitoring respect for human rights;
- II. IBIS (a Danish organisation): promotion of access to information;
- III. Oxfam Novib (a British/Dutch organisation): transparency, financial and political accountability;

⁵³ In English: Action Programme for Inclusive and Responsible Governance (AGIR).

⁵⁴ AGIR 1 has more relevance in the context of this study because of the period covered here.

IV. WeEffect⁵⁵ (a Swedish organisation): social accountability in management of natural resources and community land rights.

The IPOs work in partnership with a number of Mozambican CSOs (i.e. partner organisations, hereafter referred to as POs). Around 50 POs get funding from AGIR through the IPOs, and most of the funding is disbursed as institutional funding.⁵⁶ The goals of the AGIR programme are to strengthen the POs' ability to influence development processes and to improve the POs' possibilities to hold policy makers and other duty bearers accountable for their actions (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2016). According to the Embassy of Sweden Maputo (2016), the POs work mainly to:

- enhance public participation in development processes;
- promote access to information;
- demand accountability from the government;
- fight corruption;
- monitor Government policies; and/or
- promote respect for human rights, including gender equality and children's rights.

USD 45 million were earmarked to be disbursed to AGIR 1⁵⁷ (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2016), and approximately USD 57 million are budgeted for AGIR 2 (Openaid & Swedish Government, 2015b). In addition to the AGIR programme, Sida supports a number of other INGOs that work with democracy, gender equality, and human rights in Mozambique. One of these INGOs is the Africa Groups of Sweden, which received more than USD 1.3 million to support 40 POs in five countries in Southern Africa between 2013 and 2015 (Openaid & Swedish Government, 2015a).⁵⁸ The Africa Groups works through three programmes: the right to your body (HIV and sexuality in Southern Africa); the right to a living wage (agricultural workers living and working conditions); and the rights to Africa's resources (including natural resources, fair trade, land grabbing, and sustainable climate) (Africa Groups of Sweden, 2015). In addition, GoM institutions, such as the Inspectorate General of Finance and the Tax Agency in Mozambique, received funding in 2015 (Openaid & Swedish Government, 2015b). Figure 16 presents an

⁵⁵ In 2013, *We Effect* changed its name from Swedish Cooperative Center (SCC) to *We Effect* (*We Effect*, 2013). Here, *We Effect* refers to both SCC and *We Effect*.

⁵⁶ Institutional funding is a form of support given directly to an organisation's budget; it is not directed to any specific project or programme. The PO is thus quite free to decide how the institutional funding should be invested.

⁵⁷ No information has been found on the final disbursements in AGIR 1.

⁵⁸ No information has been found on how much of this money was spent in Mozambique.

overview of development actors involved in the flow of ODA in Swedish development cooperation in Mozambique, focusing on GBS and Swedish support to democracy and human rights.

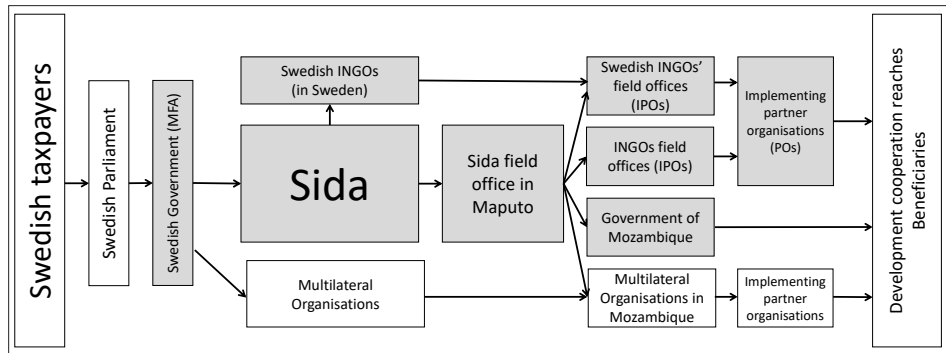


Figure 16: An overview: actors in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique. Highlighted boxes indicate actors that have been interviewed for this study (arrows indicating flow of ODA).

Source: Author's elaboration.

Monitoring and evaluation of Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique

The Embassy of Sweden in Maputo is a fully delegated embassy in charge of managing the reporting of Swedish development assistance to Mozambique (Swedish Government, 2015). The reporting of the Swedish GBS should be harmonised within the Program Aid Partners group (PAP) and follow the GoM's processes for planning and annual review (Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009, 2015). Sida wrote annual strategy reports in which assessments were made of the progress of Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique (see for instance Sida, 2015e). Within the AGIR programme, the IPOs sent individual reports to Sida and produced one joint report on the progress of the programme on an annual basis. These were the formal reporting requirements on Swedish GBS and Sida's support to the AGIR programme. The following sections discuss how these instructions were understood and conceptualised and examine the M&E in greater detail.

In addition to annual reports, a mid-term review of the AGIR programme was made in 2013 (Kelpin et al., 2013). As the report came quite late in the implementation of the programme, several of the informants described it as a final report of the first phase of the AGIR programme. Sida also published an *Evaluation of thematic results achieved and demonstrated within the Programa de Acções para uma Governação Inclusiva e Responsável – AGIR* in 2014 (Holmberg, Macune, & Salimo, 2014). One of the conclusions drawn in this evaluation is that it was necessary to improve the results reporting within the AGIR

programme. POs' should develop their systems for M&E (Holmberg et al., 2014).

Two joint evaluations of GBS to Mozambique have been made. The first of these evaluation covers the years 1994 to 2004 (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006), and the second covers the years between 2005 and 2012 (European Commission, 2014). Several donors commissioned these reports, but Sweden was not one of them. However, as the findings are general, the evaluations were also valid for the Swedish GBS. The Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos (IESE) has also published a number of reports on the GBS cooperation in Mozambique (IESE, 2009, 2010).

7.4. Conceptualising results and ownership in Swedish General Budget Support to Mozambique

7.4.1. Introduction to General Budget Support in Mozambique

This section presents the main findings of the fieldwork carried out in Mozambique in November and December 2015, when interviews were conducted with actors involved in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique. These actors comprised people who worked or had worked for the GoM (Ministry of Economy and Finance), Sida staff at the Swedish Embassy in Maputo, and people with extensive experience of work with GBS in Mozambique (in total eight informants). In addition, information has been gathered from agreements and other official documents on GBS, including evaluations and strategy papers. Before the findings related to GBS cooperation in Mozambique are presented, a general description of GBS as an aid modality is made.

7.4.2. A general description of General Budget Support and ownership

GBS is non-earmarked support given directly to a partner country's national budget in support for the implementation of the partner country's development agenda. The intentions with the GBS are to increase aid effectiveness and efficiency by means of, among other things, reduced transaction costs, predictable financing, increased partner country ownership, and strengthened domestic accountability (Koeberle, Stavreski, & Walliser, 2006; OECD/DAC, 2006). The OECD/DAC defines budget support as

[a] method of financing a partner country's budget through a transfer of resources from an external financing agency to the partner government's national treasury. The funds thus transferred are managed in accordance with the recipient's

budgetary procedures. Funds transferred to the national treasury for financing programmes or projects managed according to different budgetary procedures from those of the partner country, with the intention of earmarking the resources for specific uses, are therefore excluded from this definition of budget support. (OECD/DAC, 2006, p. 26)

Before the GBS cooperation is initiated, donors and the government that receives the GBS make an agreement that stipulates the conditions for the GBS and the specific requirements according to which the GBS cooperation should be carried out. Several donors are often involved in GBS cooperation, and the process leading up to a GBS agreement begins with a shared understanding among these donors. Based on the partner country's development objectives and strategies, GBS donors make a conditionality framework with attached indicators, from which the donors can make individual assessments of the GBS cooperation. The donors and the government in the partner country then negotiate the terms of this framework, and the negotiation should result in a GBS agreement that contains conditions and targets for GBS, as well as details on how the GBS should be implemented and monitored (OECD/DAC, 2003a, 2006). The GBS agreement usually includes a performance assessment framework (PAF) with indicators to measure progress in relation to targets (Koeberle & Stavreski, 2006). Donors also make commitments regarding how much GBS they should give, and when and how these disbursements should be made. These are often perennial and conditioned funding commitments, which entails that GBS is only disbursed if the partner government has fulfilled these conditions. GBS donors and the partner government assess the extent to which the partner government has fulfilled its commitments, and thereby decide whether the GBS should be disbursed as planned. The negotiation processes that surround GBS cooperation are often extensive, addressing issues such as the formulation of the agreement the interpretation of GBS results, and compliance with underlying principles (e.g. Koeberle & Stavreski, 2006; OECD/DAC, 2006). In the case of Mozambique, the GBS agreement between the GoM and the GBS donors is based on based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which is described in detail in section 7.4.5.

Since GBS is given to support the implementation of the partner country's development policies and since it is disbursed through its budgetary system, it is an aid modality that should contribute to, or even manifest, partner country ownership (Koeberle & Stavreski, 2006; Molenaers, 2012; Swedlund, 2013). However, it is common GBS donors find that partner countries do not follow agreements or fail to live up to the GBS's underlying principles, with the consequence that GBS donors suspend, reallocate, delay or reduce their GBS. The failures of partner countries to meet GBS requirements have

arguably compromised the effectiveness and efficiency of the GBS. Given that donors decide if, how, and when they should distribute their GBS, whether GBS really strengthens partner country ownership has become a debatable issue (i.e. Molenaers, Gagiano, Smets, & Dellepiane, 2015; Swedlund, 2013). Swedlund's (2013) study of GBS to Rwanda and Tanzania, for instance, finds little evidence that GBS decreases donors' influence over the governments in these countries. Instead, GBS is "used as a tool by which donors attempt to increase their leverage over domestic decision-making" (Swedlund, 2013, p. 357). In most cases, GBS donors form a donor group with representatives who negotiate with the government in the partner country. These representatives usually have a great say in decisions on GBS: they represent all donors and decide whether a large share of money should be disbursed. Consequently, GBS donors have possibilities to influence domestic policies in partner countries (Swedlund, 2013). Mutual accountability and extensive political commitment amongst donors as well as in the partner government are thus crucial for effective GBS cooperation (OECD/DAC, 2006).

GBS involves large sums of money, which entails high risks for both donors and partner countries (Molenaers, 2012). For example, the total amount of GBS to Mozambique in 2012 was 449 million USD, which is equivalent to 13.2% of the GoM's total revenues (European Commission, 2014, pp. 50–51). GBS usually involves aid dependency for the partner government: since a large share of the national budget is financed by GBS, there is always a risk that donors might delay and/or reduce their funding. If, for some reason, GBS donors must make cuts in their aid budget, it is easier to end one large GBS cooperation than many small development projects or programmes. GBS donors can also make cuts if they conclude that the partner country is not performing in line with agreements. For aid-dependent partner countries, these cuts can create unexpected financial shortages that hinder the implementation of their development policies and plans. For donors, fiduciary risks are higher in GBS than in other aid modalities, since partner countries' expenditures might not be accounted for with accuracy. Besides, these expenditures might also be used for purposes other than the intended ones. GBS is disbursed directly to the partner country's national budget and pooled with other donors' funding and tax revenues, which makes it difficult to ascertain with precision how it is spent or invested. Donors also face challenges in relation to the limited possibilities of demonstrating the results of GBS cooperation (Molenaers, 2012). Since GBS cooperation is often conducted in countries where the risk of corruption, violation of human rights, and other problematic issues donors do not want to be associated with is high, the underlying principles are fundamental for

GBS cooperation (Clist, Isopi, & Morrissey, 2012; Dom & Gordon, 2011; Koeberle & Stavreski, 2006).

7.4.3. General Budget Support cooperation in Mozambique

In 1998, a group of likeminded donors consisting of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland made a joint assessment of their support to the Mozambican budget. This assessment resulted in a common plan for providing GBS. The intentions with this plan were to harmonise donor procedures, improve fiscal management, increase transparency, and reduce transaction costs for donors and for the GoM (UN, 2010). The support was formalised in a “common framework agreement” between the GoM and bilateral donors in 2000 (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006).

As with GBS cooperation in other countries, GBS in Mozambique has been given to support the implementation of the country’s development strategies and policies. In 2001, the IMF and the World Bank approved the first PRSP for Mozambique, the so-called PARPA, which was later followed by PARPA II and PARP (hereafter the PARPAs and the PARP are referred to as PRS). GBS aimed to support the implementation of these strategies. In addition to the PRS, the GoM has adopted Five-Year Development Plans (PQG – Plano Quintenal do Governo). The PQG focused on poverty reduction through inclusive growth and reduced vulnerability. Until 2015, Mozambique’s PRSs were based on the PQGs (IMF & Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2014). However, when the last PRS ended in 2015, the GoM decided not to replace it and make the PQG the main document for poverty reduction (e.g. Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2015). The GoM adopted a new PQG in February 2015. Its overall objective was to

improve the living conditions of the Mozambican people, increasing employment, productivity and competitiveness, creating wealth and generating a balanced and inclusive development in an environment of peace, security, harmony, solidarity, justice and cohesion among Mozambicans.⁵⁹ (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2015, p. 6)

The main reason informants gave for why the PRS was not replaced, was that the PARP and the PQG had separate reporting structures, which implied an unnecessary workload for the actors involved. Implementation was easier, and

⁵⁹ Translated from Portuguese. In original: “Objectivo Central: Melhorar as condições de vida do Povo Moçambicano, aumentando o emprego, a produtividade e a competitividade, criando riqueza e gerando um desenvolvimento equilibrado e inclusivo, num ambiente de paz, segurança, harmonia, solidariedade, justiça e coesão entre os Moçambicanos” (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2015, p. 6).

development efforts more effective, when they have only one policy to relate to (MEI1, 26/11/2015; MEI2, 27/11/2015; GoM1, 24/11/2015).

GBS donors formed the PAP in 2001 (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006). Since then, the PAP has coordinated much of the overall international development cooperation in Mozambique, and not only the GBS-related cooperation (Hanlon, 2015, p. 136, see also Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013). The PAP has also been referred to as the Group of 19, or G19, as it for a while involved 19 donors. In addition to the 19 donors, the UN and the USA has been associated members of the PAP and they took part in planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes, although they did not provide GBS (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013). The number of donors has decreased lately; 16 donors were officially engaged in the GBS at the time of the interviews (Programme Aid Partners, 2015). However, informants have pointed out that the group has, in effect, 14 members, and that several donors were planning to leave the GBS cooperation. The reasons given for why donors were leaving GBS cooperation in Mozambique, were general cuts in ODA, challenges in reporting results from the GBS and disagreements between the GoM and donors (GoM1, 24/11/2015; MEI1, 26/11/2015).

Mozambican ownership and the GBS

Mozambique has been one of the most aid-dependent countries in the world. Between 2000 and 2010, the average net ODA received as a percentage of GDI was 22.3% (World Bank, 2016a; see also De Renzio & Hanlon, 2007). However, the GoM has become less dependent on aid over time; in 2012, ODA made up only 12.5% of GDI. Increased tax revenues, incomes from coal, gas and other commodities, and “new” donors such as China and Brazil, have given the GoM alternative ways of funding the national budget (MEI1, 26/11/2015; MEI2, 27/11/2015; see also Hanlon, 2015), have contributed to decreased aid dependency.⁶⁰ In addition, the GoM has also declared that it intended to diminish its aid dependency because donors supposedly did not allow the GoM to make its own sovereign decisions (Hanlon, 2015). Since GBS accounts for a substantial part of the ODA to Mozambique,⁶¹ the GoM’s approach has consequences for the GBS cooperation and for the government’s

⁶⁰ The economic situation in Mozambique deteriorated in 2016 (World Bank, 2016b), and it has influenced the GoM’s possibilities to find alternative funding to the GBS. The new situation falls outside the scope of this study, since the focus here lies on the years between 2006 and 2014.

⁶¹ The average GBS as a proportion of total ODA between the years 2005 and 2012 comprised an average of 30% (European Commission, 2014).

relation with GBS donors. One expert informant described the previous GoM (in office between 2010 and 2014) as

a bit reluctant and passive in relation to donors. The government did not communicate with the donors on the grounds that it could make its own decisions, since it knows what is best [for Mozambique]. It was more autonomous in its decision making and made choices that donors did not approve. Many of these decisions were not in line with the strategies for poverty reduction and economic growth. (MEI2, 27/11/2015)

The GoM aimed to be self-sufficient and independent but retain GBS cooperation, since it was a valuable input in the national budget (MEI2, 27/11/2015; see also Hanlon, 2015). However, as GBS donors did not have confidence in the GoM's commitments to its policies or the GBS agreement, and they did not find that they could reduce their results requirements or change conditions for disbursement. Instead, donors considered it increasingly important to hold the GoM accountable to their own citizens and to taxpayers in donor countries (e.g. Hanlon, 2015). This accountability concerned both the commitments to GBS's underlying principles and to results requirements specified in the MoU's PAF (e.g. Hanlon, 2015). One expert informant describes the challenges of reporting on GBS cooperation as follows:

GBS is a difficult but important instrument to improve governmental processes and to complement the government's budget. You can compare it with an irrigation system that has networks of pipes. Even if there are leakages you need to test the system in order to find where the water leaks. Only then can you address the problems. GBS is not given to strong systems but to weak ones that need to be challenged. However, the government must also have an agenda to which they are committed and in which donors can trust. These relations are based on trust, on the people that work for donors, on the political backup at the headquarters in the donor countries, and on changes in the receiving country's development process. (MEI1, 26/11/2015)

7.4.4. Swedish General Budget Support cooperation with Mozambique

Sida describes GBS in its homepage as a financial contribution to the implementation of the partner country's poverty reduction plans, which is in line with the overall objective of GBS. Sida stresses the importance of additional support to reforms aiming to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the partner country's public administration, and thereby create conditions for partner country ownership and sustainable development (Sida, 2017b). Informants in Mozambique described the overall purpose of GBS cooperation as two-folded: to strengthen the work of government ministries, and to support key reforms and policy actors in order to improve and strengthen the budgetary

system. Development effectiveness would, hence, increase, and the budgetary system would be more transparent. Another major goal of the GBS was to increase the GoM's accountability to its own citizens as well as to GBS donors (MEI1 26/11/2015; GoM1 24/11/2015).

Sweden has been part of the donor groups engaged in the GBS cooperation since the cooperation was formalised in the late 1990s, and has provided GBS to Mozambique through the common framework since 2000. The main objective of the Swedish GBS has been to support Mozambique's own development efforts and strategies (e.g. Sida, 2001; Swedish Government, 2008) and the Swedish development strategy for Mozambique 2008-2015, defines the objective with the Swedish GBS as: "the effective implementation of Mozambique's poverty reduction strategy, PARPA II, in order to reduce poverty, strengthen democracy, stimulate rapid, sustainable and broad economic growth and to achieve the Millennium Goals" (Swedish Government, 2008, pp. 4–5). In addition to the GBS, Sweden has provided institutional support to improve the public administration in Mozambique, which was considered one way to create prerequisite for effective GBS cooperation. Sweden provided, for instance, technical assistance, such as support to the Inspectorate General of Finance, to improve and strengthen budgetary systems and national audit reports in Mozambique (Openaid & Swedish Government, 2015b). Expert informants and informants from the GoM gauged the Swedish support as a strategy to strengthen the GoM's internal structures and make it more independent from donors' influence (MEI1, 26/11/2015; GoM1-3, 24/11/2015).

The new results strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique 2015 – 2020 does not state a specific objective for the GBS support to Mozambique. Furthermore, the strategy does not provide any guidelines give or recommendations concerning GBS. Instead, it suggests GBS as a possible aid modality, thereby opening up for other funding strategies and aid modalities (Swedish Government, 2015).

GBS and Swedish development relations with Mozambique

Informants described Sweden as a relatively influential donor and a progressive partner, as well as a donor who focused on aid effectiveness and listened to its partner organisations (MEI1, 26/11/2015; MEI2, 27/11/2015; GoM1-3, 24/11/2015). Even though Sweden was not one of the larger GBS donors in Mozambique, Sweden was considered influential and actively taking a leading role within the donor group. Sweden has been part of the leading troika of the PAP on several occasions, the last time was between June 2014 and May 2015 (MEI1, 26/11/2015; see also Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2014). Informants

described Sweden as a donor that believed in GBS as a mean to increase aid effectiveness and partner country ownership (e.g. MEI1, 26/11/2015; MS2-3, 13/11/2015). One expert informant put it as follows:

Sweden is not as big as the EU, the World Bank, or DFID, but it is amongst the medium big, where you also find Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, and the African Development Bank /.../ [Sweden] truly believes that aid can only be sustainable when it travels through country systems. (MEI1, 26/11/2015)

Informants from the GoM described the relations between Sweden and Mozambique as built on mutual trust, but acknowledged that this trust should not be taken for granted (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015). Sida staff played a major role in these relations, and those who represented Sweden were described as relatively open, trustworthy, and engaged (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015).⁶² Although the GoM seemed to be quite satisfied with Sweden as a GBS donor, relations between the two countries had been complicated. This led Swedish informants to describe Swedish relations with the GoM as generally being “a bit shaky” (MS2, 13/11/2015). A number of crises have affected the relations between the two countries over the last years. At the time of the interviews, the Ematum scandal (more thoroughly described below) was one of the major issues on the development agenda in Mozambique. Sida informants considered Swedish GBS as an instrument for supporting the GoM, but also as a means of influence the GoM if, or when, the Mozambican citizens do not have the power to do so. In the case of the Ematum scandal, informants that represented Sida in Mozambique described the role played by Sweden and other GBS donors as follows:

Sweden’s relations with Mozambique have undergone a number of crises. The Ematum is the latest, and perhaps the largest. Civil society or the media would have handled this situation in another country, but since they are not functioning that way in Mozambique, donors took on their role. /.../ When actors such as Sida, DFID, and the EU made others aware of the situation, they also forced the government [GoM] to write reports on what they had done. Donors required an answer and now they [donors] are more prepared. (MS1, 13/11/2015)

⁶² Descriptions of Sweden as a “good donor” should be seen with some caution, since informants from the GoM might not want to address negative aspects of Swedish development cooperation.

7.4.5. Results requirements in Swedish General Budget Support cooperation with Mozambique

Since 2004, Relations between the GoM and the GBS donors have been regulated through the *Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Mozambique and the Program Aid Partners on the Provision of General Budget Support* (referred to as the MoU) (Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2004, 2009, 2015).⁶³ This document established the requirements that the GoM must fulfil in order to receive GBS, as well as donors' obligations in relation to the GoM.

The MoU contains two sets of commitments to be fulfilled by the GoM in order to receive GBS. The first set of commitments concerns underlying principles, that is, the basic conditions for GBS cooperation, often relating to partner governments' commitment to good governance, human rights issues, sound financial systems, etc. The second set of conditions concerns results commitments related to the outcomes of the GBS cooperation. These results commitments are specified in a PAF, which includes indicators to measure progress in relation to the overall targets of the GBS (Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009; see also Koeberle & Stavreski, 2006). Informants in Mozambique associated both these sets of commitments with results requirements, since the GoM had to prove that they were accountable to the underlying principles and to the targets defined in the MoU's PAF. Here, however, the two sets of commitments are considered separately in the following sections.

Like other GBS donors (European Commission 2014), Sweden disbursed its GBS in two tranches, a fixed and a flexible tranche. A precondition for disbursing both tranches was that the GoM was assessed as committed to the underlying principles defined in the MoU. However, the flexible tranche, or part of it, would only be disbursed if also agreed results, as specified in the PAF, had been achieved (Sida, 2010a, 2011).

GBS cooperation in Mozambique – GoMs commitments to the underlying principles

The MoU defines the underlying principles, which were requirement that the GoM had to live up to before donors engaged in GBS cooperation (Government

⁶³ The first MoU (MoU I) was signed in 2004 and thereafter it has been renewed twice. The latest MoU (MoU III) was signed in September 2015. Since the Swedish Strategy for development cooperation with Mozambique was signed when MoU II (2009-2014) was still in force, references are made here to MoU II.

of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009, p. 6, see also 2015, p. 8). These principles are:

- Good Governance: safeguarding peace and promoting free, credible and democratic political processes, independence of the judiciary, rule of law, respect for human rights, probity in public life and the fight against corruption.
- Fighting poverty through policies and plans and with a public spending which is in line with poverty reduction objectives.
- Sound macroeconomic policies and Public Financial Management (PFM) systems.

The underlying principles were not included in the GoM's plans for reporting the execution of their budget and the implementation of their policies at first. However, after requirements from donors, these principles became part of the MoU. Informants pointed out that donors and the GoM had different results requirements, or different interpretations of the underlying principles, which challenged GBS cooperation (MEI2, 27/11/2015; GoM1-3, 24/11/2015; MS2-3, 13/11/2015 see also Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2015; Openaid & Swedish Government, 2015c).

GBS cooperation with Mozambique has been complicated; a number of incidents have prompted Sweden and other donors to suspend or postpone their GBS to Mozambique. These incidents have concerned above all the GoM's failure to live up to the underlying principles, or its neglect of the principles. The first major incidence happened after a bank crisis in 2001. A private bank became bankrupt after its clients, mainly politicians, had not repaid their loans. The GoM bailed out the bank without reporting it properly to the general public in Mozambique or to the donors. The total cost of this bailout is disputed, but it is estimated that it amounted to 200 million USD, which equals the total GBS provided to Mozambique that year (Hanlon, 2004b; EI1, 26/11/2015; EI2, 27/11/2015). As a consequence of this alleged fraud, some donors, including Sweden (M. Nilsson, 2004), postponed their GBS payments for six months. At that time, there was no MoU between the GoM and the donors, and the GoM claimed that the donors had not been transparent in their requirements vis-à-vis the GoM. A MoU was then developed and signed by donors and the GoM (Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2004, p. see also; Hanlon, 2004a; EI1, 26/11/2015).

GBS donors decided to suspend disbursements for a second time after controversies in relation to the 2009 elections, where one of the political parties was denied to stand for the elections (e.g. Nuvunga & Adalima, 2011).

This denial violated good governance, one of the underlying principles of the MoU (e.g. Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009). After negotiations and discussions between the GoM and the donors, the Assembly of the Republic in Mozambique adjusted their rules in order to prevent that something similar would happen again. Nevertheless, some donors withheld their GBS for three months in 2010 (EI1, 26/11/2015; Hanlon, 2015; Nuvunga & Adalima, 2011). This, and other incidences, triggered the Swedish Government to extend the flexible of the Swedish GBS. By extending this tranche, Sweden conditioned a greater share of Swedish GBS with the intentions to increase the possibilities to put pressure on the GoM to act in line with the commitments it had made in the MoU (Sida, 2010a, 2011).

Another occasion when donors withheld support was in 2013, when the, so called, Ematum scandal was revealed. The new government fishing company Ematum (National Tuna Company) was unexpectedly guaranteed an 850 million USD bond issue for financing 6 coastal patrol boats and 24 tuna fishing boats. No previous discussion had taken place within parliament regarding this bond issue, and it was not included in the national budget. In addition, it turned out that the bond issue to Ematum was used not only for buying fishing boats, but also for the acquisition of military equipment. The funding was, hence, not used in line with the commitments made in the MoU. Donors withheld GBS over Ematum, but the government did not make any significant concessions (Hanlon, 2015).

In 2016, Sweden and other donors decided to suspend their GBS to Mozambique on the grounds that the GoM had not informed the general public in Mozambique and the GBS donors about 1.4 billion USD of loans contracted to government-owned companies in 2013-2014. It is not clear when or whether Sweden and other donors will resume the GBS cooperation (e.g. Sida, 2016). This particular incident is not covered here because it took place in 2016, since it is not within the time scope of this study.

Reporting results in relation to the PAF

The results requirements that the GoM had to fulfil in order to receive the flexible tranche of the Swedish GBS were defined in the MoU's performance assessment framework (PAF). The results requirements defined in the MoU should be sufficient to meet Swedish results requirements. The MoU defined targets for every sector of the economy, and the monitoring system in place had been deemed adequate for meeting donors conditions (e.g. Wohlgemuth & Odén, 2011). The MoU's PAF was also quite extensive; it contained around

40 indicators derived from Mozambique's poverty reduction strategies. The MoU described the PAF indicators as follows:

[The PAF indicators were taken] from the indicators of the PARPA/GOP⁶⁴ Strategic Matrix, with a presumption that these indicators will be consistent over the life of the source GOP and comprise the highest quality indicators in the areas of governance, system reform and the priority poverty reduction sectors. (Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009, p. 28)

The PAF indicators were divided into five categories: governance, financial management, social sector performance, economic sector performance, and crosscutting issues, such as food security, environment, and gender equality. Each category was assigned a working group that consisted of representatives from the GoM and from the GBS donors (Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009, see also 2015).

According to the GoM, two joint processes guided the operationalisation of the PAF, namely, the planning of the PAF and the process of monitoring and evaluating PAF indicators. These processes should be aligned with the GoM's planning and budget processes (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013). Although the PAF was based on Mozambique's PRS, it was also an outcome of negotiations between GBS donors and the GoM (Binkert & Sulemane, 2006; Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013; Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009). The negotiations concerning the indicators take place within the working groups, but the GoM and representatives from the PAP donor group⁶⁵ made the final negotiations and decisions regarding the PAF (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013; Programme Aid Partners, 2015). Each PAF indicator should be monitored annually and within its respective working group and assessments should be made regarding progress in relation to the GBS targets. If progress was assessed as satisfactory, the GBS would be disbursed. The working groups usually reached an agreement about the rating of the progress. However, if they could not agree, the issue should be raised in the policy dialogue between the GoM and the PAP representatives (IESE, 2010; Wohlgemuth & Odén, 2011). In addition to the working groups, a number of other groups and committees worked with GBS cooperation, for instance dialogues were

⁶⁴ GOP stands for 'Government multi-year operational plan', i.e. the GoM's plan for operationalising the PARP (Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009).

⁶⁵ PAP representatives consist of three bilateral representatives (elected annually by the PAP) and representatives from two permanent members: the European Commission (EC) and the World Bank (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013; Programme Aid Partners, 2015).

pursued with representatives from the UN and from CSOs in Mozambique (Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013; EI2, 27/11/2015). The aid architecture surrounding the operationalisation of the GBS cooperation was complex: political and technical negotiations took place in several groups engaged in different parts and layers of the GBS cooperation (e.g. Bruschi, 2012; Government of the Republic of Mozambique, 2013). It was a challenge to coordinate the GBS cooperation and to reach agreements on the actual outcomes of the GBS in relation to the PAF indicators (e.g. Bruschi, 2012; Wohlgemuth & Odén, 2011). The complexity of the GBS structure has resulted in increased transaction costs for the GBS cooperation, in particular because negotiations within the working groups were time-consuming and required competent staff. Furthermore, the cooperation within PAP has been characterised by high turnover among donor staff and inefficient flows of information, which has weakened the PAP's capacity (Bruschi 2012).

Defining whose results and what results to report

Sida informants argued that there had been a shift in focus as regards whose results were reported and what results to report. Even though GoM informants interacted only with donor governments and not with taxpayers, they claimed that taxpayers in donor countries had become more eager to know how their money has been invested and what results it has generated in partner countries (MS2-3, 13/11/2015). This had led to discussions on attribution and how to trace the results of the GBS. Being able to trace results was seen as contradictory to one of the fundamental principles of GBS, i.e. that the GBS should be given as non-earmarked support, which made it impossible to attribute GBS results to a specific donor (cf. Koeberle and Stavreski, 2006).

The MoU defined how results should be reported and stated that results in relation to the PAF should be reported annually (e.g. Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2009). Despite the notion that GBS should depart from the GoM's poverty reductions strategy and pre-existing systems for reporting the national budget, informants claimed that GBS donors had added their own specific results requirements, thus challenging the notion of partner country ownership (MEI1, 26/11/2015; GoM1-3, 24/11/2015, see also Wohlgemuth & Odén, 2011). One expert informant described the results requirement as follows: "Even though they [the donors] have signed the MoU, they have their own requirements and their own indicators. They reward success in relation to these results" (MEI1, 26/11/2015).

Informants claimed that donors had come up with their own specific results requirement in relation to the following areas: the national system for PFM,

inclusive growth, good governance and accountability, and public service delivery (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015; MEI1, 26/11/2015). These areas, or how they were defined by donors, were not included in the GoM's original plans for results reporting, but they became part of the MoU. Consequently, they were part of the Swedish requirements for providing GBS to Mozambique (Government of the Republic of Mozambique & PAP, 2015; see also Openaid & Swedish Government, 2015c). Informants considered that the interest for results in relation to these areas had increased over time and arguably changed what kinds of results GBS donors requested. Instead of focusing on the GoM's overall objectives and plans for poverty reduction and development, more attention was given to how Mozambique's national budget was executed (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015; MEI2, 27/11/2015). Informants from the GoM also claimed that the results requirements in relation to the GBS had increased, while the GBS-funding had decreased:

It is not the objectives or the goals of the plans that govern the GBS... The MoU involves smaller amounts now, but more requirements. There are fewer donors and less money. Sweden also wants to change its budget support: they want to reduce it and focus instead on some particular areas. This is a new approach. (GoM1, 24/11/2015)

Informants representing the GoM claimed that the GoM and the GBS donors reported different kinds of results, or results at different levels. While the GoM was more interested in the outputs or outcomes of its policies, the GBS donors, including Sweden, were more interested in the GoM activities. The focus on activities included the increased focus on how the national budget was implemented (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015). Informants from the GoM considered it more difficult to identify indicators that captured the activities than to find indicators that measured outputs and outcomes, which was described as follows:

It was more output and impact previously. With this new thing, it is not easy to define indicators; it is easier to measure outcome and impact. If you get the results, you "get the cake", so to speak, but you do not know how the cake was made. The results are there, but you don't know how they were reached; you don't know what you did, how long it took to generate the results, or how you are getting results. (GoM3, 24/11/2015)

The indicators specified in the PAF and the bureaucracy around the assessments of these indicators have been criticised due to the focus on economic aspects and processes, rather than on implementation and service delivery (MEI2, 27/11/2015, see also Bruschi 2012). Informants acknowledged that it was necessary to find balance between the focus on policy implementation and the reporting of the outcomes of the policy (MEI2, 27/11/2015; S2-3, 13/11/2015). They further argued that the requirements for short-term results had increased.

In addition, the interest for results that were possible to attribute to a specific donor's intervention had also increased. Even though achievements in each sector could be measured through the PAF, these achievements were difficult to ascribe to the GBS, and impossible to attribute to a specific donor. Informants from the GoM acknowledged that donors had become more interested in other forms of aid modalities (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015; S2-3, 13/11/2015).

Why results were requested

According to informants, several donors were planning to withdraw from the GBS cooperation and some had already withdrawn (e.g. Finland and Spain); others were planning to change how they disbursed their GBS funding. Expert and GoM informants believed that Sweden also considered to withdraw or to change its GBS to Mozambique. It was not clear, however, whether and when these changes could take place (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015; S2-3, 13/11/2015; see also Programme Aid Partners, 2015). The *Results Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation with Mozambique 2015-2020* does not specify the amount of Swedish development assistance that should be given as GBS (Swedish Government, 2015), unlike the previous strategy (Swedish Government, 2008). Informants gave a number of reasons for the changes in the GBS. Among them changes in trends in international development cooperation; an increased demand for results that were possible to attribute to a specific donor's intervention; other domestic policies in donor countries; and the complicated political situation in Mozambique (MEI1, 26/11/2015; MEI2, 27/11/2015; MS2-3, 13/11/2015). These factors have sharpened Sweden's and other GBS donors' focus on accountability, and the GoM has been required to prove its accountability even more than previously.. In other words, the GoM has been required to demonstrate that it has acted in line with the PAF and the underlying principles in the MoU. At the same time, results requirements from the Swedish Government had also changed. This change concerned an increased demand for results that demonstrated the outcomes of Swedish GBS cooperation, which mainly entailed reporting in line with the PAF (the World Bank, 2016; e.g. GoM1-3, 24/11/2015; MS2-3, 13/11/2015; World Bank, 2015). The demand for accountability could be approached from two interrelated perspectives: i) from the perspective of increased aid effectiveness, or ii) from the perspective of accountability to the Swedish Government.

i) Accountability to agreements for increased aid effectiveness: Asking for evidence of improved management systems was one strategy to force the GoM to account for its decisions regarding how the national budget has been executed. This was also a strategy donors could use to increase their possibilities to influence and control the GoM's work (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015; MS2-3,

13/11/2015). According to Sida informants in Mozambique, Sweden increased its requirements in relation to GBS for two main reasons: one was the GoM's failure to live up to the agreements made in the PAF; and the GoM's different interpretation of its mandates and responsibilities.

ii) Accountability to the Swedish Government and to Swedish taxpayers: One of the major issues that influenced the relations between GBS donors and the GoM was the GoM's failure to live up to the underlying principles. The violations of the underlying principles have been a major issue in the GBS cooperation in Mozambique because the Swedish Government and the governments of other GBS donors did not want to be associated with corrupt regimes that do not promote human rights (e.g. Openaid and Swedish Government, 2015).

In addition to the two interrelated perspectives on accountability described above, the diminished popularity of GBS in Sweden and among other donors can be traced to overall trends in international development cooperation. GBS was considered a highly popular aid modality that promoted partner country ownership and contributed to effective and sustainable development. However, it has been replaced lately, in part at least, by new modalities considered easier to monitor and evaluate. Influenced by neoliberal ideologies, new forms of funding mechanisms have emerged. One of these is Payment By Results (PBR) (DFID, 2014; Sida, 2015c), which has been discussed as an alternative or a complementary aid modality to Swedish GBS to Mozambique. The PBR implies that funding is disbursed when agreed results have been achieved. This way of funding development efforts was met with scepticism by some actors, on the grounds that it could be difficult for the GoM to achieve results before they had the resources to carry out the required reforms (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015; MEI1, 26/11/2015; MEI2, 27/11/2015; S2-3, 13/11/2015). However, it should be noted that Swedish GBS already had a tranche system to distribute its GBS, since part of the GBS is not disbursed unless the GoM has fulfilled the obligations to which it had committed in the MoU (c.f. Sida, 2010a). The system with tranches and the introduction of PBR are supposed to contribute to a more results-driven approach within GBS cooperation, and the Nordic countries and the UK were described as having pushed for these changes (GoM1-3, 24/11/2015).

Sida informants further described that a culture has evolved at the agency that awards reporting frauds or misuse of funds, rather than positive outcomes of development interventions. They claimed that misuse of funds had received a lot of attention and, in some cases, extra funding had been disbursed in order to come to terms with the situation. The focus on misuse of funds was associated

with the change of management structures within Swedish development cooperation. The MFA had taken over much of the management that previously was done by Sida, while Sida had become responsible for monitoring and audit reports. This change was also reflected on Sida staff: the number of controllers had supposedly increased at the expense of staff with expertise in specific areas. Since a controller's responsibility is to monitor how money is spent, abilities to apprehend and appreciate outcomes of interventions were argued to have been lost. This new composition of staff had made it more difficult for Sida to appreciate positive results (MS1, 13/11/2015).

7.4.6. Outcomes of the General Budget Support to Mozambique

According to an independent evaluation of the budget support in Mozambique, about half of the indicators have been assessed as satisfactorily achieved over the years between 2005 and 2012 (European Commission, 2014). Because of the GoM's failures in achieving progress to a satisfactory degree, donors have at times cancelled or postponed part of their GBS disbursements (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006). In 2010, for instance, Sweden decided to withhold its GBS for 2011 given that only modest progress had been made in relation to agreed targets (Sida, 2010a).

Despite the crises in the relations between GBS donors and the GoM, evaluations have concluded that GBS has contributed to economic growth in Mozambique, and that it has led to an increased proportion of public expenditure in the national budget. The evaluations also pointed out that GBS has led to improvements in the education and health sectors, for instance, and to improved macroeconomic stability (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006; European Commission, 2014). One evaluation concludes that the "Budget Support has been fundamentally successful /.../ There are major achievements, which fully justifies the risks which have been taken in providing Budget Support" (European Commission, 2014, p. 4). Furthermore, evaluations show that GBS cooperation has created an effective structure for dialogue between donors and the GoM. The overall structure for political dialogue between GBS actors is, however, assessed as weak (European Commission, 2014; IESE, 2009). The IESE's review of GBS to Mozambique accounts for the weak policy dialogue as a result of lack of capacity in the GoM, as well as lack of power parity within the GoM:

[M]any in GoM believe that for the sake of keeping aid flowing they should not question PAP's behaviour and practices; the MoU and the Paris Declaration are good intentions but are not legally binding and do not guarantee a power balance between donors and the GoM. Hence, it is unlikely that the GoM will

question donors because at political level the GoM is not prepared to sustain a crisis that may result from such questioning. (IESE, 2009, p. 13)

7.5. Conceptualising results and ownership in Swedish support to democracy, gender equality and human rights to Mozambique

7.5.1. Introduction

Swedish support to democracy, gender equality, and human rights was mainly carried out in cooperation with INGOs and CSOs. The Embassy of Sweden in Maputo identified these organisations as important actors for the “deepening of democracy and respect for human rights and therefore sees support to civil society as a crucial component to the bilateral support to the Government of Mozambique” (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2016). AGIR was one of the largest (if not the largest) programmes that supported CSOs in Mozambique and, consequently, one of the largest Sida programmes in the country (besides the GBS) (e.g. Openaid & Swedish Government, 2015b). An evaluation of the AGIR programme was commissioned by Sida comes to the following conclusion:

AGIR is assessed to be a relevant and much needed support to Mozambican civil society that enables a strategic role for CSOs in advocating for rights, rule of law, accountability and transparency. During the implementation of AGIR civil society has strengthened its role as bearer of collective claims on specific rights and accountability of duty-bearers. The partner organizations have been able to raise evidence based claims, combining the efforts of the more research oriented and the more activist oriented partners. (Holmberg et al., 2014, p. 7)

The evaluation also concluded, however, that reporting on results needed to be strengthened within AGIR. Therefore, one of the evaluation’s recommendations was to ensure the development of a results framework and continued focus on improving systems for M&E (Holmberg et al., 2014). Informants from AGIR already reported results; the following sections will describe how informants from IPOs and POs define results.

All Swedish development cooperation should be guided by the commitments made in the Paris Declaration, and partner country ownership is strongly emphasised by Swedish development actors (e.g. Swedish Government, 2015). Results in relation to the AGIR program was described as in line with OECD/DACs definition of results. Although the results concept was considered a challenging concept, it was not – to any greater extent – problematized by the informant responsible for the program at the time for the interview (MS1,

13/11/2015). As the support disbursed within the AGIR programme was a sort of budget support, Sidas's support ownership within AGIR resembled that to the GBS (MS1, 13/11/2015, see also MS2-3, 13/11/2015). It should be noted that the person in charge of AGIR at Sida were not available at the time for the interviews due to sick leave.

7.5.2. Intermediary Partner Organisations' conceptualisation of results

The IPOs' role in AGIR was to distribute institutional funding to POs and to support the POs in the planning and monitoring of their interventions. The IPOs should also monitor the PO's progress and follow up on their checks and balances. Therefore, one of the main tasks for the IPOs was to provide capacity building for the POs (see Kelpin et al., 2013). This capacity building consisted of three parts. The first one concerned strengthening organisational and institutional development (i.e. internal regulations, including M&E); the second aimed to strengthen the networks between POs; and the third was related to good donorship and to compliance with international agreements on aid effectiveness, such as the Paris Declaration (IPO8, 3/12/2015). Within the AGIR programme, the IPOs reported annually to Sida on how their work proceeded. However, the IPOs did not implement development cooperation, as the implementation was carried out by their POs. Consequently, the objectives of the AGIR programme were reached through the POs' work with beneficiaries. The IPO's reports to Sida were, thus, based on what the POs reported to the IPOs (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO8, 3/12/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015). In addition, the four AGIR partners reported their collective progress to Sida annually. Results were aggregated at different levels, where different actors' results framework, matrixes and indicators should be considered.

Defining and measuring results

IPO informants gave quite coherent answers when asked how they conceptualised results; i.e. reporting on results implied reporting on outcomes and not activities and output. Informants generally meant outcomes when they referred to results, and the two concepts were used interchangeably. Informants used similar concepts to describe results, yet they had somewhat different definitions of outcome (see Figure 17). Several of IPO informants described outcome in terms of change (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO5, 24/11/2015; IPO7, 25/11/2015; IPO9, 4/12/2015; IPO10, 4/12/2015); for instance, "social change" or "significant changes" (IPO12, 3/12/2015). IPO informants generally described results as already achieved or "produced", and one of the main issues raised by the increased focus on results was to *capture* results and develop systems that could do this. One informant said the following

“Our slogan is to work for change. In order to capture changes, we have to follow up our projects. They do contribute to change; we just have to capture this change. We have to produce results” (IPO1, 16/11/2015).

All IPO informants claimed that reporting results was not a new thing within their organisation. However, they had noticed that the focus on results had increased over the last few years and that a change had occurred as regards what kind of results donors required. Although the POs reported results, not many of them had (solid) M&E frameworks (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO4, 23/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO7, 25/11/2015; IPO8, 3/12/2015). One informant described it as follows:

Not many of our partners had a results framework when we started /.../ It is difficult to report on results and to get the results framework and the system as such in place. We are still in the process of establishing the framework, which includes changes and not only activities. (IPO2, 17/11/2015)

Previously, reporting was done mainly in terms of descriptions of activities and outputs (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO4, 23/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO9, 4/12/2015; IPO10, 4/12/2015) and activities and outputs were often used synonymously (explicitly expressed by IPO12, 3/12/2015). Over the last few years, donors had required outcomes and impact results to a greater extent than before, which entailed a major change. IPOs were, however, still reporting activities and outputs.

Informants attributed the change of focus from reporting on activities and outputs to reporting on outcomes to a change in the nature of development cooperation in Mozambique: a needs-based approach had given way to a rights-based approach. A needs-based approach focused on technical development cooperation in which activities and tangible outputs were central. In contrast, a rights-based approach places emphasis on people’s awareness of their rights and their access to different facilities, that is to say, results that must be measured at outcome level (IPO12, 3/12/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015). Advocacy appeared to be a central issue for the IPOs, and a great deal of effort seemed to be devoted to make rights-bearers (Mozambican citizens) aware of their rights and to enable them to hold duty-bearers (the GoM) accountable (c.f. IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015). Donors required results reported at outcome level, and the IPOs wanted to demonstrate that they had achieved results; the main focus lied, therefore, on reporting outcomes. IPO informants argued that they captured change by reporting outcomes. Several of the informants gave examples of their work with advocacy to change the legislation when they described their definitions of results (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015;

IPO5, 24/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015). The definition of results in terms of outputs and outcomes varies; this variation is shown in Figure 17.

	IPO5, 24/11/2015	IPO1, 16/11/2015	IPO2, 17/11/2015	IPO3, 17/11/2015	IPO12, 03/12/2015
Activity	Advocacy	Advocacy	Education of XX number of people	Advocacy	Advocacy
Output	A new law	-	Education of XX number of people	A new law	A new law
Outcome	Changes at policy level.	A new law	Changes in behaviour within a group, amongst politicians or beneficiaries.	What can be seen and controlled at community level. What is produced.	Changes in behaviour
Impact	Changes that improve peoples' lives.	Changes in community.	Changes in society e.g. poverty reduction. Seldom possible to capture.	Contributing to improving peoples' lives.	Changes in well-being

Figure 17: Definitions of activity, output, outcome and impact

All IPO informants were familiar with the Results Based Management (RBM) approach and used a vocabulary associated with the approach, and described results in terms of activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. Although informants aimed to improve and change society and peoples' lives, their focus was to report changes at outcome level with the assumption that these outcomes would lead to impacts. Reporting impact was described as too complicated because these results are often found years after the end of the intervention (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO11, 9/12/2015). One informant said the following:

We do not aim for impact, but for outcomes. This is the level we hope to achieve /.../ An impact could be reduced poverty, for instance. There are so many components that play a part in it. Even if we suppose that our activities do it [i.e. that the activities have impact], other issues also influence impact, such as how the government acts, what other actors do, if there has been a natural disaster or not. So many things influence impact! I think that impact is not always within our control. (IPO3, 17/11/2015)

Several IPO informants saw strengths in using RBM as opposed to an LFA. The LFA was described mainly as a planning tool that captures the outputs results and objectives, while the RBM is a more detailed instrument that

includes planning and captures results at different levels. One IPO informant described it as follows:

The LFA did not respond to everything the NGO did; the LFA is mainly concerned with hard interventions, such as building schools and hospitals. It was just to show the donors results, like, if we built a well, we show the clean water, and not if anyone actually used the water. It is different with the soft interventions. It is more difficult to control, to have outside control of what is happening /.../ that's where RBM comes in and provides results at different levels and at different stages of the intervention. The RBM makes it easier to control expectations and also realise that it takes time to achieve results. (IPO5, 24/11/2015)

Much of the results discussions during the interviews concerned how POs reported results to the IPOs, partly because the IPOs depend on their POs to be able to report outcome results to donors. Yet the IPOs also need to have their own results frameworks and M&E systems in place in order to report their results to Sida (c.f. IPO12, 3/12/2015).

Why report results?

When asked why results should be reported, several IPO informants said that they had not reflected on it (IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO9, 4/12/2015; IPO10, 4/12/2015). In general, they did not question the increased demand for results; it was natural, they believed, that donors required information about how their money was spent, and enquired whether it was spent in a satisfactory way (IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO9, 4/12/2015). IPO informants gave the following reasons for results reporting:

Relevance of interventions: The previous focus on activities and outputs rather than on outcomes was also seen as a driving force behind the increased focus on results. Donors and IPOs want to see if and how their development assistance has contributed to change, i.e. if their work was relevant and if it improved peoples' lives (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO9, 4/12/2015; IPO10, 4/12/2015). As one informant put it, "it was a problem before, you were just spending money for nothing. We did not know what we achieved with the money" (IPO3, 17/11/2015). Another informant described the benefits brought by to the POs by increased reporting on results as follows:

Now we can see more clearly what our partners contribute with. And we can also help them do the job in a more structured way because we know exactly what they will do and what they need to be able to do in a more specific way. (IPO1, 16/11/2015)

None of the IPO informants made explicit reference to improved aid effectiveness or development cooperation as a reason for increasing or improving the results reporting. As the informant pointed out in the citation above, there was a demand for evidence that the work of the IPOs contributed to changes (outcomes), and not only outputs (IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015).

One informant mentioned accountability to the GoM as a driving force behind the increased focus on results. The GoM required information about what INGOs did in Mozambique; in other words, the GoM wanted to know if the INGOs contributed to development or if they “are just having a nice life here, enjoying themselves” (IPO3, 17/11/2015). Informants mentioned that the GoM generally considered civil society a threat. Therefore, the GoM required CSOs to report what they did. The information required concerned chiefly activities and outputs, and not outcome or impact results (IPO3, 17/11/2015). Writing different reports to different donors was a problem according to informants, and they pointed out that donors did not seem to have reached very far in the harmonisation of their reporting processes (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO4, 23/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015).

Accountability to donors: IPO informants pointed to accountability to donors and taxpayers in donor countries as the main reason for why results were reported. They believed that donors had increased their demand for results over the last few years as a consequence of external factors and the situation in many donor countries (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015). Informants argued that donors followed international trends in relation to increased demand for results; the USAID was one of the main actors pushing for more detailed results (IPO2, 17/11/2015). Sida, unlike other donors, did not focus too much on details in their results requirements and gave their development partners relative autonomy to form their own agenda (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO9, 4/12/2015): “they [Sida staff] are doing well in terms of giving space for civil society” (IPO12, 3/12/2015). The economic crisis in 2008 and the refugee situation in Europe were also mentioned among the issues that have contributed to donors’ increased demand for results. These events put constraints on aid budgets in many donor countries, so that donors had to be more considerate in their decisions concerning the investment of their development assistance. Scarcity of funds entailed increased pressure to report results (IPO12, 3/12/2015).

Increased transparency: Results requirements also concerned increased transparency, both in relation to the implementation of development cooperation and in

terms of financial reporting. Informants pointed out that it was important to describe how results were achieved, yet the main reason to report results was not learning how results were produced but, rather, being accountable to donors (c.f. IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015).

Learning from results: Only two of the informants spontaneously mentioned learning from mistakes and achievements as reasons to report results (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015). However, when asked if learning was a reason to report results, informants stated that learning was an important aspect of results reporting (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015). Learning from “success stories” was of certain importance, given that the POs were encouraged to report these stories (IPO2, 17/11/2015). One IPO informant claimed that donors did refer to learning as a motive for their increased demand for results, but their actual purpose of their results requirements was to prove accountability (IPO4, 23/11/2015). When asked about the relation between accountability and learning from results, the informants did not consider it difficult to report mistakes, but acknowledged that reporting mistakes could have a negative effect on their accountability (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015).

In general, informants had a clear sense that Sida required outcome results, but it was unclear what exactly Sida defined as outcome results: “Even if they require us to show results and implement these systems, their [Sida’s] requirements are not very concrete. It is more like they should be there and that they push for it” (IPO2, 17/11/2015). Even though Sida required results at outcome level, the agency also wanted information on how these outcome results had been achieved partly because it could facilitate the attribution of a result to a specific intervention. Reporting on activities and outputs should, therefore, be included in assessments. One informant described Sida’s results requirements as follows: “For instance, we have a result here, but we also have to document how many contributed to this result and where this organisation worked. /.../ which organisations contributed. We used to report more general results to Sida” (IPO1, 16/11/2015).

Results requirements as management: All informants touched on the importance of management aspects of results reporting. These aspects included having formal structures, such as results frameworks and matrixes, in place for reporting results, and capacity building of staff working in the POs and in the IPOs. Informants stressed the importance of increasing awareness among staff about the necessity of reporting results at outcome level. They also mentioned more practical aspects related to the identifying relevant indicators and the construction of results frameworks in line with instructions provided by Sida and other

donors (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO9, 4/12/2015). Having management systems in place was normally a prerequisite to get funding from donors; these systems were seen as a kind of guarantee that projects were not mismanaged. If no results were found or reported, for instance, donors were expected to accept this lack of results provided that reasonable explanations had been given, financial management procedures had been followed, and structures for reporting results were in place. However, if donors suspected any incidence of fraud, they would immediately withdraw their funding (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO5, 24/11/2015). The relations between the IPOs and the POs were described as similar; the POs had to follow basic financial requirements and if frauds were discovered, the IPO could terminate the cooperation and report the incident to the police. Although M&E systems were required, their absence did not lead to withdrawal of funds *if* there was a willingness to develop appropriate M&E systems (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO4, 23/11/2015; IPO5, 24/11/2015).

Internal justification for reporting results

Although all IPO informants wanted to see results from their development interventions, they claimed that the increased requirements on reporting results came chiefly from donors. IPO informants described the problems associated with results reporting in terms of lack of *proof* of accountability and results. In other words, for the informants it was clear that results had been achieved, but it was difficult to find evidence that results had been achieved (c.f. IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015). One informant motivated the reporting on results as follows:

All interventions are meant to solve a problem, a specific problem that can't be solved through workshops. It might be poor education, lack of health facilities, etc. Therefore, you design an intervention. Then, during the process of implementation, or once the intervention is implemented, you need to report results in order to show that the money invested was not meant only for the people implementing the intervention. It is not enough to achieve what you intended to achieve: you also have to show that you have achieved something, or that you have changed something. This is about change and value for money. But it is also a management strategy because it's about showing that this programme is the best alternative to solve the problem. The main reason why we report on results is accountability; we are accountable to Sida and other donors, but also to all actors involved. There is often a lot of money involved in this, and it is important to spend the money in a good way and to show the results generated. It is also a matter of transparency; you have to be transparent about the way donors' money has been invested. The other reason is management, showing what's been done and how. Soft interventions are trickier! And it is important to know what you are doing and how you are measuring results when it comes to soft interventions too. You might need to go to the field to find out how the

intervention could be implemented and what factors influence the progress of the intervention. There is also a learning component, learning for the next intervention. (IPO6, 24/11/2015)

When IPO informants were asked how they motivated their POs to report results, they replied that evidence of results and a results framework make it easier to attract new donors; one is able to show results (outcomes) and thereby “prove [the] relevance” of the organisation’s work (IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015).

Accountability was also seen as a requirement to get continued funding from donors insofar as it could motivate why results should be reported. Consequently, having M&E systems in place was thought to increase the chances of getting more funding or funding from other donors. As the competition for funding has increased, it has become even more evident for IPOs and POs that it is necessary to show their work is relevant and that it contributes to changes (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015):

I usually put it this way: ‘If you have a functioning system, it will benefit you in the long run because it will attract more donors’. I also usually mention that it requires a lot of work to develop a system, but when it is in place things will get easier for [the POs]. (IPO2, 17/11/2015)

Another strategy IPO informants applied when motivating POs to report on results was to discourage justifications such as “you have to report on results”, and emphasise instead the benefits of results reporting for the POs (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015). This process could be described as follows:

You should respect the partner. If they report activities, you should respect that. But of course you could be a critical friend and say ‘do you think it would be good for your members to show that you are producing change? If you think so, maybe instead of saying that you have bought that many cars or ploughs ... if you sat down with them and said that they got so much money from this, don’t you think that it will be more interesting for your members?’ Often they say ‘yeah, yeah, yeah!’. (IPO3, 17/11/2015)

Challenges in capturing and reporting results

The IPOs encourage their POs to report results at outcome levels, rather than only activities and outputs. However, informants from the IPOs described major challenges in making the POs realise the importance of reporting results at all. Defining indicators was a central aspect of reporting on results, and the POs should define what indicators to report on, and when to report on them, with assistance from the IPOs. The IPOs also had their own indicators,

which should comply with the POs' indicators. The POs' results were described as measured primarily in terms of "numbers and figures", that is, with quantitative indicators (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015). One reason for the emphasis on quantitative results was that they were considered easier to measure, especially when reported as activities and outputs. Nevertheless, informants also referred to a demand for qualitative results. It could be difficult to capture results from advocacy work only by means of quantitative indicators, for instance. Measuring change might require a combination of quantitative and qualitative results (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015).

The IPOs wanted to see more qualitative oriented outcome results. One informant, for instance, described quantitative results as "numbers without content" (IPO3, 17/11/2015). In encouraging the POs to report on qualitative results at outcome levels, they were encouraged to report "histories of success" (IPO1, 16/11/2015), "success stories" (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015), "progress reports" (IPO6, 24/11/2015), and "the most significant changes" (IPO2, 17/11/2015). Several informants gave examples from well projects to illustrate why qualitative results were necessary (IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO7, 25/11/2015). Below is one of these examples:

Say you have built ten wells. They are nice and beautifully built, clean and everything. It is a good number, but it does not say anything about people's access to water /.../ We built many wells when I was working for another organisation and one of them was in a village in the countryside. When I arrived it was there, with the machine and everything, but it was locked and not in use. 'But it's finished? Yes. Is the water coming? Yes'. He takes the key and opens and after a second, I saw the water. 'Why are people not taking water here? There are no signs of people taking water... No, we are waiting for the government to come and launch it, and it has now taken six months.' You see, but that number was already counted [reported] as a well, but it is not being used. (IPO3, 17/11/2015)

As indicated previously, measuring results was closely associated with measuring change. Many interventions within the area of democracy, gender equality, and human rights involved advocacy, and informants from the IPOs considered it a major challenge to measure outcomes, i.e. to identify the accurate indicators of advocacy (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015). Attributing advocacy results to a specific intervention (project or programme) was particularly difficult, or even impossible. Therefore, it was not deemed worth investing time and resources to measure impact and to claim attribution. IPO informants referred to "contributing to change", which was considered sufficient in terms of "claiming results" (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015):

So, how do you measure, and how can you claim that this result stems from my contribution? We do not say “this is totally attributed to the AGIR programme”, but we say that it contributes to results. For example, if the government is open now and is improving important laws, we cannot claim to one hundred per cent that those changes are a consequence of AGIR, but we know that our contribution is valid. So the challenge is how we can claim that this is our result. (IPO12, 3/12/2015)

Informants were generally convinced that their project leads to results. Therefore, IPO informants did not consider the “production” of results problematic. Capturing and reporting these results, however, was seen as a major challenge. Informants pointed out that it takes time to trace results, and the process is often costly; one might need to make surveys or hire interpreters, for instance. IPO informants considered it particularly challenging to trace results of advocacy work, since many actors are often involved. In addition, it takes time to see and measure results of advocacy work. Despite the resources (both in terms of time and money) required by the results reporting, informants saw advantages in a greater focus on results and more detailed and formalised reporting processes (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015). It should be noted that the produced results were not always planned in the project documents. The context might change and unexpected things might happen, which would entail that the expected change would not take place as planned. Natural disasters such as floods and droughts, as well as political changes, were described as issues that could distort the implementation of interventions, forcing the IPOs to change their programmes. Yet the IPOs considered themselves strong enough to handle such incidents, even if the results and objectives that had been planned could not be achieved (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015). IPO informants argued that the following strategies might be employed if results could not be reported in relation to pre-established objectives:

- To change focus/objective of the intervention and make the planning process more flexible: if there is a change in context, it should be possible to make changes in the objective and in the implementation of the interventions (IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO5, 24/11/2015).
- To improve the M&E systems and increase capacity amongst the POs to make them better equipped to report different kinds of results (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO5, 24/11/2015).

IPO informants believed that Sida would not stop funding because of the absence of results, provided that they were given reasonable explanations (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015).

7.5.3. Partner Organisations' conceptualisation of results

Defining and measuring results

The informants interviewed were mainly representatives from POs that receive funding from Diakonia and We Effect. Some informants representing POs that cooperate with IBIS and Oxfam Novib were also interviewed. Most of them were interviewed individually or in pairs, but information was also gathered through a group discussion carried out in relation to a workshop on “Swedish Results-Based Management of Development Aid”. The represented POs were active in different sectors and had different approaches to development, which entails that they had different relations with their funding IPO. The POs ranged from being research-oriented organisations to organisations that work with the practical needs of beneficiaries. In addition, the POs worked in different thematic areas, such as conflict resolution, gender equality, and land rights.

PO informants claimed that the demand for results was not a new thing, yet they had noticed a change in donors' requirements concerning what kind of results should be reported: from a strong focus on activities and outputs to reporting outcomes of development interventions. Some informants admitted that they still did not have capacity to report outcomes and, therefore, continued to report activities and outputs (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015). As the IPOs, the PO informants described outcomes in terms of changes, mainly in terms of social change or changes that had taken place at community level. Reporting evidence of results was generally perceived as a challenge; POs claimed to have accomplished outcome results, but they seldom had evidence of results, or resources to capture the changes that have occurred (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015; PO4, 8/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). Although informants referred to changes and results at outcome level, the results concept did not seem to be as strongly connected with outcomes amongst PO informants as it was amongst IPO informants.

PO informants used a similar vocabulary as the IPOs' when they were talking about results, and often referred to RBM and results as activities, outputs, outcomes, or impacts. Several informants claimed, however, that donors such as Sweden had definitions of results that differed from IPOs' definitions (POWS, 7/12/2015). One informant described their results strategy as follows:

This is an RBM-based approach because all the things we do must be based on the specific results we want to achieve. That is, on specific indicators and targets that we must achieve over the years, and on how we will be monitoring these achievements. (PO5, 9/12/2015)

Even though informants stressed that the Portuguese language does not differentiate results at different levels (POWS, 7/12/2015), terms such as activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts were frequently used, and the informants seemed to have similar definitions of these concepts:

Activities: the “production” of a document, for instance; having a workshop or giving training (PO2, 2/12/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015).

Outputs: the number of workshops and trainings (including participants) or a final document. Outputs were described as a basic requirement when reporting results to donors (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015).

Outcome: change; social change or changes that had taken place at community level. (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015; PO4, 8/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). Changes, and thus outcomes, were also described as processes (PO2, 2/12/2015), but also as sitting down with the GoM to discuss a document, policy, or other issues that could lead to social change (PO1, 27/11/2015).

Impact: long-term change in society, often measured after the end of the programme or project. Impact could refer to a policy change made by the government in line with proposals made by the PO (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015; PO4, 8/12/2015).

Although the POs aimed to report outcomes, they often failed to do so and reported instead on activities and outputs. The reason why they did not report outcomes seemed to be lack of knowledge or misunderstandings. Among the main reasons why activities and outputs were reported PO informants pointed out to lack of capacity amongst general staff to identify appropriate indicators as well as lack of capacity to capture and document outcomes (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015; PO6, 5/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). According to informants, when donors were informed about outcome results, they required information about the means whereby these results were achieved, i.e. results in terms of activities and outputs. Donors’ requirements concerning the reporting on activities and outputs could relate to requirements concerning evidence of how the projects or programmes have contributed to the specific results. However, PO informants had not reflected over this possibility when they described donors’ results requirements.

One informant claimed that there were two kinds of POs in Mozambique: one that is very confident and claims that all results stem from their work; and another that is humble and simply does the work without “making noise about

what they are doing” (PO1, 27/11/2015). Several of the informants stressed that the first kind of PO could be a problem for all POs if the donors do not discover that they are, in fact, unreliable organisations (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO6, 5/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). PO informants captured results mainly in terms of figures and numbers, generally to demonstrate activities and outputs. They argued that IPOs more often than not required quantitative results:

For donors M&E is about what you can count, and about having a good structure so you can catch “good outputs”. This is what it means to achieve results: to count chicken breasts [bones] so you know how many chicken the beneficiaries have eaten. And to show the receipts. (POWS, 7/12/2015)

Outcomes, given that they are associated with change, could be captured primarily through narratives and, thus, qualitative approaches (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO6, 5/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). These narratives could be reported as “histories of change” (PO2, 2/12/2015) or as “success stories” (PO1, 27/11/2015). In addition to RBM, *LFA* and *Theories of Change* (ToC) were concepts that informants used when they described how they reported results. While RBM was considered to have replaced the LFA, the ToC was described as a new instrument for planning and reporting development results. PO informants described that a ToC involved defining and describing how a PO’s various projects would lead to change, and how these changes would contribute to the achievement of (in this case) AGIR’s overarching objectives. However, even though donors used different concepts, informants had not experienced major changes as regards results requirements. A discussion amongst informants during a workshop revealed the following:

Participant 1: Donors have shifted the discussions from LFA to RBM and now again to ToC. But much is still the same.

Participant 2: Yes, now it is ToC that everyone is talking about and in six, seven years it will be something else. (POWS, 7/12/2015)

PO informants considered the identification of indicators as a central issue in their planning and implementation of AGIR:

The plan contains indicators that we have to follow when we report results. So everything that we do, we do according to the indicators. In the end of the semester we have to report it according to the indicators. (PO2, 2/12/2015)

Several informants argued that their overarching indicators, referred to as “big indicators”, were defined by the IPOs, while more detailed indicators were defined by the POs themselves (PO2, 2/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015). At the same time, PO informants pointed out that their agendas guided the

AGIR programme (see below paragraph on *Ownership and partnership*). One PO informant argued that “we do *not* accept indicators from our donors! [Emphasizing *not*]” (PO3, 4/12/2015). The results matrixes (or performance matrixes, as they were also referred to) were considered key documents, but the informants also experienced several challenges in the making of such a matrix, despite assistance from their funding IPO. POs found it challenging to develop results matrixes because their organisations did not have the capacity to develop them and because they did not share the donors’ language when it comes to describing and defining indicators at the right levels of results and details. Once the indicators were defined in the results matrix, there were limited or no possibilities to change them (POWS, 7/12/2015). One informant further claimed that the PO s/he worked for had not developed indicators (PO1, 27/11/2015). Despite training and tools for the development of baselines and indicators provided by the IPO, the PO had not managed to identify indicators that were measurable or specific enough.

Why report on results?

When PO informants were asked why they reported results, many said that they had not reflected about it; instead, it seemed that reporting was done out of routine and because it was a requirement from donors. Nevertheless, after giving it some thought, informants often mentioned a number of reasons for reporting results. These reasons are listed below:

Accountability to donors: for most informants, the main reason for reporting results was the requirements from IPOs and their funders, i.e. donors want to know how their money was spent so that they can be accountable to taxpayers in their home countries. The POs were held accountable by the IPOs, and the IPOs were accountable to Sida and taxpayers in Sweden (PO2, 2/12/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015).

Learning and internal accountability: Only two informants spontaneously mentioned learning as a reason to report results (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). Other PO informants did not mention learning as a reason, and some claimed that learning was not the reason why donors asked for results (POWS, 7/12/2015).

It is not to learn! Just for implementing and get the next partner and for accountability – how you as an organization have used the money. How many of that 10 euros contributed to change, how the money is spent. (POWS, 7/12/2015)

However, when PO informants were asked what their ideas were about learning from results, it was described as a reason to capture changes, or the absence

of change. Informants also expressed interest in having evidence that their efforts had paid off, which in turn spurred the interest in capturing results (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015; PO4, 8/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). One informant said that the main reasons why his/her PO asked for results were to “avoid drifting” and to focus on the efforts that were most effective.

Sometimes you are so focused on your objectives that you don't notice that the conditions have changed and that it is no longer the right way to approach things /.../ monitoring allowed us to see other things about what worked and what did not work. (PO1, 27/11/2015)

Accountability to beneficiaries and members of their organisations: A couple of PO informants explicitly mentioned accountability to their members and beneficiaries as one of the main reasons for reporting results. They referred to internal requests for information regarding whether and how their efforts had paid off (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO4, 8/12/2015). It was not clear for the PO informants how the IPOs motivated their results requirements; many of the informants had not reflected on the reasons why they reported results or on the reasons provided by the IPOs for results reporting:

Donors come and say “now you have to report on results”, and we have to do it, we have to assess [interventions] and I don't know... I don't know if the donors impose [results requirements], but in that agreement they say “we are training you to report results”, so that's what we are doing. (PO4, 8/12/2015)

PO informants argued that having appropriate M&E systems and structures to report results was part of the IPOs' basic requirements for providing future funding. These structures were often also associated with systems for finance and economic reporting (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015). Some of the informants described the IPOs' requirements for reporting results as part of the IPOs' management structure. Results requirements were further described as a means for the IPOs to control what their POs did and how they implemented their projects and programmes. One PO informant said the following: “you can do whatever you want with AGIR, as long as you follow processes” (PO3, 4/12/2015). The IPOs' comments on the POs' indicators were described as an instrument for managing their POs. One PO informant claimed that donors only considered the M&E structures, and not the actual results (PO3, 4/12/2015). It was not clear for the POs what donors did when they had been informed about results. Yet they recognized that reported results could be used for different purposes; employing results to make political statements, for instance, might entail problems for the actors involved (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015).

Challenges in capturing and reporting results

As described above, the absence of results was attributed primarily to lack of capacity to report outcomes, along with the lack of a common “language” shared with donors, which in turn can also be related to lack of capacity. “Brain drain”, lack of data and a short-term perspective are all explanatory factors for this lack of capacity (POWS, 7/12/2015).

Brain drain: All informants described that their organisations had suffered from loss of staff trained in M&E. When someone is trained in M&E, they often “disappear”, i.e. they leave the often smaller Mozambican CSOs to work for larger INGOs or other international organisations that can pay higher salaries. Without staff trained in M&E, it was more difficult for the POs to identify relevant indicators. The organisation were drained of experience and knowledge about results reporting, which compromised their capacity to adopt donors’ results language (POWS, 7/12/2015). It was common that staff left to other organisations that could pay them more, but this tendency seemed to be particularly recurrent amongst staff trained in M&E (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015). POs described different strategies that could be applied to deal with this brain drain: increasing salaries (PO4, 8/12/2015), providing staff with benefits such as housing or maternity leave (PO1, 27/11/2015), or training all staff in the foundations of RBM and M&E in order to make the organisations less vulnerable to the loss of competent personnel (PO2, 2/12/2015).

Lack of data: PO informants described the collection of data as both expensive and time-consuming. In other words, capturing results takes time and costs money, which the POs seldom have, or could, budget for lack. All of the informants worked for POs that had activities in several parts of Mozambique. Field visits to collect data were often costly, and sometimes they needed to employ interpreters or conduct surveys, which increased costs even more (POWS, 7/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). In addition, the official statistics in Mozambique were described as insufficient; they did not live up to the standards set by the POs and did not contain the required details in terms of disaggregation (PO5, 9/12/2015).

A short-term perspective: Time was generally described as a major challenge in results reporting. It takes time before changes can be seen and captured, and donors seldom have time to await these changes (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO4, 8/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). Shortage of time has also influenced the POs work; in some cases, they had the results beforehand, since funding from one particular donor often stands for only a small share of the POs’ work. When

informants were asked what they thought about the funding strategy where the funding is disbursed first when the results are achieved (i.e. “payment by result”), they said the following: “It is almost like we do now; we report and then we get paid” (workshop informant December 7, 2015). It takes time to establish systems for reporting outcomes. PO informants considered the time pressure to come from Sida in Mozambique and other donors, rather than the IPOs, since Sida had to report on the implementation of AGIR to their headquarters (PO1, 27/11/2015).

In addition to the lack of capacity within the POs to report results, informants mentioned a number of other factors that constrain the results reporting. It is difficult to measure social change, for instance, and to attribute change to a specific intervention. Some of the POs also provided funding for smaller organisations or communities, and raising these partners’ awareness about the results reporting, especially at outcome levels, was also considered a major challenge (PO1, 27/11/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015). Achieving change through advocacy was considered a particularly challenging issue because it usually takes time for changes to emerge. As a consequence, it becomes even more difficult to capture these results (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015; PO4, 8/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015).

PO informants claimed that donors did not facilitate the process of reporting on advocacy. When POs received their funding very late in the year, for instance, they had problems if the results should be reported in December:

There are delays in payment. Sometimes we do not get funding until October or November, but the results should still be reported by the end of the year. We do not have time to execute the plan. To what extent can we talk about development results? We have to change and do something short-term so that we can report results. Results are meant to be reported by the end of the year. (POWS, 7/12/2015)

Another issue was that donors’ expectations were not always realistic; in some cases, donors expected more results than was reasonable to achieve based on the size of their funding (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015). Other informants also claimed that a comment frequently made by donors about the POs’ results matrixes was that the expectations on results presented in the matrixes were too optimistic; POs should therefore narrow the objectives specified in their matrixes to make them more realistic (POWS, 7/12/2015). PO informants pointed out that lack of result, in some cases, does not necessarily mean that no results have been achieved. Rather, some results could not be captured by matrixes or narratives: “Donors often want to see results, but they often do not want to be told about what has happened, if it was something else but expected results”

(POWS, 7/12/2015). Informants also referred to cases in which, even though no results had been achieved by the project or programme, the initiative had contributed to maintain status quo or prevented that a situation deteriorated even further. One informant made the following parable:

That is another thing: no progress is also progress. If you are swimming and there is a strong current, standing still is really good, because you did not drift out to the ocean. And that is the thing: we have to learn how to include these struggles. (PO1, 27/11/2015)

Not moving forward could be a consequence of political changes or natural disasters such as droughts or floods. Yet PO informants found it difficult to explain for donors that a negative result could have been even worse without the POs' work. Nevertheless, this challenge associated with the absence of results was recognized by IPO informants (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015; IPO1, 16/11/2015). In order to capture this kind of information about the (absence of) results, they collected narrative stories and used outcome-mapping (IPO1, 16/11/2015).

Some of the informants were also concerned about the absence of evidence of results and its impact on donors and taxpayers in donor countries (PO1, 27/11/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015). PO informants argued that incidences of fraud and corruption always receive great attention, as well as absence of results; good results, on the other hand, are not recognized by donors to the same extent. Reporting on failures was difficult but necessary (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015). One informant claimed the following:

AGIR has brought the mismanagement of accounts to the fore. This is a failure, of course, but it is also a result, and something that can be addressed. But the NGOs did not change, even if bringing it to the fore was in itself a change. AGIR requires that there are structures and procedures and that these are followed. They should catch these things. Yet at the same time we don't say: "We found the rotten egg". And we don't celebrate that we have found out that the king is naked. (PO3, 4/12/2015)

PO informants considered it difficult to report incidences of fraud and corruption, especially since whistle-blowers seldom have anything to gain by reporting misconduct within their own organisation. Whistle-blowers and their colleagues often lose their jobs, for donors do not want to fund corrupt organisations; without funds, these organisations go bankrupt. Nevertheless, informants welcomed more thorough systems for reporting incidences of corruption and avoid that money disappears from their organisations (PO3, 4/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015).

7.5.4. *Intermediary Partner Organisations' conceptualisation of ownership*

Defining ownership

IPO informants referred to *good donorship* when they discussed ownership in Sida's relations with the IPOs, as well as in their own relations with their POs (explicitly explained by IPO2, 17/11/2015). In a concept note on support to CSOs in Mozambique, the Embassy of Sweden in Maputo communicates the following:

Guiding the support provided by IBIS, Diakonia, Oxfam and We Effect in partnership with Sweden is a focus on good donorship, in which harmonization, civil society ownership, alignment to partner organization's existing systems and mutual accountability for results are important aspects. The aim is to provide as much as possible of the financial support through core support to the organizations. (Embassy of Sweden Maputo, 2016)

AGIR provided institutional funding, which was a kind of budget support. The idea was that the IPOs and their POs should have greater freedom to formulate their own agendas. However, Sida was required to report how Swedish ODA had been spent and what results it had generated to the Swedish Government. These reports should be done according to general guidelines, which could influence when and how the IPOs carried out their work (c.f. IPO2, 17/11/2015). In a similar way, the IPOs and the POs have agreements that specify when and how the POs should report results to the IPOs (IPO13, 3/12/2015).

When asked whether partner country ownership was discussed within the IPOs' work, several of the informants referred to the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. IPO informants claimed that their work was conducted in line with these agreements (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015). They also emphasised the necessity of protecting POs' ownership. IPO informants described ownership in relation to their POs in terms of the PO's objectives and programmes, often referred to as the PO's "agenda". The general idea was that IPOs should not interfere in the POs' definition of their agenda; rather, they should assist the POs in accomplishing what had been established in the agenda (IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015; IPO5, 24/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015):

Ownership takes place at the agenda level! The structures that determine how one should implement the agenda are a different thing; donors or partners can interfere. If [the IPO] agrees with an agenda, we could assist them in the implementation of the agenda with financial and technical support. This is also what the Paris Declaration determines: it is support to align partners'

strategies, but to follow the agendas of the implementers. Dialogue and mutual accountability are important instruments in this process. (IPO6, 24/11/2015)

IPO informants could not further explain how they worked with promoting ownership; however, they could explain how they worked with good donorship. Good donorship was described in terms of *respecting the work the POs do*, including how the POs worked with M&E. As the IPOs' intentions were to improve or change M&E systems, it was a challenge to combine this degree of interference and, at the same time, respect the POs work (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015). Although IPO informants described ownership and good donorship in similar ways and used these concepts synonymously, they described differences between the two concepts. IPO informants claimed that it was more difficult to be a good donor than to hand over ownership to the PO. Pursuing good donorship requires diplomacy to convince the partners of the benefits of a particular way of doing things and, at the same time, to make the POs feel that they have ownership over processes. One informant said the following:

Good donorship is used here instead of ownership. It means that the PO should own the project and be responsible for it; they should feel that it is their project. We should be counsellors; our role is to support them when they need. (IPO4, 23/11/2015)

Nevertheless, when asked about ownership, IPO informants stressed that it was an important aspect of their work. When asked about whose ownership they referred to, several of them replied that they referred to the IPOs' ownership, i.e. ownership in relation to Sida and other donors, and not to the IPOs' relations with their POs or beneficiaries (IPO1, 16/11/2015, IPO13, 3/12/2015). When one informant (IPO1, 16/11/2015) was asked what staff at his/her IPO meant when they talked about ownership, the answer was the following:

Informant: Ownership is the work we do. I mean, the work as [the IPO] wants us to do. We use our systems, our values, so we had to, what should I say, we are still the same [IPO]. So we own what we do, it is not something that comes from the outside.

Researcher: And what about your partner organisation?

Informant: We choose partners according to our thematic interests.

Researcher: So they adjust to [the IPO]?

Informant: No, I mean, we provide money for three themes. So if you feel that you work within these three themes, you can apply.

One informant pointed out that ownership "is ensured through the involvement of government authorities" (IPO12, 3/12/2015), with reference to the Paris

Declaration. This informant also stressed the importance of involving the GoM and local authorities in development processes. If the GoM felt that it had ownership, it would be encouraged to take responsibility for the development of the country. The government's engagement would secure a more sustainable development cooperation in the absence of donors or CSOs. As the GoM should represent Mozambican citizens, GoM ownership should also increase beneficiaries' possibilities to influence development processes (IPO12, 3/12/2015).

Whose results?

When IPO informants were asked whose results they asked for and whose results they reported, they described that they reported their own results, defined in results frameworks and matrixes (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015). Although the IPOs claimed that they developed their own results frameworks, Sida could how influence these frameworks were formulated. Results frameworks and matrixes should be approved by Sida, and it seemed that Sida often commented extensively on these frameworks and matrixes, especially in relation to the relevance of identified indicators and on the procedures according to which indicators should be measured (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015). The process of developing results matrixes was described by one informant as follows:

Sida has a great deal to say, they have to approve it [the results framework]. They make comments during the whole process of preparing the framework before they approve it /.../ but we don't change our agenda to be in line with Sida, no, we don't do that. (IPO12, 3/12/2015)

The IPOs have their headquarters in Stockholm (Diakonia and We Effect), Copenhagen (IBIS), and in The Hague (Oxfam NOVIB), and the IPOs had to report to these offices and/or to their regional offices in Southern Africa (e.g. We Effect). In addition to taking into consideration Sida/AGIR guidelines and the POs' guidelines, the IPOs' local offices in Maputo had to adjust their work in relation to the requirements and guidelines of their organisations. Although this does not seem to be a major issue, it is an additional aspect the IPOs were required to consider when reporting results (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015).

Since the POs implemented the development cooperation, the IPOs depended on results reported from their POs to report results to Sida, i.e. the results the IPOs reported were compilations of their POs' results. One IPO informant described the relations between the POs' and the IPO's results as follows:

Informant: We depart from what they, the partners, are doing and how they contribute to our results.

Researcher: What do you mean with “contribute to our results”?

Informant: Well, if they contribute to the achievements of their own results and these are in line with our results... They share the same reality as we do...

(IPO6, 24/11/2015)

The IPOs did not wish to interfere in their POs’ agenda. However, the IPOs could have influence over the agenda by requiring that specific M&E systems should be followed and, thereby, require that certain indicators should be considered. The role of the IPOs should be to support the POs in planning and reporting, without interference in their development agenda. For IPO informants, the distinction between interfering in the agenda and in the implementation of the agenda seemed to be clear, at least in theory (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015). One informant described it as “the purposes and objectives of the interventions are defined by the partners, and we can only provide capacity building when it is needed” (IPO6, 24/11/2015). The extent to which the IPOs interfered in the implementing process varied. Some informants representing both IPOs and POs described that the IPOs only assisted the POs in developing and implementing a results framework (IPO2, 17/11/2015; PO6, 24/11/2015). Other informants described the development of M&E systems as a joint exercise between IPOs and POs, in which the IPOs had the possibilities to influence how indicators were defined (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015).

Although IPO informants acknowledged that Sida encouraged ownership amongst the IPOs, they also felt pressure to report results in line with Sida’s expectations. IPOs felt that they were forced to require their POs to use specific planning and reporting systems, which could compromise POs’ ownership. Combining ownership and Sida’s results requirements was considered a challenge (IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO4, 23/11/2015; IPO12, 3/12/2015). One IPO informant described this challenge as follows:

They [Sida] think that the partner should own their projects and that they should be independent, which, of course, I agree with. But with these systems and reporting on results is rather square and how to match that with ownership. It is a huge problem for Sweden that they try and say that everything is super important /.../ donors convey contradictory messages: they say that ownership should be super strong but also that it is super important to report results. I think this complicates things. (IPO2, 17/11/2015)

Nevertheless, the POs’ possibilities to influence their agenda seemed to be significant, even if their possibilities to influence their results frameworks and

M&E systems were somehow limited. The lack of possibilities to influence the results reporting arguably impeded it: results might not be reported even though the systems were in place (IPO2, 17/11/2015), or POs reported anything in order to simply have results to report to the IPOs (IPO3, 17/11/2015).

Selection of Partner Organizations

Since Sida should not interfere in the agendas of their IPOs and POs, it should not interfere in the development results that their partners chose to report. Therefore, the selection of IPOs was particularly important. It was not completely clear, however, how Sida selected which IPOs it would cooperate with within the AGIR programme when it started in 2010. Three of them, Diakonia, IBIS, and Oxfam, were already Sida partners and received core funding, while We Effect became a new partner in 2010. The goal was to find one IPO for every sub-programme within the AGIR programme. The four IPOs that Sida selected already worked within these areas in Mozambique.

Different processes played a role in the IPOs' selection of POs within the AGIR programme. Some of the POs had funding from IPOs when AGIR started, so that their cooperation was simply extended. In other cases, new POs were enrolled. In these cases, open calls were made and CSOs were invited to send in their terms of references (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO13, 3/12/2015). The POs were selected on the basis of their agenda, and not primarily on the basis of how they worked. Some fundamental requirements, however, had to be fulfilled by the POs in order to qualify for the AGIR programme. The organisations must represent their members, that is, the organisations must be based on membership and have a board that represents the members, and they should not be connected to political parties (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO3, 17/11/2015; IPO5, 24/11/2015; IPO6, 24/11/2015). The organisation also had to fulfil basic requirements related to internal (risk) and financial management. Some informants referred to Sida's *The Octagon – A tool for the assessment of strengths and weaknesses in NGOs* (Sida, 2002). The Octagon assessment considers eight areas, including the institutional parts of an organisation (Sida, 2002).

As the IPOs should not interfere in the POs' agendas, one of the main criteria in the selection of POs was that the PO had an agenda in line with the objectives of IPOs and of the AGIR programme. Less attention was given to the POs' institutional prerequisites, such as systems for financial reporting and M&E, since the IPOs could assist the POs in the development of these resources (IPO3, 17/11/2015). An IPO informant motivated this focus as follows:

We are much more flexible with the institutional part because if an organisation says “we are working on land, but also on HIV”, then we can be flexible and say “if this is your mission, we will respect you”. We focus on the things the organisation has identified. If we know that this organisation has a clear vision and mission, a clear objective and everything, but they lack institutional capacity, we can be flexible. (IPO3, 17/11/2015)

Organisations that lacked the required management structures could get funding for capacity building to develop these structures by applying to so-called nursery funds (IPO1, 16/11/2015; IPO2, 17/11/2015; IPO5, 24/11/2015). Although the process of selecting POs seemed to be objective, more subjective aspects were considered as well:

This is based on a feeling that this organisation works with interesting subjects or in interesting places in the country. We have no one there, so we go there and support this organisation so that it can become stronger, as the Swedish embassy requires for partners. But if they do not fulfil certain criteria, we cut directly. If they are connected to political parties, for example. (IPO1, 16/11/2015)

7.5.3. Partner Organisations’ conceptualisation of ownership

Defining ownership

PO informants discussed issues related to ownership throughout the interviews, which was reflected in the above section on measuring results. The informants had different experiences of work with the AGIR programme. Some claimed that they could act entirely in line with their own agenda, as long as they followed the procedures constituted by their funding IPO, while others said that their possibilities to influence the implementation of their own programmes were limited. A participant at the workshop said the following:

There is no discussion about how the partner organisation will contribute to the AGIR programme and the AGIR results; you make adjustments according to the programme. Everything is already there, in the plan. You just put the activities in the plan. The problem is that this shapes the programme. The indicators and the priorities of the programme are adjusted to AGIR and not to beneficiaries. (POWS, 7/12/2015)

All informants claimed that they had, at least to some extent, ownership over their own agenda, referring to their possibilities to set and define their own goals and objectives. As one informant put it: “[Our PO] is donor-funded but *not* donor-driven [emphasizing *not*]” (PO3, 4/12/2015). However, some informants also described that the IPOs interfered in political and technical aspects of the POs’ work. Several of the informants mentioned that the IPOs required them to add a gender perspective in their projects, which some informants

considered redundant or not applicable (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO2, 2/12/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015). The POs' dependency on donors was also mentioned in relation to discussions on ownership, which addressed which strategies could be applied to avoid becoming too dependent on donors. Informants acknowledged that they were very dependent on Swedish organisations to get funding. The claimed that they depended on the AGIR programme for institutional funding, and that they received other funding from the Africa Groups of Sweden or We Effect's regional office. The organisations were thus vulnerable for cuts in Swedish aid. At the time of the interviews, budget cuts as a consequence of the refugee crisis in Europe and in Sweden were under discussion, and these cuts could have consequences for the POs. Several of the PO informants seemed to have reflected on the relations between the POs and the IPOs. For them, it was clear that they gave up some of their independence when they accepted funding (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015): "Everyone wants money from donors, but they do not want donors to interfere too much. Ownership is a challenge! I do what you [the donor] want but I don't want to do it" (PO3, 4/12/2015).

PO informants described lack of capacity as a factor that influences relations between donors and recipients of development assistance. The POs felt that they were required to adopt the same language of the donors if they wanted to be on equal footing with them (POWS, 7/12/2015) and be able to frame results in such a way that donors would appreciate and understand them (PO4, 8/12/2015). When discussing who is responsible for reporting results and who has the capacity to do so, participants at the workshop replied as follows:

There is no capacity, we do not speak the same language of the donors and therefore we cannot act on equal terms. CSOs do not have the capacity [to do] business, and we have to report this in a business-like way. (POWS, 7/12/2015)

Whose results?

PO informants described that they reported results from the perspectives of different actors. Some of the informants pointed out that they reported results as they were experienced by beneficiaries (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015), while others referred to donors when they discussed results (POWS, 7/12/2015). In addition, some informants made it clear that they did "not accept indicators from donors" (PO3, 4/12/2015), while others said that they reported the results the donors required (POWS, 7/12/2015). A possible solution would be to select the IPOs' indicators, since they are in line with the POs' work, and only report on them:

The AGIR sent us the indicators for the next six years. Once we had the indicators, we looked at our strategic plan and said "one and ten and twelve is

what we are doing”. We don’t change to comply with all the twelve indicators that AGIR wants /.../ We are not changing our programme according to AGIR indicators. (PO2, 2/12/2015)

As described above, some PO informants claimed not achieving results could in itself count as a result if the situation had not deteriorated as much as it could have without the work of the POs. PO informants used different strategies to raise awareness among their beneficiaries. For instance, one PO informant described that the mission of the PO s/he worked for was to raise awareness amongst beneficiaries so that they could make informed decisions:

We are not there to influence what the communities want, we are there to say, ‘look, these are the risks, these are the tricks, these are the dangers. These are the concerns we have and you should be aware of this because it has happened to other communities and it is up to you how you want to go ahead with it’. (PO1, 27/11/2015)

PO informants also stressed that achieved results, or “victories”, belong to the communities or the actors that have achieved them, and not to the POs or the IPOs. PO informants pointed out that donors often claimed results that had actually been achieved by other actors, such as communities and beneficiaries, who do not get enough recognition for their achievements (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO4, 8/12/2015). One informant said the following:

[Ownership] is difficult. Sometimes you think ownership is there. You have trained and you make things happen, things that contribute to change and it is not something that you imposed or imported /.../ so whose ownership is this? Both donors and partners are involved in order to build what the [beneficiaries] want. (PO4, 8/12/2015)

The POs were required to submit different reports to different donors. Even though the same results could be mentioned in several reports, the formats of the reports were different. As the support from AGIR was given as institutional funding, the AGIR report should be an aggregation of all the results achieved by the PO:

We have different programmes with different partners, and we report specifically [to each one of these partners]. But since the support from [the IPO] is for our strategic plan, we report all our partnerships to them. (PO5, 9/12/2015)

Different actors’ definitions of “ownership”

While IPO informants associated ownership with “good donorship”, the POs used the term “partnership” when they referred to their relations with donors, and “ownership” when they referred to their own mandate to formulate and implement their development cooperation (PO1, 27/11/2015; POWS,

7/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). Although references to beneficiaries were made throughout most of the interviews, beneficiaries were seldom considered in discussions about ownership. The focus of these discussions lied instead on the POs' ownership and possibilities to set and implement their own agendas.

The IPOs' and the POs' possibilities to set and define their own agendas were partly based on personal relations between the IPO and the PO, but also on personal relations with staff at the Swedish Embassy in Maputo (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO3, 4/12/2015; POWS, 7/12/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). Some informants described relations with their contacts at the IPO as a vital condition to achieve results: if the contact understood the context and the work the PO did, implementation was often rather smooth. Informants also mentioned that IPO staff should know when a PO was not sincere as regards, for instance, reporting results that had not been achieved (PO1, 27/11/2015; PO5, 9/12/2015). Some informants argued that POs were accountable to donors and not to their beneficiaries. They also considered the GoM accountable to donors, rather than to its own citizens.

7.6. Summary and Analysis: Framing Results and Ownership in Swedish Development Cooperation with Mozambique

7.6.1. Framing Results and Ownership in Swedish General Budget Support to Mozambique

Framing Results in Swedish GBS to Mozambique

Sida informants in Mozambique and informants from the GoM used the same results concepts and had similar ideas about the reasons behind the results agenda. These actors had a shared understanding about the shift from activities and outputs to outcomes and impacts. Yet they interpreted this shift in different ways. Informants from the GoM argued that even though Swedish development actors claimed that they required outcomes results, they also required information about how these results had been reached, which implied that the GoM should also report activities and outputs. At the same time, the GoM had committed to reporting activities and outputs when they signed the MoU. There seemed to be some confusion between compliance and performance auditing, that is, between reporting on the execution of the budget and on what had been accomplished with the budget. Figure 18 presents an overview of how Sida informants in Mozambique and GoM informants framed results in relation to the Swedish GBS to Mozambique.

	Informants: Sida in Mozambique	Informants: Government of Mozambique
<i>Diagnostic framing: Description of the problem</i>	Misuse of funds within the GoM: high risk of corruption and non-execution of the budget is not executed in line with the agreements in the MoU.	Lack of development.
<i>Prognostic framing: Solution to the problem</i>	Increased accountability and transparency. Reporting activities and outputs: how the budget has been allocated. Mechanisms for control and monitoring the execution of the budget.	Report outcomes of the budget. As long as the Mozambican economy grows and the number of poor decreases, it should not be necessary to report activities and outputs.
<i>Motivational framing: Why is this the best way to solve the problem (stated above)?</i>	Accountability in relation to taxpayers in Sweden and to citizens in Mozambique.	To promote economic growth: The Mozambican economy is growing and the number of poor is decreasing.
<i>Framing rationale: Internal justification to implement the identified solutions</i>	A weak civil society and the absence of (functioning) control mechanisms means that Sweden, and other donors, function as watchdogs to hold the GoM accountable to its own citizens, which also will force the GoM to be accountable to their own citizens. GBS is given in vulnerable contexts, which always, to some extent, involves risks.	As long as outcomes have been achieved and reported, it is not necessary to prove how they were reached.

Figure 18: Framing of results: Swedish GBS to Mozambique.

Neither informants from Sida nor GoM informants mentioned learning from development results in relation to the GBS. The absence of a discussion about learning in relation to GBS could depend on the nature of the GBS support; since it was given directly to a country's state budget, the focus lied on the execution of the budget in line with the partner country's policies. Therefore, it was up to the partner country to learn from the execution of the budget and change its policies accordingly. Although donors could also have a say in this process, learning was not necessarily emphasised within the framework of the GBS. For instance, M&E of Mozambique's PRS could be done with the purpose of learning. The evaluations of the GBS support to Mozambique also include learning aspects, but they tend to focus on effectiveness and efficiency (Batley, Bjornestad, et al., 2006; European Commission, 2014) or mutual accountability (IESE, 2009, 2010).

Ownership in relation to results in Swedish GBS to Mozambique

GBS as an aid modality was considered to manifest partner country ownership, however partner country ownership was manifested in different ways within the GBS. Amongst development actors involved in GBS to Mozambique, ownership was generally referred to as *partnership*. Partnership referred to relations between GBS donors and the GoM. GoM informants perceived Sweden as a relatively open and sincere donor who had a great deal of confidence in GBS as an aid modality. Sweden gave technical support to improve the GoM's systems and structures, which was taken as evidence of Sweden's confidence in GBS. Sweden also had a reputation of being a "good donor", a reputation attested by its long presence in the country.

GoM informants described the relations between Sweden and Mozambique as based on mutual trust, while Sida informants described that these relations had become strained over the last years. The relations had changed as a result of changes in the situation in Mozambique and in Sweden, along with general trends within international development cooperation. Even though Sweden was seen as a relatively reliable donor, GoM informants believed that cuts in the GBS might occur if there were cuts in Swedish ODA to Mozambique. In addition, the Swedish Government did not want to be associated with corrupt regimes that did not promote human rights, which could also impact on Swedish GBS to Mozambique. At the same time, the GoM wanted to reduce its dependency on donors and limit donors' influence in policymaking and budget execution. Even though GBS was a welcome addition to the state budget, the GoM was not willing to make big sacrifices as regards its independence, which was reflected in the GBS relations with GBS donors. Furthermore, general trends in international development cooperation were not favourable to non-earmarked support such as GBS. Instead, payments by results and similar aid modalities in which ODA is not disbursed before results have been achieved were expected to replace GBS. However, how ownership or partnership intersected with these modalities was not clear for the informants; it was not clear who defined the required results and how these results should be achieved.

GBS could be an aid modality that promotes ownership and makes it possible to report results on actual developments that take place in Mozambique. However, donors and the GoM must follow the agreements established in the MoU, and that no major deviation from these agreements are accepted. The issue of mutual accountability is central in the GBS cooperation. Mutual trust between GBS donors and the partner government usually takes time to establish, and it is often easily ruined. In the GBS cooperation in Mozambique, several scandals within the GoM have caused damage to donors' confidence in

the GoM. Framing results and ownership in Swedish support to democracy and human rights in Mozambique

Framing of results in Swedish support to democracy and human rights in Mozambique

IPO and PO informants had similar conceptions and definitions of results. Results were associated with outcomes of development interventions. A change of focus had taken place: results were previously associated with activities and outputs. However, the extent to which IPOs and POs focused on results differed. While much of the work the IPOs did seemed to be based on RBM approaches, the POs focused on implementing their interventions and achieving objectives, rather than on reporting achieved results. One of the reasons for this focus was the lack of resources and capacity to put the necessary M&E systems and procedures in place and to implement the M&E. PO informants mainly referred to RBM, but also to LFA, and ToC. Figure 19 presents an overview of how IPOs and POs were framing results in Mozambique.

	Intermediary Partner Organisations	Partner Organisations
<i>Diagnostic framing: Description of the problem</i>	<p>Results had been achieved, but no evidence could be provided. Sida require evidence of results at outcome level.</p> <p>Lack of transparency: absence of formal structures and capacity to report results.</p> <p>Increase development effectiveness by learning from previous development interventions.</p>	<p>IPOs require accountability.</p> <p>Improved development effectiveness through learning and internal accountability.</p> <p>Lack of evidence of results and information about the reasons why or their development interventions were successful or not.</p> <p>To demonstrate accountability to beneficiaries who often invest time and effort to take part in interventions.</p>
<i>Prognostic framing: Solution to the problem</i>	<p>Finding and reporting evidences of achieved changes/outcome to report to donors.</p> <p>Reporting quantitative results, mainly as evidence of results to report to donors.</p> <p>Reporting qualitative results: success stories to report to donors.</p> <p>To learn how to improve future development interventions: learning how they had contributed to changes/outcomes.</p>	<p>Improved reporting on results.</p>
<i>Motivational framing: Why is this the best way to solve the problem (stated above)?</i>	<p>Demonstrating relevance: Finding proofs that what the IPOs were doing were generating results to get future funding.</p> <p>Proving accountability to donors.</p>	<p>The ability to demonstrate accountability to IPOs and beneficiaries.</p>
<i>Framing rational: Internal justification to implement the identified solutions</i>	<p>Increased development effectiveness and efficiency.</p>	<p>To get funding from the IPO: appropriate M&E systems were a prerequisite to get future funding and funding from other donors.</p>

Figure 19: Framing of results: Swedish support to democracy and human rights in Mozambique.

For IPO as well as PO informants, measuring the outcomes of their development interventions was a major challenge. Relevant and measurable indicators were a key factor to track these outcomes. The reporting of results was costly and involved a great share of administration, since specific protocols and procedures had to be followed when results were reported to Sida and to other donors. Quantifiable indicators were used with more frequency than qualitative ones, on the grounds that they were easier to measure. Whether or not an outcome

could be attributed to a specific intervention did not receive much attention, as long as the interventions had contributed to change.

Ownership and results in Swedish support to democracy and human rights in Mozambique

Ownership was frequently referred to as “good donorship” in discussions about ownership in relation to Swedish support to democracy and human rights in Mozambique. The IPOs described ownership in terms of the possibilities that IPOs and POs had to define development objectives and set the agenda for their work. Although ownership and good donorship were almost used as synonyms, they were assigned different attributes: informants believed that it was easier to hand over ownership (and thus responsibilities) to a development partner than to pursue good donorship (and retain some of the responsibilities).

When asked whose results they referred to, IPOs replied that they referred to results reported in line with their development objectives, rather than the objectives of Sida, POs, or beneficiaries. POs reported results in line with the IPOs’ requirements, but they still seemed to have a great deal of influence over their own development agendas. It should, however, be noted that the IPOs selected their POs taking into account what they worked with in order to make sure that they had a similar approach to development and shared development objectives. Furthermore, the extent to which POs adjusted their agendas to suit the IPOs’ development agendas differed. When they described what indicators were used, several of the POs made a distinction between indicators defined by the IPOs and the indicators that the PO had defined internally. The IPOs’ indicators were referred to as *big indicators* because they referred to overarching objectives, while their own indicators often concerned more detailed results. When the POs were asked whose results they referred to, they often replied they referred to beneficiaries.

Although partner country ownership was considered important, several of the PO informants remarked that POs should not have too much ownership. Donors should also feel a certain degree of ownership, and thereby feel responsible for the development in Mozambique.

7.6.2. The results agenda and ownership: policy arrangements in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique

Policy discourse – the views and narratives of the actors involved: In Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique, the changed demand for results was mainly referred to as a move away from the focus on activities and output to a focus on outcome results. These outcomes concerned mainly how development

interventions contributed to *changes* in society. However, while development partners focused on outcomes, Sida in Mozambique also required that they report on how these outcomes were achieved, i.e. to report on inputs, activities, and outputs. This demand was particularly important in relation to GBS. Requirements to report outcomes seemed to be quite a new phenomenon in development cooperation in Mozambique.

All interviewed actors within the Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique identified accountability as the main reason why results were requested. Yet the actors had different perceptions in relation to whom they were primarily accountable. While Sida staff and IPO informants considered themselves primarily accountable to their funders, PO informants considered themselves accountable to their beneficiaries. Although learning was mentioned as a motive for reporting results, learning was not a top priority. It should also be noted that both IPO and PO informants believed that their development interventions led to change. The challenge of the results agenda was to find evidence of these results, and not how to achieve them.

Ownership was also referred to in terms of partnership or good donorship, however informants did not share the same view about what good donorship exactly entailed. In relation to results, ownership was discussed mainly in terms of the development partners' possibilities to define development objectives and set their own agenda. Donors' primary responsibility was to assist development partners in the identification of indicators and in the development of methodological frameworks to capture results. It was unclear, however, how this approach to ownership became concrete in practice. IPOs and POs were also concerned about the extent to which their ownership competed with donors' ownership, insofar as it could impact on funders' interest and on their responsibility for the interventions. Development partners wanted their donors to be engaged in development cooperation, not least in order to secure future funding, but also to avoid becoming the only agent in charge of carrying out development cooperation.

Actors and policy coalitions: GoM informants described Sweden as a good donor and as an open actor relatively easy to cooperate with. However, cooperation in relation to GBS also faced several challenges associated with incidents of corruption and misuse of funds within the GoM, which were issues the Swedish Government did not want to be associated with.

IPOs played an important role within the Swedish support to democracy and human rights. They received core funding, which could be compared to a form of budget support. Instead of working directly with implementing partners, Sida

in Mozambique had delegated the work to their IPOs, which also influenced the roles and responsibilities of development actors. IPOs were responsible for carrying out Swedish development cooperation and reporting their results (in line with Swedish policies and Sida's guidelines) to Sida, while the POs were responsible for the actual implementation of development interventions. IPOs functioned as a middlemen in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique: they functioned as a mediator between the POs, which were expected to generate results, and Sida. As presented in Figure 16, many actors were involved in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique and their respective mandates and responsibilities seemed to be somewhat unclear, especially the IPOs' mandate.

The rules of the game seemed quite straightforward to development actors engaged in Swedish development cooperation with Mozambique, although they found it challenging to implement the requirements. The major challenge associated with the results agenda was to follow the right protocols and procedures, including the identification of appropriate indicators and the disposal of time and resources to implement the new results requirements. Protocols and procedures were more than instruments for results reporting; they were also seen as a prerequisite to receive continued funding and attract new donors. Informants also touched on flexibility, that is, the extent to which they could be flexible in the implementation of donor-funded projects. In the case of a contextual change that affected the implementation of the intervention, for instance, IPOs and POs were not sure which mandate they had to change the objectives and indicators of the intervention.

Resource allocation and power relations: power relations between the GoM and the Swedish Government within GBS cooperation have changed over the last few years. The GoM was not as dependent on GBS as it had been previously. As a consequence, GBS donors had more limited possibilities to influence the GoM by means of GBS. As noted above, results reporting within the Swedish support to democracy and human rights was also considered a prerequisite to get funding, regardless of whether results had been achieved or not. Development partners were required to have M&E system in place in order to get funding. However, Sweden and other donors have increased their power over the development cooperation as a result of donors' increased demand for evidence of compliance with the underlying principles: a larger part of Swedish GBS was given as a variable trench, which indicates that Sweden wanted to increase its control over the implementation of GBS.

8. Conclusions and discussion

8.1. Introduction: Aim and research questions revisited

The increased focus on results within international development cooperation is a consequence of the assumption that development cooperation must be more effective and efficient. When development actors agreed on the eight MDGs in the early 2000s, they attested to the belief that development is possible and that the situation for poor men and women can be improved. Yet by the time the MDGs expired in 2015, far from all the goals agreed upon had been reached (e.g. UN, 2015). The increased demand for results and partner country ownership, have been two central approaches for achieving the MDGs. However, these approaches present diverging and sometimes contradictory strategies to increase effectiveness and efficiency within international development cooperation, with different implications for the relations between donor and partner countries. In addition, the demand for results by means of what is commonly referred to as the results agenda and the issue of partner country ownership are contested issues among stakeholders, who often differ in their interpretations and understandings of results and ownership. A major challenge for many stakeholders is, thus, how to reconcile the results agenda and partner country ownership. This study investigates how different actors frame the results agenda and partner country ownership and to contributes to an increased understanding of the dynamics and relations within international development cooperation. This is mainly a conceptual study where the aim is *to explore how the results agenda has influenced the relations between donors and development partners, and thereby partner country ownership.*

This is mainly a conceptual study, which entails that its central concern is to investigate how stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation are framing the results agenda and partner country ownership. Two of the research questions asked in this study address how stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation frame the results agenda and partner country ownership.

RQ1: How are different stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation framing the results agenda? Why are results required, what kind of results is required, and whose results are required?

RQ2: How are different stakeholders within Swedish development cooperation framing partner country ownership? Why and how is ownership promoted, and whose ownership is considered?

The relations between Sweden and its development partners are another central concern, since relations based on mutual trust are a prerequisite for partner country ownership. The third research question explicitly addresses these relations.

RQ3: How is the results agenda influencing relations between Sweden and its development partners, and how has it in turn influenced partner country ownership in the case of Swedish development relations with Uganda and Mozambique?

The theories outlined in Chapter 3 serve as point of departure for the explanations provided in this concluding chapter as regards the influence of the results agenda over the relations between Sweden and its development partners, an influence that also affects partner country ownership. The theoretical approach adopted in this study is inspired by critical approaches to development. The results agenda and partner country ownership have thus been carefully scrutinised, along with the relations between different actors involved in international development cooperation. Yet this study does not only criticise international development cooperation; it also offers suggestions to improve future development cooperation.

The chapter begins with a presentation of the overall conclusions drawn in relation to the research questions. First, it presents the conclusions of the research questions on framing and reframing of the results agenda and partner country ownership. Thereafter, the conclusions in relation to the influence of the results agenda over the relations between Sweden and its development partners. Finally, the chapter presents a discussion of the overall aim of this research, suggestions for improvements of international development cooperation, and ideas for future research.

8.2. The framing of results and ownership in Swedish development cooperation

8.2.1. Introduction

Results and ownership are not new issues in Swedish development cooperation. However, the concepts that have been applied to address these issues, and how they have been framed, have changed over time as a consequence of prevailing discourses in international development cooperation. As far as results are concerned, a prominent change has to do with the number of reasons why results are required; results have ceased to be a mere instrument to learn how aid effectiveness can be increased, and have become an instrument for managing development cooperation and to prove accountability to Swedish taxpayers. Another change concerns whose results are required, as well as who is responsible for achieving and reporting results. Since the early 1980s, neoliberal approaches have dominated the development thinking. In particular during the 1980s and the 2000s, it is possible to notice an increased emphasis on development results that are possible to attribute to donors' development objectives, and development partners have become increasingly responsible for achieving and reporting development results.

8.2.2. Stakeholders' framing and reframing of results

Development actors interviewed for this study stressed that reporting results is not a new phenomenon on the development agenda, but they acknowledged that results requirements have increased and become more specific during the 2000s. As a consequence of this increase, development actors often experienced confusion in relation to what precisely qualifies as a result. Many informants claimed that stakeholders within international development cooperation had different definitions of the results concepts. However, this study has shown that most stakeholders from different development actors used the same concepts when they discussed results; they had, in fact, similar definitions of results. To a large extent, these definitions correspond with the definitions of the OECD/DAC, according to which results are defined in terms of outputs, outcomes, and impacts (see OECD/DAC, 2002).

Even though informants used the same concepts when they discussed results, they had different ways of framing the results agenda. This framing of the results agenda varied according to the stakeholder that the informants represented, that is to say, the Swedish Government, Sida, an INGO or a development partner. The main differences concerned the reasons why the results agenda was

implemented, the best strategies to implement the agenda, and the reporting of results.

This study views Swedish development cooperation as one policy arrangement that consists of several policy practices. The results agenda is one of these practices. By stipulating development policies and deciding over ODA budgets, the Swedish Government decides over policy arrangements and practices within Swedish development cooperation. As a Government Agency, Sida has to follow these policy practices. If other stakeholders want to benefit from Swedish development cooperation, they must also act in accordance with these policy practices. The results agenda is, thus, a *master frame*. Although all stakeholders have to relate to *master frames*, they are able to reframe them; consequently, they are able to reframe the results agenda. Swedish development stakeholders can reframe the results agenda so as to make it more suitable to their policies and strategies.

Framing the results agenda: The Swedish Government

The main reason behind the results agenda, according to Minister Carlsson and Sida staff members, was the lack of results reported on the achievements of Swedish development cooperation. The government attributed this lack to two factors: either results had not been achieved, or they had been achieved but not reported, which entailed that the results reporting needed to be improved. The results agenda aimed to address these problems. Besides improving and increasing the reporting on evidence of results, the results agenda was expected to improve effectiveness and efficiency in development cooperation. The increased reporting on results would facilitate learning from previous mistakes; annotations of success stories would improve future development cooperation; and the introduction of the results agenda would pave the way for a general improvement in the management of Swedish development cooperation (which is further discussed in section 8.3). The results agenda was, thereby, considered an instrument for both achieving and reporting on development results.

One of main arguments provided by the government for the introduction of the results agenda was transparency: Swedish development cooperation had not been sufficiently transparent as regards how Swedish taxpayers' money had been used. The government argued that it was necessary to assure Swedish taxpayers that their money had indeed contributed to development; Swedish taxpayers' money could not "disappear" in corruption scandals or be misused in any other way if the government aimed to sustain the relatively strong opinion in favour of development cooperation in Sweden. An additional reason

to introduce the results agenda was, therefore, to improve accountability in Swedish development cooperation.

Framing the results agenda: Sida staff

Sida staff members did not share the Government's framing of the results agenda. Sida informants argued that the agency had always reported results in line with the Government's policies and guidelines, as well as in line with the agency's internal policies and guidelines. In other words, Sida did not share the government's view about the problem that the results agenda aimed to address. Instead, Sida staff argued that there was a need to improve the results reporting; in particular, they pointed out that more evidence was needed as regards outcomes and impacts of Swedish ODA. The main reason why Sida wanted to improve its results reporting was to make Swedish development cooperation more effective and efficient by learning from previous experiences. Proving accountability was also considered important, but secondary.

For Sida, the Swedish Government's framing of the results agenda was an indication of lack of confidence on the Government's part and a strategy employed by the Government to regulate relations between the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida. Sida staff viewed the results agenda as an important instrument to improve their capabilities to report on development results and, thus, to improve management. Yet they also perceived that the results agenda had been attributed a disproportionate significance in the context of Swedish development cooperation. Instead of being an instrument in the reporting of development results, the reporting of results had become a development objective in itself. The Swedish Government's application of the results agenda as an instrument to report and achieve results caused confusion among Sida staff in relation to how the agenda should be implemented. This uncertainty among Sida staff concerned mainly the possibilities that the agency had to reframe the results agenda, that is to say, it concerned whether and how Sida could reframe the agenda in such a way that it would correspond with the government's and the agency's views about the pursuit of Swedish development cooperation.

The discrepancies between the Swedish Government and Sida as to whether results had been achieved or not can be traced to their different views about at what levels results should be reported. In other words, should results reflect the overall objective of Swedish development cooperation (which concerns impact results), or should they reflect the different strategies and priorities established in order to achieve the overall objective (which concerns outcome results)? The overall development objective of Swedish development cooperation has remained almost the same since the 1960s. This objective is "to create

preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression” (Government Offices of Sweden, 2014, p. 5). However, the priorities and strategies to accomplish this objective have changed over time. Sida has continuously reported results in relation to these priorities and strategies, and not necessarily in relation to the overall objective of Swedish development cooperation. Furthermore, Sida staff have been concerned with the improvement of living conditions for poor men and women in partner countries, rather than with the reporting of results that can be of interest for decision makers and taxpayers in Sweden, despite acknowledging the importance of both aspects. The conflict between the government and Sida in relation to the framing of the results agenda concerns, thus, *why* the results agenda should be implemented and *what problem* it sought to address.

In 2012, staff at Sida perceived that their possibilities to reframe the results agenda was limited, partly as a consequence of an ongoing negotiation of power relations between the Government and Sida, which took place at the same time as the results agenda was introduced. In 2015, when the second round of interviews was conducted, the situation had changed somewhat: the relations between the government and Sida had stabilised and staff at the agency concluded that they did have possibilities to reframe the agenda. From their perspective at that time, the government stipulated which results should be achieved, whereas the agency was granted relative autonomy to decide how these results should be obtained.

Framing the results agenda: Swedish development partners

For Sida’s development partners in Uganda and Mozambique, the agency’s requirements concerning the results reporting were legitimate; in other words, Sida’s development partners understood and accepted that they should be accountable to the Swedish Government and to Swedish taxpayers. They did not always share the view that accountability was the main reason to require results, but they did believe that it was very important to prove that the money they received from donors contributed to positive changes in poor men and women’s lives. In addition, it was also evident for development partners that they should prove accountability to donors in order to get future funding. Despite donors’ increased results requirements, development partners considered that they had possibilities to reframe the results agenda in such a way that they could justify the increased results requirements within the frameworks of their organisations. Many development partners were convinced that their work did contribute to development, so what they needed to do was to find evidence of these results and show donors that they could be held accountable. In Mozambique, for

instance, development partners put great emphasis on identifying and reporting “success stories” from their development interventions.

Despite the challenges stemming from the implementation of the results agenda, development partners perceived that they had possibilities to reframe the results agenda in such a way as to meet their own expectations on results and comply with Sida’s requirements. Development partners in Uganda and Mozambique considered Sida staff relatively open and flexible; in their view, Sida was willing to accept that results had not been achieved as expected, provided that their partners were honest and reported results in relation to agreed indicators.

8.2.3. Stakeholders’ framing and reframing of ownership

As regards partner country ownership, informants used different concepts to describe ownership. Stakeholders, however, did not consider the use of different concepts in relation to ownership as problematic as in relation to the results agenda. One of the reasons why informants did not consider this use of different concepts as problematic was that stakeholders framed ownership in similar ways: they had a shared understanding about the importance of partner country ownership and adopted similar approaches to promote ownership.

Swedish development stakeholders used different concepts to describe ownership, which uncovers reveals different strategies and approaches to promote partner country ownership. For stakeholders in Uganda, “dialogue” emerged as a key concept in discussions about ownership, referring to strategies to promote ownership. In Mozambique, “good donorship” and “partnership” were concepts frequently used in relation to ownership. Both concepts placed emphasis on donors’ roles and responsibilities in development cooperation. Despite the differences in the use of concepts and definition of strategies in relation to ownership, no significant discrepancies emerged in relation to how ownership was diagnostically framed and motivated. The main justification to increase development partners’ ownership was to improve effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability in international development cooperation. The underlying assumption was that these were not possible to achieve without the participation of partner countries.

Informants frequently referred to the Paris Declaration when they discussed ownership and how it was framed. Since the Swedish Government has signed the Paris Declaration and makes reference to it in its policies on development cooperation, the Paris Declaration stipulates the *master frame* of ownership. As opposed to their position in relation to the results agenda, most stakeholders agreed with the framing of ownership as it is presented in the Paris Declaration.

They did not consider it a challenge to (re)frame partner country ownership. Furthermore, the Paris Declaration contributed to a shared understanding of the importance of partner country ownership, as well as of the procedures to achieve ownership. The main difference concerning how stakeholders framed ownership had to do with whose ownership they should promote: partner countries', development partners', beneficiaries', or donors' ownership. Development partners were framing ownership in similar ways, yet this common approach was not reflected in practice, since there are a number of challenges associated with the promotion of ownership. Many of these challenges concern the relations between development stakeholders. These relations are further discussed in section 8.3.

8.3. Power relations, results, and ownership

8.3.1. Introduction

The possibilities to reframe the results agenda are closely associated with ownership, and they refer to what can be described as *power over* and *power to do*. *Power over* has to do with the rights to make authoritative decisions in relation to policies, that is to say, to define what results should be achieved; *power to do* refers to the rights to control processes and outcomes related to these policies, that is to say, it has to do with how results should be reported. Besides, the results agenda is closely associated with development objectives, processes, and outcomes. Rather than carrying positive connotations related to rights, however, the results agenda is mainly associated with increased responsibilities for actors that work within Swedish development cooperation. The results agenda has made Sida and its development partners responsible for reporting in line with the Swedish Government's development objectives. In addition, Swedish development cooperation has become more instrumentalised, which has also increased the requirements on development actors to follow protocols and procedures stipulated by the Swedish Government. The results agenda challenges the idea of ownership, understood as *power over* and *power to do*, which also makes the reframing of the agenda more problematic for the concerned actors.

8.3.2. Power relations and the results agenda

It should be possible to combine the results agenda and partner country ownership, provided that development partners' agenda and objectives establish how results should be reported, which results should be reported, and when they should be reported. However, this is not always the case; one of the main

reasons why development partners cannot set the development agenda and objectives is donors' lack of trust in their development partners.

The introduction of the results agenda in international development cooperation is in line with the NPM approaches that have dominated much of public management since the early 1980s. NPM entails a rather mechanical and top-down approach to public management, where politicians make decisions based on evidence of results, so that implementers of the decisions (public servants) are not necessarily involved in the decision-making process. One explanation for this detachment of civil servants from decision-making processes is the government's lack of trust in public servants' capacity to account for and implement public services in the most efficient way. The Swedish Government communicated that it did not trust Sida's effectiveness and accuracy in relation to the implementation of Swedish development cooperation. Sida, on the other hand, did not trust the government's and the MFA's competence to make adequate decisions about Swedish development cooperation. From 2006 to the early 2010s, relations between the Swedish Government and Sida were not characterised by mutual trust; in other words, relations between both were quite strained in this period.

Unlike most other policy areas, policies that concern international development cooperation are implemented in other countries. Consequently, international development cooperation involves relations among several actors, during different stages of implementation. Put differently, development policies travel much farther than many other policies, both in terms of place (from a country in the global North to a country in the global South) and in terms of space (from one political context to another, which entails that a huge number of actors are able to reframe the policy). This long chain of actors makes policy making and implementation of development cooperation very complex. Development cooperation also implies that taxpayers' money does not directly benefit citizens in the donor country and, in addition, development cooperation is often carried out in difficult contexts with a high risk of misuse of funds and corruption. This combination of factors makes international development cooperation and policies more vulnerable for criticism than many other policy areas, which in turn gives rise to a high demand for accountability. Yet the complex nature of international development cooperation also makes control a more complicated issue. In sum, international development cooperation is a policy area in which Governments could have great interest in adopting NPM approaches in line with the results agenda, but it is also a policy area in which the great number of actors involved makes it difficult to implement NPM approaches.

The introduction of the results agenda created tension within the administration of Swedish international development cooperation, and it has altered the relations between Sida and its development partners. However, since these relations were affected in different ways depending on the actors involved (that is, tension could emerge between Swedish stakeholders or between Sida and development partners), they will be addressed separately in the following sections.

8.3.3. The results agenda and changed relations between the Swedish Government and Sida

The results agenda has entailed a number of changes in the relations between the Swedish Government and Sida, which has influenced Sida's *power over* and *power to do*. These changes are, in part at least, a consequence of the Swedish Government's adoption of NPM approaches to public management.

Responsibilisation processes in Swedish development cooperation

The results agenda was introduced in Swedish development cooperation when the Swedish Government was engaged in reforming development cooperation. The government aimed, among other things, to clarify mandates and responsibilities of the MFA and Sida respectively. The results agenda was an instrument in this process insofar as it specified that Sida was responsible for the achievement and reporting of results, while the Government should stipulate which particular development results Sida should achieve. As stated above, international development cooperation is often politically sensitive. By making Sida responsible for the achievement of development results, the Government reduced its own responsibilities, and thereby diminish the political risks associated with international development cooperation.

With the results agenda, the Government's requirements on evidence of results increased. Besides the reasons presented above, the Government's increased demand for results with the intentions to create conditions for future decision-making processes based on experiences from previous development cooperation. Instead of basing international development cooperation on political arguments, the Government wished to promote development cooperation based on facts and evidence of results. By removing the political character of decision making and replacing it with notions of expertise, the Government would be able to reduce some of the political risks associated with international development cooperation. On the other hand, such depoliticisation processes could also allow the government to avoid some of its responsibilities, which would in turn make it more difficult to hold the Government accountable for the decisions it has made.

Sida informants took the results agenda as an indication of the change in the power relations between the agency and the government. Sida had been given the responsibility to carry out the decisions made by the Government. This limited the agency's possibilities to influence which results should be achieved, and why they should be achieved. Sida staff raised objections about these changed roles on the grounds that the government and the MFA did not have the required competence to make decisions about the expected outcomes of Swedish development cooperation. From Sida's perspective, the MFA's lack of competence led to the establishment of unrealistic or irrelevant policy objectives for Swedish development cooperation. Sida was not only required to adopt policies that the staff considered irrelevant; they were also forced to relay these policies to their development partners. The results agenda was one of these policies that Sida staff considered irrelevant or even counterproductive. They argued that Sida had always reported results and that the results required from its development partners were already extensive. Increasing the results requirements would imply that development partners would have to invest their already scarce resources in M&E, rather than in concrete development efforts. In addition, as Sida did not work directly with the implementation of development cooperation, the agency relied on results reported by its development partners when they reported results to the Government. In other words, Sida was trapped in what could be described as "the squeezed middle". Sida did not agree with the government on the necessity of increasing the results requirements. Nevertheless, Sida staff had to implement the results agenda and make their development partners follow the required protocols and procedures.

As regards partner country ownership, Sida staff believed that the results agenda reduced development partners' ownership over development processes. The demand for reporting results in line with Swedish development objectives had increased, and these results should preferably be clearly attributable to Swedish development interventions. These requirements are difficult to reconcile with partner country ownership.

Instrumentalisation of Swedish development cooperation

Intentionally or not, the Swedish Government used the results agenda as a way to manage and control the implementation of Swedish development cooperation between 2006 and 2014. One of the reasons why the Government enforced the results requirements on Sida was an alleged scarcity of development results. In order to prove to the Government that development results had indeed been achieved, Sida had to increase its focus on results by following protocols and procedures stipulated by the Government. Results strategies accompanied by specific results requirements and matrixes, for instance, were introduced as new

guidelines that Sida should follow to pursue in order to report on its bilateral development cooperation. These requirements further specified the role of each actor in Swedish development cooperation, so that each actor could also be held accountable. Some actors argued that the demand for accountability had gone too far, to the point that reports on mistakes and failures were rewarded, rather than development achievements. For Sida, the results agenda entailed a loss of *power over* and *power to do*.

Over the last few years, however, Sida has regained some of its power: the Swedish Government defines the objectives of Swedish development cooperation, but Sida staff feel that they have the mandate to decide how development results should be achieved and reported. Two explanations can be provided for this change. One has to do with awareness: Sida staff have a clearer idea about how they can reframe the results agenda. The other explanation has to do with the change of Government in Sweden: the new Government gives more priority to thematic issues, such as climate change and gender equality, than to the management of Swedish development cooperation.

8.3.4. The results agenda and relations between Sida and its development partners

The changed relations between the Swedish Government and Sida have also had consequences for Sida's relations with its development partners. The results agenda has played a central role in changing these relations by instrumentalising development cooperation. More specifically, the impact of the results agenda over Sida's development partners could be felt in relation to whose results should be achieved and reported.

Responsibilisation and the relations between Sida and its development partners

Sida's field offices did not work directly with the implementation of Swedish development cooperation; rather, they worked with development partners. These development partners implemented development cooperation or worked with other partner organisations that carried out development cooperation. Consequently, many actors were involved in the implementation of Swedish development cooperation, which entailed that results should be reported at several stages. In order to report results, Sida depended on results reported by other stakeholders, all of which had to report results in line with Swedish development objectives. Since Sida did not want to interfere in its development partners' ownership, one of the main criteria for the agency in the selection of development partners was that these partners' objectives were in line with Swedish development objectives. It is unclear to what extent development

partners changed or adjusted their objectives in order to suit Swedish objectives.- Development partners' *power over* was limited unless their development objectives corresponded with Sweden's objectives, and unless partner organisations adjusted their development agendas to suit these objectives.

Many development partners prioritised the reporting of results in line with the development objectives established by Sida and other donors, since this compliance with their demands was a prerequisite to get future funding. Reporting results entailed, for development partners, that donors should be informed that their money made a difference for beneficiaries. Besides, several development partners considered the reporting of results a mere formality, since they were convinced that their development interventions did make a difference in their beneficiaries' lives.

Instrumentalisation of Sida's development relations with development partners

When the Swedish Government's requirement on Sida to report results increased, Sida's results requirements on the partner organization also increased. Sida specified with more clarity which kind of results it expected from its development partners, who had to follow reporting procedures in relation to indicators that they did not always consider relevant. Evidence of results was crucial to get funding, since it was necessary to show that Sida's funding did make a difference. For some development partners, the results agenda implied that reporting evidence of results had actually become more important than achieving results. Several development partners were frustrated and claimed that their development efforts did make a difference, but they were not able to show the success of their interventions by following the required protocols and procedures. Yet the increased focus on results was also perceived as something positive. Sida's increased interest in the results introduced a feeling of recognition amongst some of Sida's development partners, implying that Sida and the Swedish Government cared and were concerned about what was taking place in partner countries.

All development partners faced challenges in terms of resources and competence to report development results in the way required by Sida. Staff trained in M&E often left smaller CSOs to get better paid jobs in larger, often multilateral, organisations. Development partners in Uganda were particularly worried about the increased focus on the reporting of results, rather than on the achievement of results. Given the fierce competition for funding, they feared that dishonest organisations that were competent in reporting results but not really committed to development would have advantage.

8.4. Conclusions and discussion

8.4.1. *Conclusions: The results agenda, relations, and ownership*

The unclear allocation of mandate is a particularly significant issue as regards power relations in international development cooperation. Mandate refers here to the possibilities to define overall development objectives, which entails the possibilities to define expected results and to set the agenda concerning how these results should be reached. Ownership, intersects, thus, with the allocation of mandate. The results agenda has implied a change: donors' mandate has increased, whereas development partners' mandate has decreased. The results agenda has also entailed changes in terms of responsibilities, that is to say, development partners have been allocated more responsibilities. The results agenda promotes an approach to development cooperation in which development partners have a significant share of responsibilities but limited mandate. This imbalance has a negative impact on partner country ownership, which implies that development partners (representing partner countries) should have both mandates and responsibilities in the pursuit of development in their own countries.

In the Swedish case, the introduction of the results agenda in international development cooperation has influenced relations between the Swedish Government and Sida. The Government has used the agenda as a strategic instrument and as a management tool. By defining which results Sida should report and limiting the agency's influence in decision-making processes, the government constrained Sida's power over development cooperation. By stipulating which procedures and protocols Sida should follow, the Government also reduced Sida's power over processes. More attention has been given to Swedish development objectives and results reported in line with these objectives, than to the encouragement of partner country ownership. Although the examples given here apply to the Swedish case, the situation is similar and even more accentuated in other donor countries. In the United Kingdom and in the Netherlands, for instance, the debate about the results agenda has been intense, in particular as regards what qualifies as a result and who sets the results agenda. In these countries, the Government has increased its demand for results, paving the way for increased instrumentalisation within their development cooperation (cf. Eyben et al., 2015).

For development partners, the results agenda has implied instrumentalisation of development cooperation, insofar as requirements to report results according to agreed protocols and procedures have increased. The instrumentalisation

of development cooperation has, in turn, changed the focus of development cooperation: evidence of results, regardless of their relevance, has been given priority over improvements in the lives of poor men and women.

8.4.2. Discussion and suggestions for future development cooperation and research

One of the main conclusions drawn here is that there is confusion surrounding what the results agenda is. Instead of functioning as a means to achieve an objective, the results agenda has become an objective in itself. Decision makers have lost track of the overall objective of international development cooperation, i.e. to improve the lives of poor men and women. The results agenda has also changed the focus of international development cooperation. Donors' development objectives, and the results achieved in relation to these objectives, have come to play a more prominent role, given that it was considered necessary to maintain political support from taxpayers in donor countries. In addition, solidarity with people in the global South seems to have become a weaker motivation in the pursuit of international development cooperation. More attention has been given to issues that also carry consequences for people in the global North, such as climate change, terrorism, spread of diseases, or refugee crises in the global North. Furthermore, ownership in combination with responsabilisation processes might imply that development partners bear all the responsibility for development, and donor countries in the global North do not assume any responsibility for development processes in the global South.

While the results agenda should be a means for implementing and reporting development interventions, partner country ownership should concern the fundamental idea about what development is and how it should be pursued. Partner country ownership departs from the assumption that only those affected by poverty or development can actually tell what development entails for them and how it could be achieved. As a consequence of this assumption, development cannot be accomplished if development partners are not allowed to define objectives and set the agenda for the pursuit of development and the reporting of results.

It is not impossible to combine the results agenda and partner country ownership, provided that the point of departure of development cooperation is the objectives of development partners and their agendas. As the title of this thesis indicates, donorship has been given priority in development cooperation, yet development cooperation does not necessarily have to be pursued with a focus on donors' development objectives and results; it should be possible to bring the results agenda and partner country ownership together.

Suggestions for future development cooperation and research

This study intended to investigate challenges within international development cooperation and to suggest how these challenges can be addressed. Needless to say, the scope of this study is limited, and more research is required in order to shed light on relations between donors and partner countries. Nevertheless, it is possible to suggest how development stakeholders, in particular how donors can improve their relations with development partners, as well as to identify issues that can benefit from future research.

Unclear mandates: One of the main problems in the implementation of the results agenda was lack of clarity as far as mandates are concerned. In other words, it was not clear how development stakeholders could reframe policy practices such as the results agenda. When new policy practices are introduced, decision makers must make sure that their communication is unambiguous; policies must be communicated in a consistent way, whether in writing or orally. All actors, including decision makers, must take responsibility for their actions. It is important to clarify the responsibilities that apply to different actors, as the Swedish Government has done as regards the relations between the MFA and Sida. However, it is also important to clarify each stakeholder's mandate, particularly in terms of the extent to which stakeholders can reframe a policy practice.

Clarity in framing: Decision makers must be clear about the way they frame a policy and explicit about the goals of this policy. In other words, they must specify with clarity which problem the policy seeks to address and how this problem is going to be addressed. They must also make sure to provide solid justifications for their particular way of framing an issue, and collect plenty of information about the context in which they operate. Awareness of that actors reframe policies and of how development stakeholders reframe policy practices would facilitate communication between actors.

Partner country ownership: In development cooperation that promotes partner country ownership, development partners should define goals and set the agenda for the pursuit of these goals. Development partners should, therefore, define which results are expected and how they should be measured. Nevertheless, unequal power relations between donors and development partners are an inescapable fact, since one actor has the resources on which the other actor depends. Donors must provide a clear account of what partner country ownership entails and specify how it should be promoted in all policy practices, including the results agenda. If donors are sincere in their effort to promote partner country ownership, they must let go of some of their power.

This study focused on the conceptualisation of the results agenda and partner country ownership. Future research could take this study one step further and investigate how the results agenda has influenced partner country ownership of ownership in practice. It would be possible to explore whether and how development partners adjust their objectives and agenda to suit the development policies of donors. A future study could follow specific interventions from their formulation through implementation to results reporting. It would be relevant to include development actors that applied for funding but were rejected, and examine the reasons why they were not selected as development partners in Swedish development cooperation. New forms of development cooperation have emerged over the last few years, such as Payment By Results (PBR), in which ODA is disbursed only when the expected results have been achieved. This aid modality is entirely governed by results, so that responsabilisation processes are arguably even more evident in this kind of development cooperation. It would be relevant to conduct a study that explores how the PBR for relations between donors and partner countries and its consequences for future development cooperation.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Examples of interview guides

Example 1: interview guide “simple”

Interview guide

Background information:

Title/working with:

Time in Uganda:

Background:

Description of donor relation/context in Uganda:

1. The results agenda

How do you work with monitoring and evaluation? Personally/in your organization?

Has the demand for results increased? If so how would you describe this demand for results? (Knowledge of/references to the “results agenda”)? Why is there an increased demand for results?

What are the objectives with the results reporting? (to justify aid to taxpayers/to improve aid/to manage aid agencies/to manage complexity)?

What kinds of results are asked for?

- In terms of: methodology, output-impact level, time frame?

Whose results are asked for (attribution): is it Swedish development results, the partner country's and/or the partner organization's results? Why are these actors results asked for?

What is new with the "results agenda"?

2. The results agenda and Swedish support to gender equality

How do you experience that the demand for results has influenced your work within the gender equality in Uganda?

Whose results are asked for? Why?

Has there been any change in what kinds of results are asked for?

3. The issue of partner country or partner organization ownership

How would you define ownership?

- Ownership of development policies and interventions?
- Or ownership of the outcomes of policies and interventions?
- Whose ownership?

What are the objectives with an increased ownership?

4. The results agenda and Swedish development cooperation with Uganda

How do you experience that Sida's demand for results has increased? Or changed?

If so how has it influenced the Swedish development cooperation with Uganda?

Are there any contradictions between partner country/organization ownership and the results agenda?

How do you combine the issue of ownership with an increased demand for results?

The new results strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Uganda - comments?

5. Finally

Anything you want to add?

Persons to meet?

Documents?

Example 2: interview guide "detailed"

Interview guide

Background information:

Title/working with:

Background:

1. RESULTS AGENDA

How would you describe the results agenda?

- How do you experience the effects of the increased demand for results in your work?
 - What kinds of results are asked for?
 - Qualitative or quantitative results?
 - What is the time perspective?
 - At what level are results requested; on output, outcome or impact level?
 - How should the results be reported?
 - To whom should the results be reported?
 - Whose results are asked for?
 - The donor's or the partner country's/organization's?
 - What is new with the results agenda? Examples?

Why has the demand for results increased in Swedish development cooperation? (motivational framing)

- Why is there an increased demand for results?
 - Do all actors (in Swedish development cooperation) have the same objective with their results agenda?

What are the objectives with the results agenda? (diagnostic framing)

- Why are results asked for?
- What are the objectives with the results agenda?
 - Using results to justify aid to taxpayers?
 - Using results to improve aid?
 - Using results to manage aid agencies?
 - Using results to manage complexity?
 - What problem(s) does the results agenda address?
- Are different actor considering the same problems when they talk about results?
- Whose problem(s) does the results agenda address?
- What/who is causing the problem(s)?
- Have there been any recent changes in the objectives with the pursuit of results?

2. OWNERSHIP

Is the issue of ownership still a prioritized issue in the international development cooperation?

How is the issue of ownership described by staff at Sida and in partner organizations?

- Who has the ownership?
- Who should have the ownership?
- Does ownership include control over outcomes of interventions, the formulation of development strategies, or both?

What are the Swedish objectives with an increased partner country ownership according to staff at Sida and in partner organizations? (diagnostic framing)

- What kinds of problems are addressed with the issue of ownership?
- What is causing these problems?

How is ownership encouraged in Swedish development cooperation according to staff at Sida and in partner organizations? (prognostic framing)

Why is ownership encouraged in Swedish development cooperation according to staff at Sida and in partner organizations? (motivational framing)

How is the issue of ownership organized within the framework of the results agenda in Swedish development cooperation?

- How do you work with ownership within the framework of the results agenda?
- What are the major challenges with combining ownership with the results agenda?

The actors and coalitions:

- What actors are involved in the decision making process as regards the results agenda?
- How do different actors frame the issue of ownership in relation to the results agenda?
- Are there any coalitions between actors as regards the issue of ownership in the results agenda?
- How is the donor structure in the partner country (Mozambique)? How is it manifested in the development cooperation? (institutional perspective on actors and coalitions)

The resources and power:

- Have there been any changes in financial resources with the results agenda?
- Have there been any changes as regards the aid modalities?
- Have there been any changes as regards sharing of information with the results agenda?
 - Changes as regards for instance the general budget support?

The rules of the game:

- Have there been any changes as regards the requirements for financial support?
- Changes in requirements on reporting?

Appendix 2: List of informants

<i>Informants</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Government of Sweden	GoS1, 22/11/2012 GoS2 , 22/11/2012 GoS3, 21/05/2015 GoS 4, 19/05/2105 GoS 5, 30/09/2015
Experts, Sweden	SEI1, 27/11/2012 SEI2, 12/11/2012 SEI4, 28/11/2012 SEI3, 27/04/2015 SEI5, 20/05/2015 SEI6, 22/11/2012 SEI7, 28/04/2015 SEI8, 18/03/2015 SEI9, 22/04/2015
Staff at Sida and INGOs, Sweden	SS1, 21/11/2012 SS2, 28/11/2012 SS3, 20/11/2012 SS5, 26/11/2012 SS6, 21/05/2015 SS7, 21/05/2015 SS8, 21/05/2015 SS9, 05/05/2015 SS10, 22/04/2015 SS11, 04/05/2015 SS12 , 21/05/2015
Expert, Uganda	UEI 1 26/01/2014
Sida informant, Uganda	US1, 09/04/2014 US2, 26/03/2014 US3, 09/04/2014

Development Partner, Uganda	UDP1, 16/05/2014 UDP2, 13/05/2014 UDP3, 04/04/2014 UDP4, 13/05/2014 UDP5, 02/04/2014 UDP6, 04/05/2014 UDP7, 10/04/2014 UDP8, 10/04/2014 UDP9, 10/04/2014
Government of Mozambique	GoM1-3, 24/11/2015
Experts, Mozambique	MEI1, 26/11/2015 MEI2, 27/11/2015 MEI3, 13/11/2015 MEI4, 01/12/2015 MEI5, 25/11/2015 MEI6, 27/11/2015
Sida, Mozambique	MS1, 13/11/2015 MS2-3, 13/11/2015
Intermediary Partner Organizations (IPOs), Mozambique	IPO1, 16/11/2015 IPO2, 17/11/2015 IPO3, 17/11/2015 IPO4, 23/11/2015 IPO5, 24/11/2015 IPO6, 24/11/2015 IPO7, 25/11/2015 IPO9, 04/12/2015 IPO10, 04/12/2015 IPO11, 09/12/2015 IPO12, 03/12/2015 IPO13, 03/12/2015 IPO14, 26/11/2015
Partner Organizations (POs), Mozambique	PO1, 27/11/2015 PO2, 02/12/2015 PO3, 04/12/2015 POWS, 07/12/2015 (workshop, with 8 participants) PO4, 08/12/2015 PO5, 09/12/2015 PO6, 05/12/2015

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- Nr 23 *Lars Nordström*: Rumsliga förändringar och ekonomisk utveckling. 1971
- Nr 43 *Kenneth Asp*: Interregionala godstransporter i ett rumsligt system. 1975
- Nr 44 *Jan Lundqvist*: Local and central impulses for change and development. A case study of Morogoro District, Tanzania. 1975
- Nr 56 *Staffan Öhrling*: Rural change and spatial reorganization in Sri Lanka. Barriers against development of traditional Sinhalese local communities. 1977
- Nr 57 *Ulf Halloff*: Inköpsresor i ett rumsligt system. Metodstudier på grundval av empiriskt material från några stadsdelar i Göteborg. 1977
- Nr 59 *Lage Wahlström*: Naturvården i regional och lokal planering. Geografiska studier med exempel från Göteborgsregionen och övriga delar av de västsvenska länen. 1977
- Nr 60 *Kent Persson*: Sysselsättningen i centrum. Sysselsättningsförändringar i stadscentrum, deras orsaker och verkan - med exempel från Göteborg. 1977.
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