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Sweden's Development Cooperation in the Light of the Principles of the English School of International Relations

This article undertakes the issue of development assistance, which is one of the factors shaping human security. It is a human right, which refers to the security of people and communities, as opposed to the security of states. Also, human security recognises several dimensions related to feeling safe, such as freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom from indignity. This people-centred approach to security has implications on how we carry out and understand development cooperation. The aim of the article is to analyse the effectiveness of development policy and development cooperation conducted by Sweden in 2000-2018 in the light of the principles of the English School of International Relations. The English School of IR is referred to as liberal realism. It maintains that there is a "society of states" at the international level, despite the condition of anarchy. The English School stands for the conviction that ideas, rather than simply material capabilities, shape the conduct of international politics, and therefore they deserve analysis and critique. The article discusses the assumptions of development assistance in the light of the English School's guidelines. The organisation and management of development assistance in Sweden were characterised in the article. The last part examines the effectiveness of the development assistance provided by analysing selective cases and the Human Development Index (HDI). The focus of the article should be drawn to the fact that a human being is placed in the very centre of the Swedish projects. The donors' attention focuses exactly on people. Similarly, in the case of the concept of human security and sustainable development, Sweden's aid policy serves as an example of actions, which are a model for other states and may be used for reference purposes by them.

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Introduction

“The huge gap between the richest and the poorest states is still one of the greatest moral dilemmas of the West.”¹ According to the World Bank Report of 17 October 2018 entitled *Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report 2018. Piecing Together the Poverty Puzzle*², global poverty has decreased in almost all regions of the world. In 2015, only approximately one-tenth of the world’s population lived in extreme poverty, reaching the lowest poverty rate in history. This is a significant change, considering that this problem affected more than one-third of the world’s population in 1990³. The World Bank Group has two overarching goals, i.e., to end extreme poverty by 2030 and to promote shared well-being by increasing the income of 40% of the population in each state⁴. Achieving these priorities requires the cooperation of all states, especially the highly-developed ones, which should allocate no less than 0.7% of GNP to the world’s poorest regions. Unfortunately, the reality turns out to be far from ideal.

As a part of studies on development assistance, it is possible to point to publications, which examine patterns of its distribution in different donor states⁵. Most of them focus on the best examples, i.e., states, which manage to implement development assistance in the most effective way. This is due to the fact that in the subject literature one may point to irregularities related to organising development assistance⁶. For example, Angus Deaton, being the 2015 Nobel Prize winner, criticises the assistance system for inefficiency in his book entitled *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality*. Deaton emphasises that in order to effectively combat poverty, the international community should focus on projects, which stimulate growth, such as investment in education, improvement of infrastructure, technical support and a greater

¹ Rogoff, K., Złudne korzyści pomocy zagraniczne, *Observator Finansowy*, 19 January 2014, <https://www.obserwatorfinansowy.pl/forma/rotator/zludne-korzysci-pomocy-zagranicznej/> (accessed 20 November 2019); See also: Pawłuszko, T., (2018), Model Rokkana-Urwina w analizie relacji centro-peryferyjnych, *Cywilizacja i Polityka*, vol. 16, no. 16, 2018, p. 143.

² International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report 2018. Piecing Together the Poverty Puzzle*, Washington, 2018, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30418/9781464813306.pdf> (accessed 22 November 2019).

³ *Ibidem*, p. xi.

⁴ See: The United Nations, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, no. 70/1, https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf (accessed 22 November 2019).

⁵ Forster J., Stokke O. (eds.), (2013). *Policy Coherence in Development Co-operation*, New York: Routledge.

⁶ Paterek, A., (2018). Rola pomocy rozwojowej w procesie stabilizacji i odbudowy obszarów pokonfliktowych, *Bezpieczeństwo. Teoria i Praktyka*, no 3, p. 120.

flow of goods from poorer to richer states⁷. However, as indicated by Viktor Jakupc and Maks Kelly in the study entitled *Assessing the Impact of Foreign Aid*, there is no scientific evidence indicating that the support provided by the aid agencies has contributed to development, economic growth, and development of democracy or budget stability of the recipient states.

There are also articles, which underline the consensus between strategic interests and trade policy of donor states. They focus on colonial history, political institutions of recipient states⁸. These articles include the opposing interests of domestic and development constituencies, conflicts between development objectives themselves, disagreements between experts on what a "good" development policy is, difficulties in identifying the true development interest of developing states, and the growing heterogeneity between and within developing states⁹.

In this context, it is worth analysing such a state as the Kingdom of Sweden, which allocates more than the required 0.7% of its GNP for development assistance and is one of the most active states in the world and in the EU lending its support to the development policy. One may raise a question whether the assistance provided by Sweden is used effectively. Taking the principles of the English School into account, it may be assumed that Sweden will strive to support the poorest states by including the assumptions for compliance with international law and the essence of supporting human rights and democracy in its policy.

The article adopts the theoretical approach of the English School of International Relations. It refers to the theory of international law by Hugo Grotius according to which the limitation of the arbitrariness of monarchs was to bring benefits to the entire human community, including individual states¹⁰. The article consists of three parts. The first part analyses development assistance in the light of the principles of the English School. This made it possible to specify the factors, which Sweden should take into account when organising development assistance. The second part presents development policy in Sweden, thanks to which the method of its implementation and management was presented. The last part is devoted to the analysis of the effectiveness of

⁷ Deaton, A., (2015). *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 269-270.

⁸ Kwak, Sungil and Jeon, Hyelin, Environmental ODA to Africa: Policies, Determinants and Implications (April 30, 2014). *KIEP Research Paper No. World Economic Update 14-17*, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2488310> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2488310>

⁹ King M., Barry F., Matthews A., (2010), Policy Coherence for Development: Five Challenges, *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, Vol 21, DOI: 10.2307/41413183

¹⁰ Grocjuż, H., (1957). *Trzy księgi o prawie wojny i pokoju*, trans. R. Bierzanek, Warszawa: PWN.

Sweden's development policy. For this purpose, attempts were made to answer the question of whether Sweden chooses partners for cooperation based on respect for international law and whether development assistance is allocated to the poorest states in an effective manner, also whether it brings results in the form of reduced poverty.

1. Development assistance by the English School of International Relations

1.1. Definition of ODA in the light of the English School of International Relations

Scientific considerations on relations between states in the field of different policies are reflected in the theoretical assumptions of the English School of International Relations. The term first appeared in literature in the early 1980s, although the British Committee on International Relations was established in the 1950s, which made the study of international relations a subject of its interest. Studies made by the English School of International Relations were focused on identifying the assumptions of state policy in the foreign dimension and the ethical side of international conflicts, as well as on determining the levels of diplomatic activity. The latter dimension is particularly important in building relations between states as a part of development assistance, as it includes determination of the diplomatic activity of states. In this context, the definition of development assistance proposed by Kosiński seems to be the most interesting one. It emphasises the informal structure and arrangement of specific relations organising the process of economic and social changes supported by economically more advanced states for the benefit of the states of the global South¹¹. The informal structure of assistance allows the use of diplomacy as a means of communication between entities and negotiating the terms of assistance between states. It should be remembered that, in the light of the English School, states maintain relations with each other through the institutions of international community, in which there is a collision of interests, dialogue, and conflict resolution¹². In the case of development assistance, it was

¹¹ Kosiński, D., (2011). *Pomoc rozwojowa: Teoria i polityka*, Warszawa: Difin, p. 122-125.

¹² Keohane, R.O., Nye, J.S., (1997). Introduction. In: R.O. Keohane, J.S. Nye, S. Hoffmann, (eds), *After the Cold War. International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe 1989-1991*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard university Press, p. 4-9.

necessary to appoint a Development Assistance Committee - DAC, which was established at the OECD. Institutions influence the interests of states by creating and legitimising standards of conduct, which are then treated as obvious and necessary.

The English School of International Relations distinguishes the concept of international system from international community. The international system assumes the existence of contacts, as a result of which states take into account the interests and potential behaviour of other states in the decision-making process. This, in turn, influences the decisions made by other participants of the system. Watson uses five categories defining relations between the subjects of international relations: independence, hegemony, suzerainty, dominion, and empire, which cyclically adopt the above categories according to the movement of pendulum. In the case of the analysis of development assistance, one may also deal with the system defined in this way. It should be noted that states are actors in the global development assistance system. There are donor states on one side and recipient states on the other side. This division results from the intensification of the development gap dividing the world by levels of development. One may distinguish between developed and developing states. According to the practice of the United Nations, the developed states include those located in North America and Europe as well as Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. The developing states are African, Caribbean, Central and South American states as well as those located in Asia (excluding Japan) and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand)¹³. The classification drawn up by the Brandt Committee - Independent Commission on International Development Issues of 1980 - contrasts the northern states with the southern ones. Differences in development have given the label to the states of the North, i.e., those characterised as being rich, modern, urbanised, industrialised, and located in a moderate climate. The states of the South are stereotypically characterised as being as poor, backward, mostly non-urbanised, agricultural, static, and located in a tropical climate¹⁴. In 1983, the Brandt Committee published a report entitled *Common Crisis: North-South Cooperation for World Recovery*, in which the relationships between the states of the rich North and the poor South were referred to. The Committee also pointed out that it was in the North's strict interest to help the states of the South because a greater level of

¹³ Dodds, K., (2008). The Third World, developing countries, the South, poor countries. In: V. Desai, R.B. Potter (eds.), *The Companion to Development Studies*, London, Hodder-Arnold and New York, Oxford University Press, p. 5.

¹⁴ Brandt, W., (1980) *North-South: a programme for survival; report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues*, London, Pan books.

economic activity and interaction served everyone, regardless of geographical location¹⁵. It is worth emphasising that changes resulting from the provision of development assistance may contribute to the transformation of the relations between subjects of international relations from a subordinate system of a hegemonic type to a partnership and independent system, e.g., a suzerain one. In this sense, the observation of the development of recipient states may be analysed in terms of changes in international relations.

The main founders of the English School of International Relations, such as Bull, Wight, and Watson, were sometimes referred to as Neo-Grotians.¹⁶ Their intention was to create an intermediate path between realism and idealism in order to create a synthesis of both trends. Thus, it is worth paying attention to Hugo Grotius¹⁷ whose theses form the basis for the functioning of the English School of International Relations. He argued against the position taken by Hobbs who claimed that people always strove to maximise their benefits¹⁸. He believed that people acted with moderation for the sake of society. This path included rejection of the extremes by accepting moral restrictions on states on the one hand and the pluralism of the political world on the other hand. This approach is essential in building cooperation between the following states: rich and poor, democratic and authoritarian. If we were to refer only to the norms and values, it would turn out that donors would collide with a cultural barrier and different values. In this case, development assistance could not be established. But if we took a look at the problem from a different perspective, it would be impossible for the rich states to help the underdeveloped ones, because the interest of a given state would be more important. Thus, when analysing the problem of development assistance, the approach represented by the English School of International Relations looking for a kind of a “bridge between these two banks of the river” may be relevant. In this aspect, the following question may be interesting: do states actually seek maximising their profits only or are they able to help and give up a part of their income? When trying to find an answer to this question in the light of the English School of International Relations, states should look for a path between focusing only on their own and idealism, or even naivety that they would devote themselves to other subjects of international relations. Do they actually do this? According to the definition provided by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation

¹⁵ Brandt, W., (1983). *Common crisis North-South: cooperation for world recovery*, London: Pan books.

¹⁶ Culter C. A., (1991). The Grotian Tradition in International Relations, *Review of International Studies*, Vol 17, No 1, p. 41.

¹⁷ Grocjustz, op. cit.

¹⁸ Wight, M., (1987). An Anatomy of International Thought, *Review of International Studies*, no. 13, pp. 223-224.

and Development), Official Development Assistance (ODA) means financial flows directed to or for a specific group of states and multilateral institutions by institutions of donor states, including state and local government institutions¹⁹. It is the response of developed states to the problems of poorer partners, which result from their lower level of development. The purpose of assistance is to support the development and well-being of developing states. This occurs when the financial flows include a minimum of 25% of the donations²⁰, and the criterion for recognising assistance as the official one is the presence of the recipient state on the list of the Development Assistance Committee - DAC.

In the light of international agreements, there is an indication of states complying with the international standards. However, it should be remembered that this is not a kind of assistance consisting of transferring funds to the account of a poor state. Hence there is a doubt about the particular interests of donor states. This is evidenced by the small share of assistance that must be contributed to the entire donor project, which will also consist of benefits resulting even from granted interest-bearing loans to assistance recipients. Given this nature of assistance, it is difficult to state unequivocally that states offer assistance to other entities only because of their own interests, but it may not be idealistically assumed that the ODA donors act altruistically (not taking into account the political, economic, cultural factors) or under conditions which would be detrimental to their states. Therefore, in order to be effective, the development policy must take into account the interests of both parties associated in the form of interdependence²¹.

¹⁹ OECD, Official development assistance – definition and coverage, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm> (accessed 22 November 2019).

²⁰ Definition of ODA, starting with 2018 data - Official development assistance flows are defined as those flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions which are: provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and each transaction of which: is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and is concessional in character. In DAC statistics, this implies a grant element of at least 45 per cent in the case of bilateral loans to the official sector of LDCs and other LICs (calculated at a rate of discount of 9 per cent); 15 per cent in the case of bilateral loans to the official sector of LMICs (calculated at a rate of discount of 7 per cent); 10 per cent in the case of bilateral loans to the official sector of UMICs (calculated at a rate of discount of 6 per cent); 10 per cent in the case of loans to multilateral institutions (calculated at a rate of discount of 5 per cent for global institutions and multilateral development banks, and 6 per cent for other organisations, including sub-regional organisations).

²¹ Heeren, A. H. L., (2017). *Manual of the History of the Political System of Europe and Its Colonies, from its Formation at the Close of the Fifteenth Century to Its Re-Establishment upon the Fall of Napoleon*, Oxford: Forgotten Books; Keene, E., (2002). *Beyond the Anarchical Society. Grotius. Colonialism and Order in World Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 22-23.

1.2. Development of ODA

Apart from the international system, there is a category of the international community. The international community means a community of states being aware of common interests and values. Relations between them are governed by certain rules, such as mutual recognition of independence and compliance with agreements. According to Bull and Watson, it is “a group of states (or more generally a group of politically independent communities), which forms a system not only in the sense that the behaviour of each state is a necessary factor in the calculations of other states, but also established common rules through dialogue, agreement, and institutions to maintain mutual relations and have a common interest in their consolidation”.²² How has the relationship between donor states and recipient states developed? Let us pay attention to the most important events, which shaped the institutional dimension of development assistance distribution across the world.

It is worth noting that the definition of development assistance formulated in the light of the English School emphasises that states learn the art of taking the interests of other states into account and strive to maintain a balance between universal norms and particular interests²³. Therefore, bearing the norms and values in mind, which should guide states involved in development assistance, it is worth paying attention to the process of forming and shaping the official development assistance policy.

The need for assistance became apparent after the end of World War II, and its symbol was the American programme for the reconstruction of Western Europe. During the “Cold War”, development assistance was a tool for acquiring allies among Third World states. Sweden joined the donors in the 1960s, along with other Scandinavian states, which are now considered to be the largest and most effective donors.

The term “official development assistance” was used in 1968 for the first time by the so-called Person Commission defined as a group of experts appointed by the UN Secretary General to evaluate assistance activities. Its recommendations were presented at the United Nations General Assembly in 1970, postulating that rich states should contribute 0.7% of their GDP annually to assistance. However, two oil crises in the 1970s and a recession in the 1980s resulted in a significant reduction in funds allocated to foreign assistance. As

²² Bull H., Watson A. (eds), (1984). *The Expansion of International Society*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 1.

²³ Bull, H., (1995). Society and Anarchy in International Relations. In: J. Der Derian (ed.) *International Theory. Critical Investigations*, London: Macmillan, pp. 75-93.

a result, most economists considered this period a “lost decade” during which unsuccessful attempts were made to overcome poverty or famine (mainly in sub-Saharan Africa)²⁴.

Lack of successes and deepening development gap among the rich and the poor states dominated the public discourse in the 1990s. It was then believed that the funds allocated to the ODA were being wasted and did little to fulfil their role²⁵. As a consequence of the criticism of transparency and effectiveness of spending funds under the ODA, the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation was issued in February 2003²⁶. This document was created in cooperation with representatives of national and multilateral aid agencies, international financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, and the governments of recipient states, and initiated work on increasing the quality of official development assistance. It noted the rapidly growing costs of providing assistance and the need to adapt the offered assistance to the needs of the recipient states. At the same time, an appeal was made to the states of the South for a greater involvement in social and economic development and paying attention to maintain the highest standards while implementing development projects²⁷.

The entities involved in the ODA project met in Paris in 2005. As a result of the conference, a document entitled *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*²⁸ was signed enabling development of new rules in order to increase the effectiveness of the provided assistance. Among other things, attention was focused on the need for the recipient states to take initiative and responsibility under the so-called ownership; to match the assistance provided within regional development strategies under the principles of alignment, harmonisation, co-ordination and transparency of procedures; to improve project management;

²⁴ See: Latoszek, E., Proczek M., (2013). *Polityka rozwojowa. Rola organizacji międzynarodowych w zwalczaniu ubóstwa na świecie*, Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza SGH w Warszawie; Bagiński, P., (2009). *Europejska polityka rozwojowa. Organizacja pomocy Unii Europejskiej dla krajów rozwijających się*, Warszawa: CeDeWu.pl Wydawnictwa Fachowe/

²⁵ See. Führer, H., (1994). *The Story of Official Development Assistance. A History of The Development Assistance Committee and The Development Co-operation Directorate in Dates, Names and Figures*, Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, pp. 39-40, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/1896816.pdf> (accessed 24 November 2019); Hynes, W., Scott, S., *The Evolution of Official Development Assistance Achievements, Criticisms and a Wayforward*, OECD Development Co-operation Working Papers, no. 12, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5k3v1dv3f024-en> (accessed 25 November 2019).

²⁶ DAC, *Rome Declaration on Harmonisation*, Rome, 25 February 2003, DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/31736458.pdf> (accessed 26 November 2019).

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ DAC, *Paris Declaration On Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results And Mutual Accountability*, High Level Forum, Paris 2005, <https://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/34428351.pdf> (accessed 27 November 2019).

and to bear mutual responsibility for results. The Paris Declaration established a control regime for checking the status of implementation of its provisions. Each principle has objectives and indicators assigned to it, which in turn are controlled by the OECD²⁹.

The third meeting of the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in September 2008 resulted in agreement on the Action Plan, i.e., the so-called Accra Agenda for Action aiming at clarifying the rules regarding the provided assistance³⁰. The importance of such issues were highlighted therein, namely: predictability of assistance (informing the recipient states about future donor activities, strengthening the relations between public expenditure and effects); ownership / joint responsibility for development (involvement of the parliaments of the states of the South and civil society institutions in creating economic development); national development systems (basing assistance on recipient states' plans or strategies); changing the nature of assistance conditions (departing from the requirements of the conditions stipulated in national development strategies); untied assistance (specifying plans to untie the ODA); fragmentation of assistance (strengthening the existing assistance delivery channels); partnership (application of the Paris Declaration principles); as well as transparency.

Currently, development assistance is provided on the basis of the principles stipulated in the declarations made during the fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011 in Busan³¹:

1. The principle of ownership of the developing states (activities should take place under the direction of developing states and be adapted to the specificity and needs of these states);
2. The principle of focusing on the results (it is intended to exert a lasting impact on fighting poverty and reducing inequalities, balancing development and increasing the potential of the recipient states according to their priorities);
3. The principle of an inclusive development partnership (aimed at openness, trust, ability to learn and mutual respect between partners);

²⁹ DAC, *Better Aid: 2008 Survey on Monitoring The Paris Declaration. Making Aid More Effective by 2010*, OECD 2008, https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/2008-survey-on-monitoring-the-paris-declaration_9789264050839-en#page4 (accessed 27 November 2019).

³⁰ DAC, *Accra Agenda for Action*, Accra 2008, <https://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/34428351.pdf> (accessed 27 November 2019).

³¹ DAC, *Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness: Proceedings*, 29 November-1 December 2011, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/HLF4%20proceedings%20entire%20doc%20for%20web.pdf> (accessed 28 November 2019).

4. The principle of transparency and mutual responsibility (it is designed to help to achieve the expected results, including ordinary citizens, who should become the final beneficiaries of development assistance).

It is worth noting that the process of shaping official development assistance is still being improved. It was announced in Busan that the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation aiming at supporting the implementation of the agreed political provisions would be created³². However, despite the progress, which could be observed at the beginning of this century, it should be remembered that respecting this document is only declarative and it depends on the policy of individual states to what extent and on what terms the official development assistance would be organised.

2. Organisation and management of official development assistance in Sweden

Sweden organises its official development assistance as a part of the European Union's external policy. Cooperation with the EU Member States and activities are carried out in line with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are crucial for the effective delivery of assistance.

2.1. Evolution of development cooperation in Sweden

It should be remembered that development cooperation in Sweden has a long tradition. The Swedish workers, who were missionaries in Abyssinia (Ethiopia), initiated its assistance activity back in the 19th century. The purpose of their mission was not only to preach the word of God, but also to establish schools and to build hospitals³³. In the Protestant culture and religion, one may find motives for undertaking such initiatives by Sweden. As van der Veen emphasises, the issues of the so-called soft security, i.e., involvement in solving global problems, a sense of duty or humanitarian motives, have always been important to Scandinavia. Thanks to such qualities, the Swedes expressed their own identity and desire to gain reputation on the international stage³⁴.

³² Ibidem.

³³ SIDA, *How We work. About Swedish development cooperation*, 15 June 2017, <https://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/about-swedish-development-cooperation/> (accessed 29 November 2019).

³⁴ van der Veen, A. M. (2012). *National Identity and the Origins of Development Assistance*, Conference Papers – American Political Science Association, p. 12, cited in Klepacka, J., (2010). Współpraca rozwojowa państw skandynawskich – próba identyfikacji cech szczególnych „modelu nordyckiego”, *Working Papers*, no. 2, www.gdr.org.pl, (accessed 1 December 2019).

Development cooperation became an important element of Sweden's foreign policy after World War II. Already in 1952, as many as 44 Swedish organisations cooperated with each other for assistance activities in Ethiopia and Pakistan. In 1955, in turn, the *Sweden Helps*³⁵ campaign was launched aiming at raising public awareness of the need to provide development assistance. It should be noted that the examples indicated above confirm that Sweden, as a small state with no colonial past and aspirations for being a superpower, did not try to pursue the strategic superpower objectives back then. Quite the opposite, the beginnings of its assistance activities were largely shaped by moral and humanitarian motives³⁶.

The campaign initiated the growth of the government activity in this field. The first governmental state assistance project for development was initiated in 1962. This gave impetus to establishing a government agency. The Swedish International Development Office, SIDA, was established in 1965, which was later transformed into the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The Swedish assistance focussed on building schools, hospitals, power plants, and factories in the world's poorest states during the 1970s. As Joanna Klepacka emphasises, the Swedish successes and high involvement in this field began to be seen internationally as a source of strength and prestige. As a result of this, the Swedish commitment to help the poorest states contributed to gaining a strong bargaining position in negotiations with trade partners from the Western world³⁷. In the light of the English School, this is important because not only it rationalises a development assistance process, which is not perceived by the Swedish society as a tribute, but it also justifies the benefits of such activities.

One could say that Sweden has been not only a donor of development assistance, but also its initiator since the 1990s. Sweden was a state which set the tone for the debate on the fields of development cooperation³⁸. It was proposing to solve such global problems as environmental protection and human rights. It also became a leader in implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and later, the Sustainable Development Goals included in the 2030 Agenda³⁹. Thanks to these projects, the Swedish international significance was growing, although the internal factors, such as its location, climate, and population, did not favour achieving such a role and position in the world.

³⁵ SIDA, *How we work...*, op. cit.

³⁶ Selbervik, H., Nygaard, K., (2006). *Nordic Exceptionalism in Development Assistance? Aid Policies and the Major Donors: The Nordic Countries*, Chr. Michelsen Institute Report, Bergen.

³⁷ Klepacka, op. cit.

³⁸ Onsander, S., (2007). Swedish Development Cooperation through Swedish and Local NGOs', *Perspectives*, no 7, pp. 7-8.

³⁹ The United Nations, *Transforming our world...*, op. cit.

2.2. Institutional structure of the Swedish development cooperation

When analysing the institutional structure of development cooperation in Sweden, it should be noted that not one, but several entities are responsible for it. The most important role is played by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is responsible for centralising the decision-making process. At the same time, a decentralisation process is taking place in the field of implementation as evidenced by the transfer of some competences to non-governmental entities, diplomatic missions, and enterprises

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sweden coordinates the activities of all institutions undertaking the challenge of development cooperation⁴⁰. It is responsible for preparing a strategy to be shaped within the course of consultations and preparations made together with the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA). The SIDA plays a supporting and advisory role. Its competences include working in the field of policy making and its implementation. The SIDA manages half of the budget allocated to development assistance. It is responsible for initiation, control, and evaluation of the implementation of the strategy for development cooperation. In addition to this, its tasks include contacting foreign partners, other donors, international institutions, and partner states. The SIDA represents the Swedish Government under the so-called advocacy work on the international stage⁴¹. It should be emphasised that the SIDA [owns] high competences and may enjoy considerable independence in the framework of the undertaken activities. Thanks to this, it gains autonomy allowing it to operate internationally in the most effective way possible.

Some important development cooperation tasks are also carried out by the diplomatic missions of Sweden. The Swedish embassies have a budget allowing them to finance smaller development projects. The benefits of these types of activities are very important. The Swedish ambassadors being in developing states have the knowledge and experience enabling appropriate and the most effective use of funds where they are needed most⁴².

The private sector implements complementary activities done by development support institutions, although they are not as significant as those of

⁴⁰ Government of Sweden, *Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance*, Stockholm, 2016, www.government.se/legal-documents/2017/05/policy-framework-for-swedish-development-cooperation-and-humanitarian-assistance/ (accessed 2 December 2019).

⁴¹ SIDA, *How we work...*, op. cit.

⁴² Klepacka, op. cit.

the entities discussed above. The need to involve the private sector in development projects enables the transfer of knowledge and technology to developing states, which, in turn, may directly contribute to reducing unemployment along with poverty. However, this form of cooperation has some drawbacks. Tied assistance may be considered as promotion of their own economic interests, which forces cooperation with own enterprises and does not guarantee a long-term impact⁴³.

2.3. Objectives and effectiveness of development cooperation

The Swedish development cooperation focuses on reducing poverty around the world. On the one hand, it is characterised by international solidarity and commitment to the fight against poverty; on the other hand, its actions support democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. It aims to support economic and political development in the poorest states in the world, provided that democracy is strengthened in these states. This means that Sweden favours those states which facilitate the strengthening of democracy and human rights, including women's rights. These values are the basis for establishing and developing cooperation with developing states. However, violations of human rights or democratic values form the basis for Sweden to limit or to cease provision of the assistance. This may happen even when its own interests or issues related to political alliances are at stake⁴⁴.

The Swedes' approach to supporting poorer states is also important. The strategy emphasises that donors, including the Kingdom of Sweden, may only create preconditions for better living conditions, a sort of perspective to solve the most difficult problems for people living in poverty and oppression, but it is the people themselves, who must take responsibility for development, and they should be the subjects of change.

There are two types of assistance: humanitarian aid and long-term development cooperation. In turn, the long-term development cooperation is implemented in two forms: bilateral and multilateral. Several states receive budget support, i.e., support paid directly to the partner state's national budget.

It is worth emphasising that Sweden's cooperation with developing states is long-term. Currently, the SIDA cooperates with 35 states from Africa,

⁴³ Ibidem.

⁴⁴ SIDA, *How we work. Our fields of work*, 7 April 2015, <https://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/our-fields-of-work/> (accessed 3 December 2019).

Asia, Latin America, and Europe in the form of bilateral assistance. In addition, it implements regional cooperation activities in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe, supporting international organisations in this respect⁴⁵.

Table 1. Sweden's allocations to partner states and territories

	Burkina Faso SEK 1 500 mn 2018-22	Democratic Republic of Congo SEK 1 250 mn 2015-19	Ethiopia SEK 1000 mn 2016-20	Kenya SEK 1 750 mn 2016-20
AFRICA	Liberia SEK 1 350 mn 2016-20	Mali SEK 1 200 mn 2016-20	Mozambique SEK 4 100 mn, 2016-20	Rwanda SEK 900 mn, 2015-19
	Somalia SEK 3 030 mn 2018-22	Sudan SEK 1 200 mn 2018-22	South Sudan SEK 1 500 mn 2018-22	Tanzania SEK 5 500 mn 2013-19
	Uganda SEK 2 400 mn 2018-23	Zambia SEK 2 250 mn 2018-22	Zimbabwe SEK 1 500 mn 2017-22	-
ASIA	Bangladesh SEK 1 900 mn 2014-20	Cambodia SEK 1 000 mn 2014-18	Myanmar SEK 1 280 mn 2018-22	Afghanistan SEK 4 870 mn 2014-19
Latin America	Bolivia SEK 750 mn 2016-20	Colombia SEK 950 mn 2014-18	Guatemala SEK 1 125 mn 2016-20	Cuba SEK 90 mn 2016-20
Middle East and North Africa	West Bank and Gaza Strip SEK 1 500 mn 2015-19	Iraq SEK 1 300 mn 2017-21	-	-
Eastern Europe, Western Balkans, Turkey SEK 8 500 mn for 10 states, 2014-20	Georgia Albania Republic of North Macedonia	Belarus Kosovo Turkey	Moldova Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ukraine Serbia

Source: Government Offices of Sweden, *DAC Peer Review - Memorandum of Sweden, September 2018*, Stockholm

Partner states may count on long-term support. This allows the Swedish administration to become thoroughly acquainted with the problems of a given state or territory and to adapt cooperation to its needs most effectively. The list of priority recipient states has not changed much for years. The Swedes choose the states which are the poorest, but well prepared and willing to cooperate.

When trying to answer the question about the effectiveness of official

⁴⁵ SIDA, *Where SIDA works*, <https://www.sida.se/English/where-we-work/> (accessed 3 December 2019).

development assistance, one should look at Sweden's commitments to transfer 0.7% of collective (aggregated) GNP for development assistance against the background of selected European states (see Table 2).

Table 2. Official development assistance as a share of gross national income

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
[EU] (28 states)	0.43	0.44	0.42	0.43	0.43	0.46	0.52	0.50	0.48
Sweden	0.97	1.02	0.97	1.01	1.09	1.40	0.94	1.02	1.04
United Kingdom	0.57	0.56	0.56	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Norway	1.05	0.96	0.93	1.07	1.00	1.05	1.12	0.99	0.94
France	0.50	0.46	0.45	0.41	0.37	0.37	0.38	0.43	0.44
Germany	0.39	0.39	0.37	0.38	0.42	0.52	0.70	0.67	0.63
Poland	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.10	0.15	0.13	0.13
Latvia	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.11	0.11	0.10

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=sdg_17_10&plugin=1 (accessed 3 December 2019).

The European Union is the largest donor in the area of development assistance and Sweden is its most important pillar. It should be noted that only four of the twenty-eight EU Member States fulfil their obligations in terms of the amount of official development assistance, i.e., Luxembourg, Great Britain, Sweden, and Denmark. In 2018, Sweden was ranked first among the states in terms of the amount of assistance granted in relation to the size of the economy. It is worth mentioning that Sweden has been characterised by generosity and high quality of the provided assistance for years in comparison to other EU partners. The allocations made by Sweden for this purpose are twice as high as the average of all 28 EU States. This makes it an undeniable leader. In this context, this state is a role model for other subjects of international relations.

3. Practice of official development assistance in Sweden

Assuming that development requires actions on many levels, the SIDA supports interventions covering such areas as democracy, human rights and freedom of expression; gender equality; environment and climate; health; market development; agriculture and food security; education; sustainable social development; conflict; peace and security; and humanitarian aid (see Figure 1).

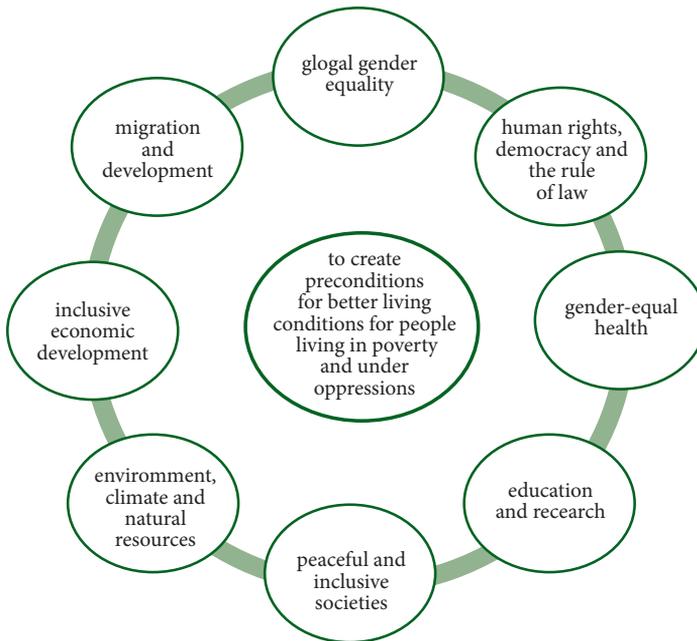


Figure 1. Sweden's perspectives and priorities of development cooperation

Source: Government of Sweden (2016), *Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance*, www.government.se/legal-documents/2017/05/policy-framework-for-swedish-development-cooperation-and-humanitarian-assistance/ (accessed 4 December 2019).

The SIDA posted stories of people struggling for a better life free from poverty and oppression on its website under the slogan “people first”. As a part of this project, one may find many examples of development activities as well as point to specific results of these activities in individual states.

An example within the area of democracy, human rights and freedom of expression is the story of Hamid Khatun’s 11-year-old daughter Samia, who attends a school near Jessore in southwestern Bangladesh. The SIDA conducted a survey focussing on the mothers of children attending this school, which revealed its biggest problems such as: lack of toilets, lack of space, lack of teachers, as well as unfair distribution of scholarships. As a part of the Swedish initiative, the number of employed teachers increased, the infrastructure was improved, for instance, a deep well was dug and a playground for children was built. Regarding the unfair distribution of scholarships, examinations were introduced enabling to select the best students in addition to the achieved results made public. Furthermore, mothers of the top three students receive awards, thus encouraging them to be more involved in the education of their children.

This triggered a change in the attitude of parents and students in respect of school attendance. Although there are more ideas for further changes (road construction, planting trees, building a library), today the school attended by Samia is a good role model for the region⁴⁶.

An example of well-organised assistance in the area of health is the story of Bertha Mbile who works as a nurse at the Panzi Hospital in Congo, after she received medical aid herself. The hospital specialises in fistula operations, which are perinatal injuries. It must be remembered that over 1000 women in the world die from pregnancy and birth related injuries every day. Despite that women are the most valuable resource of the society, lack of proper medical care results in exclusion of women from the society. Exclusion prevents women from working and thus inhibits social development. Sweden supports activities to provide qualified medical assistance to women in Congo⁴⁷.

For example, in the area of gender equality, Sweden conducts trainings entitled “Local Leaders - Capacitating Women in Zimbabwe”. The action allows women, including Annanciatah Mazikana - one of 24 local councillors - to increase her involvement in local politics. As she emphasises, “If more women leaders received such a training, we would go far as a nation”. This programme was organised by the International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) and aimed to strengthen women’s ability to influence local politics. The ICLD has trained women to be leaders in their regions. They were taught how to deal with oppression, how to earn opponents’ respect, and how to use various influence techniques. By acquiring new skills, Annanciatah Mazikana motivates parents to send children, including girls, to school. She also initiated the opening of a high school in her district - Harare, expanded the school by adding classrooms, as well as initiated a project to renovate an old farm in order repurpose it as a hospital⁴⁸.

In summary, the examples described above show a chain of dependencies on what goals may be achieved by the proper management of the received development assistance. One project, a single training, and only one person enable so many changes in a particular region of the world.

The examples discussed above serve as illustrations of the effectiveness of the Swedish development cooperation. Also, international statistics confirm

⁴⁶ SIDA, *People first. Hamida Khatun in Bangladesh*, 5 June 2015, <https://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/people-first/the-stories/Hamida-Khatun-in-Bangladesh/> (accessed 4 December 2019).

⁴⁷ SIDA, *Bertha Mbile in DR Congo*, <https://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/people-first/the-stories/Bertha-Mbile-in-Congo/> (accessed 4 December 2019).

⁴⁸ SIDA, Annanciatah Mazikana, Zimbabwe, 19 August 2016 <https://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/people-first/the-stories/annanciatah-mazikana-zimbabwe/>, (accessed 5 December 2019).

economic growth and social development in those states, which have been receiving development assistance over the past ten years. The figure presented below shows the Human Development Index. HDI is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living. It is a standard means of measuring well-being. It is used to distinguish whether the state is a developed, developing, or underdeveloped state, and also to measure the impact of economic policies on the quality of life. States (almost all UN Member States and a couple of special territories) fall into four broad categories based on their HDI: very high, high, medium, and low human development.

Table 3. **Human Development Index (gap between 2010-2017)**

AFRICA	Burkina Faso (0.375-0.423)	Democratic Republic of Congo (0.407-0.457)	Ethiopia (0.412-0.463)	Kenya (0.543-0.590)
	Liberia (0.407-0.435)	Mali (0.403-0.427)	Mozambique (0.403-0.437)	Rwanda (0.485-0.524)
	Somalia -	Sudan (0.470-0.502)	South Sudan (0.413-0.388)	Tanzania (0.493-0.538)
	Uganda (0.486-0.516)	Zambia (0.544-0.588)	Zimbabwe (0.467-0.535)	-
ASIA	Bangladesh (0.545-0.608)	Cambodia (0.719-0.747)	Myanmar -	Afghanistan (0.463-0.498)
LATIN AMERICA	Bolivia (0.649-0.693)	Colombia (0.719-0.747)	Guatemala (0.611-0.650)	Cuba (0.779-0.777)
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	West Bank and Gaza Strip -	Iraq (0.649-0.685)	-	-
EASTERN EUROPE, WESTERN BALKANS, TURKEY	Georgia (0.735-0.780) Albania (0.741-0.785) Republic of North Macedonia -	Belarus (0.792-0.808) Kosovo - Turkey (0.734-0.791)	Moldova (0.670-0.700) Bosnia and Herzegovina (0.713-0.768)	Ukraine Serbia

Source: *The United Nation, UNDP, Human Development Index*, <https://www.undp.org/> (accessed 5 December 2019).

As the table shows, the beneficiaries of the Swedish development assistance are states with a similar socio-economic profile. They are dominated by the least developed states, which are mostly located in Africa. Analysis of the data covering the period of 2010-2017 indicates that most states receiving assistance from Sweden have made progress. There was a regression and HDI dropped slightly only in two states: South Sudan and Cuba. Among the beneficiaries of

development assistance, the most economically and socially developed states are Georgia, Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belarus, and Albania. South Sudan, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Mozambique, in turn, are classified as the least developed states in the world. The greatest improvement of HDI index was observed in Zimbabwe (+0.068), Bangladesh (+0.063), and Turkey (+0.057).

It is also worth noting that, despite these positive changes in the level of economic and social development of Sub-Saharan African states, this region still remains the least developed area of the globe. Suffice it to say that nineteen of the twenty lowest positions in the latest HDI ranking were held by the states of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Conclusions

Sweden is currently carrying out 63 strategies focussed on implementation of development cooperation at various levels, including 6 regional ones, 25 national ones, 13 global ones, and 19 strategies related to multilateral cooperation. The strategies set goals, which Sweden aims and intends to achieve. It is worth emphasising that, although the strategies are adapted to the framework of development cooperation policy, there are no clear links between them, which may result in duplication of financing partners and loss of synergies. An example of such a state is Liberia where more than one strategy is being implemented, ensuring funding in a given state. For example, the Sahara Regional Strategy for Peace Building in Liberia was supported in 2017. At the same time, this network was also financed as a part of the national strategy for Liberia.

Differentiation between areas of assistance seems to be another problem. Due to the fact that development problems concern not one, but sometimes many, often interrelated areas, there is a difficulty in separating them. For example, water, which is crucial for both health and sustainable economic development, is also a cause of conflict. Therefore, an interdisciplinary and synergistic approach is needed.

Despite drawbacks and shortcomings, which may be identified by analysing the practice of development assistance, it should be emphasised that Sweden can boast of the best results and interesting solutions related to the management and organisation of development assistance. Taking the approach of the English School into account, the Swedes' attitude to providing development assistance, including issues related to rational spending, is noteworthy.

hy. The approach of the English School also explains the Swedish philosophy regarding the provision of assistance, provided that democratic criteria or human rights are met. In this approach, the Swedes try not to waste help but to contribute to its most effective use.

In summary of the above considerations, the attention should be drawn to the fact that a human being is placed in the very centre of the Swedish projects. The donors' attention focuses exactly on people. Similarly, in the case of the concept of human security and sustainable development, Sweden's aid policy is an example of actions, which are a model for other states and may be emulated by them.

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