Deciding who gets what

A study of Swedish aid policy change through FPDM theory

Viktor Söderqvist

Abstract

This thesis seeks to investigate what factors played a role when Sweden took the decision to lessen the amount of countries it should give aid to, commonly called the land focus. It seeks to do so using foreign policy decision making theories and the rational actor model commonly assumed by those. The study is made part through the study of official materials, part through interviews with people at the Swedish ministry of foreign affairs and SIDA, Swedish International Development Agency. The thesis finds that the process had several problems, both due to intentional and unintentional biases. This is due to several reasons, mainly stemming from a historic power disparity between the MFA and SIDA, but also due to the nature of the process itself. Since foreign policy matters are of delicate nature, time constraints meant that a quantitative process was used, introducing ambiguity due to indicators not being singlehandedly "good" or "bad". The land focus process combined with other measures does help to alleviate the problem of individual rationality leading to sub-optimal collective rationality. Finally it's concluded that the need of aid was a guiding, but not the only, factor in the decision.

Key words: foreign policy, decision making, Sweden, aid, efficiency
Words: 10112

Table of contents

1 Introduction

For the longest time Swedish aid policy has been contradicting itself, as if the words stating what it should be were oxymorons in themselves. Proposition 1962:100, also called the Swedish "foreign aid bible" (Odén, 2006, p65), clearly states that Sweden should keep the number of countries it was giving aid to as low as possible. This was due to the practical realization that Sweden is a relatively small actor in the aid arena, and hence too many recievers would severely hurt the efficiency of the aid given.

Despite these policies, the number of countries receiving Swedish aid grew exponentially from 7 in the 1960s to aproximately 40 in the beginning of the millennia, or even higher depending on how you count. Subsequently the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committée Peer Review-reports in 2000 and 2005 both gave Sweden harsh critique due to the unfocused nature of the aid given. Despite the critisism, the Swedish aid model did not change until 2007. The change in the Swedish aid policy concidenced with the changes of the government after the 2006 elections; for the first time since 1994, the power parity swung in favour of the liberal/right. Twelve years of Social democratic rule had come to an end, and almost in an instant – one year later, in 2007 – the Swedish aid policy was changed. This process was called "the nation focus" in Sweden since it aimed to lessen the amount of countries Sweden donated aid to.

How did this change come about? In the public's eyes, the decision was made suddenly, announced through a newspaper debate article made by the Swedish aid minister (Carlsson, 2007; Utrikesdepartementet, 2007A) and a press release from the ministry of foreign affairs. What was the rationale behind this decision? Was it a decision taken in the spur of the moment, or had there been extensive research to support it? Accordingly, what factors played a role in deciding what countries should continue to receive aid, and vice versa? These are all valid concerns and issues that need to be addressed, due to the delicate nature of foreign policy, most of these questions will probably never be completely answered.

There is extensive research on foreign policy decision making and most of these theories goes into great detail regarding individual decisions. Most commonly though, one-shot decisions – decisions made "on a whim" – are the most studied ones since they often represent something distinctly unique. Due to cirumstances surrounding the nation focus-process, it is hard to tell what type of decision this was, which makes the issue urgent to study.

1.1 Research purpose and problem

This thesis will focus on the change in direction of the Swedish aid policy, and the decision making process leading up to it. In particular, it will use process-tracing to try and understand what factors played a role in the change, and if/how they were interrelated. The thesis will not claim to seek the end-all answer to this question – the topic is much too complex to assert anything like it. However, the author still believes there is much light to be cast upon the decision making process, even if the complete enlightenment of the entire issue may never be realised. Scientific progress is often made through many small steps towards a certain direction, and the purpose of this thesis is as such. Making use of current theories and operationalizations of foreign policy decision making it will seek to investigate which factors of the established theories is applicable. The secondary purpose is to explore whether it is possible to augment anything to these theories based on the case studied.

The main focus will be on the decision making *process* and thus the actual *outcome* will not be thoroughly discussed. The main question this thesis seeks to answer is as follows;

How can the decision made in 2007 to lessen the number of countries Sweden was going to give aid be explained?

1.2 Method

There will be two main methods used in this thesis. The first one is analysis of secondary material (Esaiasson, 2012, s281f), mainly consisting of articles in newspapers (such as the earlier mentioned debate article and press release), official documents and other such related materials. The study of these texts mainly aims to give a static picture of what *was* and what *is* – thus they will mainly serve as reference points. That's not to say that these reference points cannot give us information about the process, rather that the conclusions drawn from them might seem arbitrary. Many texts are only available in Swedish; in those cases that quotes are used from these texts it's the author's own translation that appears in the text.

The second method used will be interviews with public officials such as experts and special advisers at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (henceforth abbreviated as MFA) and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). This method aims to give a deeper and alternative perspective to the official documents. The interviews are especially important since they can give more detailed information about the actual *process*; this will enable me to more easily determine what factors played a major role in the decision making process. The interviewees chosen all had positions where they were closely tied

with the process at their respective agency. In total there was three interviewees, two from the MFA and one from SIDA. Because the anonymity of these persons are to be preserved (Kvale, 1997, p109), the persons from the MFA will be given the names of "Sara" and "Peter", while the SIDA representative will be named "Klas". In addition to these 3 topic-specific interviews an additional interview was conducted with a person working at one of the departments of the MFA dealing with a specific continent. This was to give an understanding of the decision making process in general matters regarding development policy. This person will be referenced to as "Mark". The use of pseudonyms for the interviewees will mean that reproducibility of this thesis will be nil, but with such a limited number of interviewees there's no way around it. A word regarding the selection seems to be in place here since the number of interviewees was relatively small. This is because the author chose to employ a strategic selection (Teorell & Svensson, 2007, p84) when it came to how the interviewees were picked. There is a relatively small amount of people with enough insight into the decision making process to be able to give information about it, which is why this method of selection was preferred.

Therefore, we are forced to draw the conclusion that the possibility of adding another interviewee to the sample group would allow the author to gain a deeper understanding and alternate perspectives with which to evaluate this process. This is an infinite problem however, and since the issue of the nation focus was handled by a relatively small amount of people the author believes that it was more important to have quality over quantity.

In choosing these methods of study two problems immediately appear. Firstly, the results will be partially arbitrary due to the fact that reconstructing the exact decision making process is impossible. This is emanates from two basic assumptions made throughout the thesis; first off there is a large risk of missing information. This is due to multiple factors, not the least that all information available will be dependent on personal reproductions of an issue stretching about 5-6 years back. This leads us to the second point which is that all information used will be more or less subjective, except the static information published in official documents (to avoid going too far into the realm of relativity this will be assumed). The interviews especially suffer from this validity problem – it is well-known within' the psychology research field that people perceive even the same situations differently (Munhall, 2008). This will inevitably lead to justified questions regarding whether this thesis can be viewed as anything but a subjective retelling of an event and subsequent conclusions drawn will be valid only for this particular case. However this criticism comes out of a misunderstanding of the interview from a methodological standpoint. An interview is in no way an equal form of communication (Kvale, 1997, p118); the researcher's objective is to lead the conversation and get answers to the questions he/she deems relevant. The methodological angle of attack should thus be aimed not at the outcome of the interview, but at the preparatory work the researcher has done. To avoid this kind of criticism to the largest possible extent the author of this thesis used a document with the same questions as a basis for all interviews. The questions asked during the interview was then adjusted according to the answers received – sometimes

questions got answered in conjunction to other questions and thus didn't need to be asked explicitly. This document can be found in appendix A. It should also be noted that all italicized text within' citation marks is quotes translated from Swedish by the author of this thesis; therefore it is possible that some things might get lost in translation due to inaccuracy. This is a known source of error.

1.2.1 Delimitations and scope of study

The first delimitation that needs to be made is that this thesis only aims to study one specific decision making process. It is the author's hope that the conclusions drawn will serve to further the study of foreign policy decision making only. There will be no extensive attempt to evaluate the outcome of these changes since this is deemed unimportant to this particular kind of study. The decision to study one particular case is mainly to constrain the scope of the thesis – a comparative study between two similar decisions, or an anachronistic study over reasons to evaluate the aid policy, might also have shed light over the decision that was eventually made. This was deemed infeasible however, due to the sheer amount of work required.

It should also be noted that the theory of Mintz & DeRouen (2010) which this thesis is mainly based on consists of so many factors that it was considered impossible not to pick and choose. Thus, there will be parts of the book which is not discussed or presented at all. This is a conscious decision and will be a possible source of critique.

2 Background

A multi-level analysis appears to be crucial in the investigation of the decision making process that eventually led to the downsizing of Swedish international aid. This kind of analysis will highlight a multitude of variables on different levels of society – individual, bureaucratic and coalition – which all might have an effect on the final decision being made. This chapter will first explore which kinds of decisions are possible in foreign politics. After this initial classification, which often also gives a hint at which level a decision mainly stems from and will affect, those levels will be explained and explored. Throughout this chapter, alternative views will be presented where necessary to complement the base theory used (mainly sourced from Mintz & DeRouen, 2010). Although there are multiple models of decision making discussed in this book, the rational actor model is going to be assumed in this thesis. This model will be examined in section 2.4. After the theoretic groundwork is outlaid, a brief summary of Swedish aid policy will be presented to give context to the analysis part of the thesis.
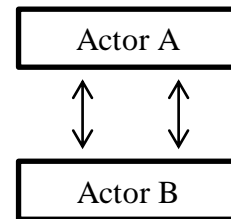
2.1 Foreign policy decision types

According to Mintz & DeRouen there are five types of foreign policy decisions that can be made. These five types are based on the circumstances the decision is made in. There are additional classifications (for example how information was searched and processed, i.e. holistic, wholistic or heuretic (Sage, 1990, p239ff)), but they are secondary to this initial classification. It's important to note that some, if not most decisions could be argued to fall into more than one category. For simplicity, the table below lists the available types after which each will be discussed.

Types of decisions
One-shot decisions
Strategic decisions
Sequential decisions
Strategic-sequential decisions
Group decisions

One-shot decisions or single decisions are characterized as decisions made without any previous decisions being made regarding the issue at hand. While these often are the subject of academic studies, they also hard to draw any general conclusions from since most foreign policy decisions are made in sequence.

That's not to say that studies of these decisions are fruitless, only that they're studying the specific rather than the general. Examples of this type of decision can be the US decision to not invade Iraq 1993, but also the one taken in 2003 to do so. The subsequent famous speech of US President George W Bush proclaiming "If you're not with us, you're against us" also prompted one-shot decisions by countries whether to join the US war on terror or not.

Strategic decisions are decisions where at least two actors are involved and where the decision of one actor relies upon the decision, or expected decision, of the other actor. This goes two ways, which means that actor A's decisions affect, and are affected by, actor B's decisions which are affected and affect actor A. In other words, there exists a circular dependency when it comes to strategic decision making.

```
┌─────────────────┐
│     Actor A     │
└─────────────────┘
      ↕       ↕
┌─────────────────┐
│     Actor B     │
└─────────────────┘
```

This is important to elaborate on because it is a very good example of what kind of problems that foreign policy decision makers are facing; the one of imperfect information. The classic example of a strategic decision, also brought up by Mintz & DeRouen (2010, s15), is the *prisoners dilemma,* which largely is based on *game theory*. This classic challenge to the rational actor model implies that rational actors without the ability to communicate will make decisions which for the individual are optimal, but their decisions are collectively sub-optimal. To further explain this, it's easiest to consider the following scenario; "Police apprehend 2 criminals committing a significant crime. However, they do not have enough evidence to convict either criminal for the big crime, only smaller crimes. They place the two criminals in separate rooms and proceed to tell each of the prisoners that they have two choices; cooperate with police against your partner and you go free while he serves a one year sentence. If you deny the crime and he cooperates, you'll do the time and he goes free. If you both remain silent, we'll sentence you for the minor charge which will mean jail for 1 month for each of you. However, if you both cooperate, you'll both get 3 months in jail. Each prisoner now has to choose whether to either betray his partner or to stay silent – and they do not know the other person's decision. What will they do?"

Decision	Prisoner A (silent)	Prisoner A (cooperate)
Prisoner B (silent)	Each serves 1 month (A, A)	Prisoner A: Goes free Prisoner B: Serves 1 year (B, C)
Prisoner B (cooperate)	Prisoner A: Serves 1 year Prisoner B: Goes free (C, B)	Each serves 3 months (D, D)

Assuming that each actor is interested in lessening their own jail time as much as possible, in this scenario they will both betray the other person. This is because the decision matrix for each prisoner individually is as follows (assuming they are risk averse); B>A>D>C. However, collectively (still assuming they want to minimize jail time) their decision matrix would be: A>D>B&C. The lack of perfect information (i.e. what their partner will be doing) will lead to a sub-optimal decision for both actors. Of course, the above example assumes that

actors are unable to communicate which is highly unlikely in foreign policy. Despite this fact there are still major points to be made out of the critique of rational choice theory because it highlights crucial problems within the field of foreign policy which we will return to later in this thesis.

The third type of decision within' the field of foreign policy is the sequential decision. These decisions are made interrelated to other decisions. For example, the continuous decisions whether to increase or decrease the troop size in Iraq were sequential decisions made in relation to the previous decisions. Most foreign policy decisions are sequential decisions, but not in the pure form meant here, but of the type discussed below.

The fourth type of decision is the strategic-sequential decision. This decision type combines the above two types of decisions, and is probably the most recognizable and common of all the decision types. A good commonplace example of this type of decision is the chess player's decisions. The chess player both have to relate his and his opponent's previous moves all the while trying to plan ahead thinking of what his opponent might do. Another example of this is the foreign policy decisions made during the arms race in the cold war; the formation of the Warsaw pact and the subsequent creation of NATO are typical strategic-sequential decisions. The reason for most foreign policy decisions being strategic-sequential is twofold; first off international relations issues are often of the recurring type. Issues often have a protracted life and demand continuous processing as they get affected by other issues, internal and external. Second issues not originally considered sequential might resurface because the previous decisions made did not properly or satisfactorily address the problem (Hermann, 2012, p4f).

The final kind of foreign policy decision is the group decision. These are decisions made by larger organs such as the UN and the US Security Council. These decisions are often very complex since they almost always involve a number of actors who has to agree on a joint agenda. This means that the decisions made are often a mishmash of the involved actors' preferences.

2.2   Levels in decision making

The topic of levels in foreign policy decision making are not uncontested grounds. Mintz & DeRouen identifies 3 levels, individual, group and coalition. This classification, albeit modified in names of the levels, is also supported by Kesign (2010). Meanwhile, Jakobsson (2006, s268ff) identifies 4 of them; individual, bureaucracy, state and international system which is also referenced by Brommesson & Ekegren (2007, p25). While 4 levels probably give more possibility for detailed study, the three presented by Mintz & DeRouen seems sufficient for the objective of this thesis.

Levels in decision making

Individual
Group
Coalition

Each level has distinct characteristics associated with it. Individual level decisions are not very common in democratic societies since they require an actor with sufficient power to decide policy him or herself. Thus, individual decision making is most common in dictatorships like those of old China, USSR or Cuba. Individual ministers can also have a strong influence on decisions made in democracies too. This can be seen in examples such as the reform of grades being given in earlier years in Sweden which has been strongly advocated by the current secretary of education, Jan Björklund (Hökerberg, 2009; Marteleur, 2012). Focus on an individual level might also be applied during times of crisis, where decisions need to be made in a rapid succession.

Group level decisions are decisions made by small or large groups where the outcome is not dictated by all powerful individuals. This kind of decision process is often extremely complex since it involves a lot of factors like groupthink, group polarization and polythink (meaning multiple opinions). These factors lead to additional complications such as information bias and holistic/wholistic/heuretic information searching depending on the group's composition. Also the term "group" is ambiguous in the sense that it might refer to many types of groups. For example, a group might refer to a group specifically created to deal with an ad hoc issue (for example 9/11), or permanent groups of bureaucrats dealing with specific issues within' a department. Examples of the former could be the creation of Department of Homeland Security (which was made permanent but created due to said attacks), and the Africa-group within' the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sweden is a good example of the latter, although it holds no power to make decisions itself. The common denominator of these groups is that their members identify with the group itself, and the actors do not have to seek outside advice in order to make or give recommendation for a decision. These decisions or recommendations come from internal debate and the basis might be concurrence (i.e. groupthink), unanimity or plurality.

Coalition decision making is when several groups come together to preferably form a majority, compromising between each other to reach a consensus. This differs from group level decisions since decisions are aggregations of many groups' preferences. The coalition is always interested in keeping the number of groups it consists of as low as possible while still retaining power. This is because the larger number of groups the coalition consists of, the less credit and resources can be allocated to each. Also this implies a greater number of opinions to be considered while trying to reach a decision, which gives less effectiveness. However, there is a distinct advantage with having a surplus in a coalition, because it means that it can lose a group/party without the majority of the coalition being threatened. The coalition level of decision making is quite common, not least attributed to the parliamentary rule of many countries where more than 1 party shares power. The coalition level of decision making often

involves other actors than the traditional ones (individuals, parties), such as interest groups, media and public opinion. However these complications also means that this level of decision making is with regards to foreign policy fairly uncommon (Jakobsson, 2006, p271).

2.3   Factors in foreign policy decision making

As previously noted there are a multiple of factors affecting each foreign policy decision, no matter how small or big. This section of the thesis will discuss the factors that might or might not have affected the nation focus decision making process.

2.3.1   Time constraints

Each and every political decision is limited by a time constraint. This is mainly out of necessity – if there wasn't a deadline for a decision deliberation could continue in eternity. Democracies in general are criticized for being inefficient (Blühdorn, 2006, p2), so having a set duration for a decision making process makes sense. Time constraints might also come out of necessity in the sense that a crisis is demanding a quick decision. Because time might be limited it might be hard to carry out rational calculations. Hence, time constraints are probable causes for a non-holistic search for information and therefore, emotional decisions are more likely to be made.

2.3.2   Information constraints

A basic assumption of the rational actor model is that it requires the actors to have sufficient and reliable information if they are to make decisions predicted by the model. Problems with this assumption have been discussed previously, but there are additional problems worth highlighting. One is the producer-consumer problem. Producers are the information gathering actors stationed in the field. There are multiple types of actors including but not limited to intelligence agencies, diplomats, field workers, consulate personnel and local organizations. The information gathering process is prone to problems – producers might produce biased information in order to either highlight problems, or try to hide them. The way information is framed to the decision maker might also play a crucial role in which information is deemed important and not. The decision maker might also be partial to one type of information – this is called information bias and will be discussed in point 2.3.5.

    There are multiple examples of imperfect information leading to irrational decisions – this does however not mean that the decision itself was irrational, only that the prerequisites for a rational decision were not met. Information constraints

might also be caused by the above discussed time constraints. The stress caused by the time constraint might lead to incomplete information presented. This can be caused either knowingly, i.e. using heuristic information search methods, or unknowingly, to the information producer.

2.3.3 Ambiguity

Closely tied to the previous section about information constraints is the point of information ambiguity. Information might have multiple meanings depending on how it is framed, or how it is interpreted on the consumer side. Information produced can be interpreted in different ways, and therefore it leaves the consuming actor to decide the proper course of action.

A relevant example of this, which also will be discussed later, is the good governance variable used in the data gathered for the nation focus-process. It was deemed desirable to cooperate with countries which had good governance since it indicated that corruption and malpractice was less common. On the other hand it was also deemed important to cooperate with countries experiencing conflict or being in a post-conflict state, which often as a direct consequence of said conflict has low scores when it comes to good governance.

Ambiguity in information is a complicating factor in foreign policy decision making in general, but also closely relates to the aid policy field. The added complexity leads to decision makers using cognitive shortcuts to simplify the decision making process. This also is problematic to the rational actor model which assumes that all possible options are considered and fully explored.

2.3.4 Risk

All political decisions are characterized by risk, whether it's small or large. This is not in the least true for issues regarding foreign policy since the stakes are often high. In this case, risk can be thought of as the probability of a negative outcome of the decision made.

To be more precise, for this study risk might imply the probability of disastrous/negative consequences for the country Sweden gives aid to, negative consequences for Sweden's international reputation as an aid donor and/or Sweden's relationship with the receiving country.

2.3.5 Bias

Information bias ties closely to the information consuming actor. There are is magnitude of bias types available. The table below lists those mentioned in Mintz & DeRouen (2010, p39):

Bias types in decision making
Focus on short-term benefits rather than long-term problems
Preference over preference
Locking on one alternative
Wishful thinking
Post-hoc rationalization
Relying on the past
Focusing on a narrow range of policy options rather than on a wider range of options
Groupthink
Overconfidence; over-estimating one's capabilities and underestimating rival's capabilities
Ignoring critical information; denial and avoidance
Focusing on only one part of the decision problem
Turf battles leading to suboptimal decisions
Lack of tracking and auditing of prior decisions and plans
Poliheuristic bias
Shooting from the hip
Poly think
Group polarization effect

Each type of bias will not be thoroughly discussed here, although they will be referenced to in the analysis as needed. It's worth noting however that all kinds of bias tend to lead to misperception. So not only is there a possibility of information shortage, the information that does get presented might also for different reasons be misinterpreted. This may, in addition to the factors already listed above, occur due to motivated (what they feel affectionate towards) and unmotivated (i.e. their cognitive disposition) biases.

It is of utmost importance to notice that although biases have these two components, they do not have to be mutually exclusive. A leader can have a motivated bias towards, for example, limiting the number of countries receiving aid because they think that it would improve overall effectiveness of the aid given. This motivated bias might be a result of an unmotivated bias, for example that aid is not an effective way to help poor countries in the first place.

2.3.6 Beliefs

Bias and beliefs are closely interconnected with each other. What beliefs an individual, a group or a coalition holds *will* strongly affect the decisions that those actors take. Beliefs will shape both the desired and expected outcome of a particular decision, both for the self and others. Hence, beliefs will shape a leader's or group's ability to interpret issues, and the eventual outcomes of these issues. This in turn leads to an inability to clearly identify and define the proper responses to these issues. This closely relates to the earlier mentioned bias, where information might be interpreted in different ways depending on the actor's conscious and subconscious biases. With regards to bias, a distinct difference still

exists, since bias can also be due to other factors not related to the belief of the individual, group or coalition. However, such conclusions are hard to draw since it can be hard to distinguish between bias based on, for example, group polarization and bias based on political beliefs. Most often, beliefs and bias might be so closely intertwined that it's impossible to determine which factor has weighed in the heaviest into the outcome.

2.3.7 Alliances (international cooperation) and domestic issues

Aid is a topic of international cooperation; this is not in the least proven by the numerous aid conferences held. Since aid goes under the foreign policy agenda, Sweden's aid-related issues are to be considered a topic for not only the aid policy, but also security policy and trade policy, which are all responsibilities of the MFA. Therefore, aid-related issues such as the nation focus process will not only consider the immediate need of aid, but also the other factors mentioned. This ties in not in the least with the earlier mentioned factor of risk of damage to Sweden's reputation. While the examples in Mintz & DeRouen mostly refer to military alliances, these are still very present in aid related matters as well. While these "alliances" mostly concern multilateral aid it seems unlikely the same thoughts shouldn't have spilled over to the work with bilateral aid. This is especially probable due to the Paris declaration's focus on the need to eliminate duplicate efforts (OECD, 2008).

Domestic issues can be divided into two separate parts with widely different meanings. The first one is the realization that foreign policy affects, and is affected by, decisions which concerns domestic issues (Doeser, 2011). This is clearly a realization made by the Swedish government as well; writing 2007/08:89 (Utrikesdepartementet, 2010) (further discussed in part 2.5), states *"Many other areas of policy have access to instruments that can have a greater effect on the spread and depth of poverty than those available in the aid policy. Domestic policy decisions in Sweden can have consequences for poor people in developing countries"*. The second part is that while foreign policy often is not considered to be very important within' the electorate, especially aid related matters could be more sensitive than other issues. The idea of giving aid has a strong standing amongst Swedes (Nordström, 2009) and thus negative news about it might potentially be a source of loss in electoral votes.
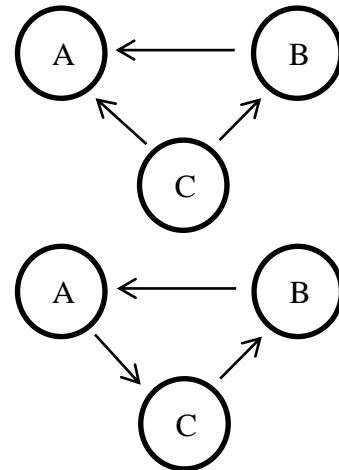
2.4 The Rational Actor Model

The main theory used throughout this thesis will be that of the rational actor model. This theory has a few key assumptions which will need to be elaborated on.

Firstly, the Rational Actor Model (RAM) uses expected utility theory. This implies that the decision maker is able to rank his/her own preferences by how

much satisfaction completing each of them will give him/her. As the theory's name implies, the decision made is then based on this rational ranking of preferences and their relation to the choices available. This assumption is based on that the decision maker is able to identify all available alternatives and their consequences in order to choose the best alternative available. These two assumptions taken together mean that many foreign policy decisions can be explained in a relatively easy way. The rationality assumption can be broken down into three parts;

The first part is that the actor is able to identify its á priori goal and make moves to reach that goal. This implies that the actor is not ruled by habit or social expectations, but by their own will alone.

The second part is that the actor's preferences are consistent. This means that if decision A is preferred to decision B, and decision B is preferred to decision C, then decision A must also be preferred to decision C. Simply put A>B>C, not A>B, B>C, C>A – the latter would imply a circular preference. See the figure to the right for a visual explanation of this (arrows indicate preference).

The last part is utility maximization, which simply means that actors will choose the alternative that provides the greatest amount of net benefits.

The consistent preferences assumption is worth being further expanded upon since it carries a few implications for foreign policy decision making worth noting. What does this imply for the instances where the path chosen turns out to be wrong?

These types of problems can depend on a variety of reasons, but if the rational actor model is to be used, it must stem from incomplete information (since the goal, and thus preferences are static) at the time of decision. The course of action should thus be to search and account for new information and remake the decision. Within' the field of RAM theory, it is widely known that usage of the model does not guarantee a sound outcome. In general, the usage of RAM theory implies that usage of the theory leads to better decisions, but not necessarily better outcomes (as demonstrated by the example of game theory in part 2.1).

2.5 Swedish aid policy over time

This section aims to give a short background to Swedish aid policy from 1960 until today. This serves to show how the policy was constructed and interpreted over time. Most of this section will be based on Bertil Odén's (2006) excellent book "Biståndets idéhistoria : från Marshallhjälp till millenniemål" ("History of ideas regarding aid : from the Marshall help to the millennium goals") which outlines the ideas dictating Swedish aid from 1960 to approximately 2005.

Swedish aid policy always aimed to first and foremost lessen poverty, something that to this day persists even though the exact wording of this goal has changed over time. In the first proposition regarding Swedish foreign aid, proposition 1962:100, the motives were stated to be *"the growing sense of solidarity and responsibility over country borders is an expression of a deepened realization that peace, freedom and prosperity is not exclusively national concerns, rather something universal and undividable. The non-profit motives for giving aid are therefore very realistic. The Swedish development aid does not require any other justification than the one here presented"*. In the current policy document, writing 2007/08:89 (Utrikesdepartementet, 2008) titled "Sweden's politics for global development" it's stated that *"The fight against poverty in its different meanings not only continue to be the superordinate aim for the Swedish aid but also a central starting-point for the joint Swedish development policy. [...] At the same time Sweden can and should contribute to a fair and sustainable global development. We do this out of a solidary commitment and because we have a common responsibility for the future of the world. It is also in our own interest"*.
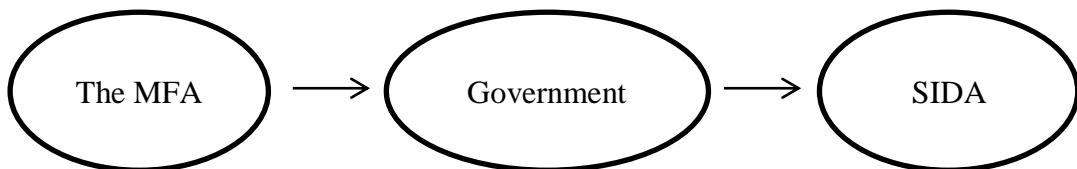
Hence it's very clear that Swedish aid policy, even after the nation focus-process – which also included a change for more efficient aid – to this day first and foremost keeps its aims of lessening poverty. The main difference thus lies in the methods through which this has been tried to be achieved. For Swedish aid, this has been realized through different goals which were formulated over time. 1968 saw the creation of the so called independence goal, 1988 the environment goal and 1995 the equality goal. Although the lessening of poverty always was the overarching goal all these sub-goals meant that Swedish aid never was focused. This was because each goal was considered equally important. This in turn meant that the desired influence on the governing of the aid receiving states never was very strong. The proposition 1987/88:100 (Regeringen, 1988) serves as a testament to this; adding up from previous propositions (1977/78:135) Swedish aid should lead to; resource accumulation, economic and social equalization, economic and political independence, societal development towards democracy and foresighted management of natural resources and care for the environment. In 1995 it was also added that the aid should lead to equality between women and men.

The realization that Swedish aid suffered from a lack of clear direction through which the lessening of poverty was to be achieved, these goals were consolidated in proposition 2002/03:122 named "Shared responsibility: Sweden's policy for global development". It is worth noting that the previously mentioned proposition 2007/08:89 is a developed and expanded version of 2002/03:122. Here the overarching goal, which was also the only goal, was clearly stated to be the lessening of poverty. At the same time, 5 out of the 6 earlier goals were still present, but were now more viewed as means to an end rather than an end themselves.
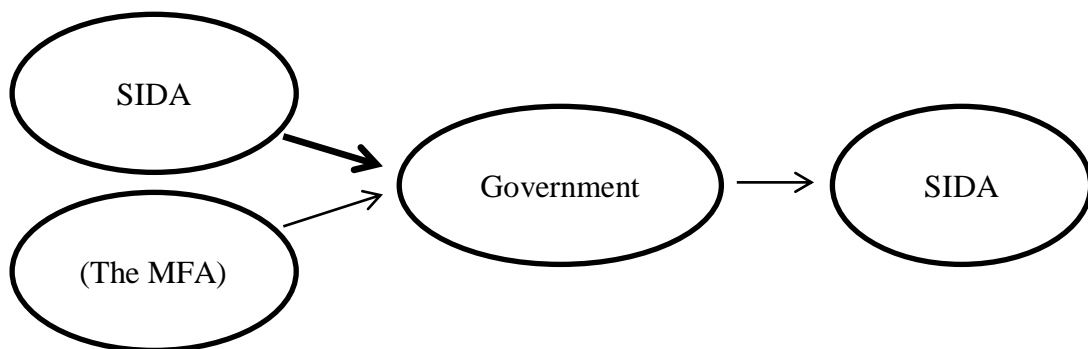
The growth of the number of countries Sweden gives aid to came about gradually and grew exponentially. This was partly due to the fact that Swedish aid came to grow a great deal in volume, not in the least during the late 60s and early

70s. Another reason was that Sweden originally was hesitant to give too much aid since it regarded itself too inexperienced in the field to make valuable contributions; an argument that got weaker as time went by and aid engagements were expanded.

In closing and for clarification, it should be noted that in theory, SIDA is the ministry which handles and distributes Swedish aid. The MFA's role regarding aid policy is to gather materials which then serve as a basis for decision making for the government.

```
┌──────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────┐
│ The MFA  │ ───> │  Government  │ ───> │   SIDA   │
└──────────┘      └──────────────┘      └──────────┘
```

These are not the roles that the organizations has had in practice however; often SIDA has held a very strong position in aid policy matters, more so than the MFA, which has been a source of critique from the OECD DAC peer review (OECD, 2009, p51).

```
┌──────────┐
│   SIDA   │ ──╲
└──────────┘    ╲──>┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────┐
┌──────────┐    ╱──>│  Government  │ ───> │   SIDA   │
│ (The MFA)│ ──╱    └──────────────┘      └──────────┘
└──────────┘
```

3 Analysis

This chapter aims to outline the empirical data gathered through interviews and articles regarding the nation focus. Part of this chapter will take a narrative form since most of the materials in this study will come from the interviews conducted. This is meant to serve as an empirical basis for the result part of the thesis, where empirics and theory are bound together and discussed.

3.1 Initiation and duration of the process

To the public, this process was announced first and foremost through a debate article in Sweden's premier morning paper Dagens Nyheter (Carlsson, 2007). All interviewees agree on that the process was initiated a long time before this announcement was made though. While they all have different opinions on when exactly the process started, this could mainly be summed up to be due to different interpretations of what signifies a starting point. The general consensus seems to be that the process was formally initiated by the minister of aid around winter 2006/2007, giving it a formal preparation time of more than 6 months.

Mark says that the information gathering process at the MFA, which serves as a base for decision making, is mostly done by a single individual. Sara confirms that this normally is the case, but the land focus was such a major issue that a small group was created. This group's job was to coordinate and compile all the materials gathered into a single decision making base.

The ambiguity regarding the exact starting date probably stems from the fact that all interviewees, albeit in different ways, acknowledge the fact that the groundwork for the process was laid years before. Klas says that SIDA had been discussing the potential efficiency gains from a more focused aid for at least 3-4 years before the process actually started. This claim is also backed up by Odén (2006, p180) which confirms that SIDA at many times tried to argue for a concentration of the amount of countries given aid to. Likewise, both Sara and Peter say that the MFA had started gathering data and information for a long time supporting the idea. They add that it's very possible for someone working at the MFA to do this kind of thing; materials serving as a base for decisions can be gathered at any time even if no decision is made in the end. Here it is interesting to note that Klas says that the first time he remembers SIDA proposing the idea of a land focus, around 2002-2003, the MFA was very skeptical. This was due to the ideas of *"that it is important to have a foot everywhere"* and *"we're a small country, we must be able to be heard and seen"* – i.e. it is good to have a relation of any kind to a country, irrespective what type and if it fulfills a "real" need. This

view was shared by ministers and government officials at the time, but the parliament did not agree and thus proposition 2002/03:122 (Utrikesdepartementet, 2003) titled "Shared responsibility: Sweden's policy for global development" states that *"the number of long-term cooperation-countries should be focused and limited"* (p61ff). Klas notes that things might have been different if *"someone else had been at the rudder of the MFA at the time"*, indicating that resistance to the proposal was mainly in the top levels of the administration.

Sara says that the land focus-process that later came to be official was informally started already in autumn of 2006, right after the election. According to her, Gunilla Carlsson, the responsible minister, wanted to have an overview and discussion of the already existing materials before formally initiating the process. According to documents released by the MFA, the initiative was based on the need to raise the bar regarding efficiency and quality of Swedish aid (Utrikesdepartementet, 2007B, p1). Sara also emphasizes the importance of the personal engagement of Gunilla Carlsson. Moderaterna, of which Gunilla Carlsson is a member, is the biggest party in the four-party coalition ruling Sweden. The party had previously not been very interested in aid related matters, but changed its party program around the same time (October 2007) as the land focus process was decided upon (late September 2007). Previously, the party program didn't mention anything about aid, while the new program states *"The discussion regarding aid has thus far been all too focused on volumes. The Swedish development cooperation must place a greater emphasis on quality, being more focused and coordinated"* (Moderaterna, 2008, p90). While it's impossible to say whether this change can be attributed to Gunilla Carlsson personally, she has stated herself that it was important to give aid a clear profile in the party program.

In regards to the process length the opinions between the interviewees vary. Sara says it was the longest process that she's been involved in during her (lengthy) career at the MFA. Klas largely agrees that this was the case too; according to him the intention from SIDA when proposing a land focus was to do it on a regional basis rather than a global. Peter says it was about average for a decision being made by the government. Peter goes on to say that it was important for the government that the process didn't get stuck at being discussed indefinitely; partly for their own sake of planning, but mainly for the receiving countries' sake. When the land focus process was initiated, all country-specific strategy processes – done yearly on a rolling schedule – were put on suspend since the government didn't want to precede the overarching land focus process. Peter notes that it was a delicate balancing act between getting the decision done quickly while still having enough time to do a proper assessment of needs and evaluations for each country. Especially since longer delays would have significant impact on the relations to the countries affected.

3.2 Considerations made during the process

Official materials released from the MFA regarding the land focus-process give a great deal of credit for the process starting to the Paris declaration (Utrikesdepartementet, 2007B, p2). It goes on to note that Sweden is part of the international donor collective and thus has an obligation to collaborate. The report states that not only does the land focus give Sweden better efficiency in its own aid, it also mitigates some pressure off the countries that Sweden ends its cooperation with. This is because fewer actors involved in a country means less reporting and accounting for that country's administration.

Klas elaborates in great detail on this point; he says that this realization is not new – in fact it was around since before the 2002/03:122-proposition. He further explains and says that with the new government coming into office, doors previously closed were opened. This was according to him not primarily an ideological change – as the 2002/03:122 proposition proved, the previous parliament acknowledged the need of a land focus too. However due to factors such as that the previous ruling coalition had been in power for about 8-9 years at that time, relations had been built with the aid receiving countries. Such relations are hard and often painful to break, both for donor and receiver, which he reasons could be a major factor in the reluctance to actually carry out a focusing process.

Gunilla Carlsson, in her debate article, mentions a few of the factors that were guiding for the selection process and thus gives us a first glimpse into the decision making process. *"The questions we asked [ourselves] were amongst others: How encompassing is poverty and where are the needs the greatest? Is the development regarding human rights and democracy heading in the right direction? If not, are we able to affect that development? How can Sweden contribute? Are there other donors who have a better opportunity to reach good results?"* (Carlsson, 2007). The report from the MFA (Utrikesdepartementet, 2007B, p4) adds that there were around 20 indicators studied in total and that the final selection was based on a contexture of those indicators. Along with the indicators considered was an estimation of Sweden's ability to make an impact. The report continues to state that not all indicators were of equal importance in the decision, and that the analysis of each country had its starting point in the factors Gunilla Carlsson mentioned. Finally, the report adds that in addition to the above indicators and factors, Sweden's *"combined connections"* with each country were accounted for.

In relation to this both Sara and Klas mentioned that the indicators were put into a large matrix which then was used to evaluate each country. It's interesting to note how different the perception of this matrix is. Sara says that SIDA's role was central and of utmost importance but points out that the agency had no role in the decision regarding which countries were selected and not, something Peter confirms. Klas on the other hand says SIDAs role was mere statistics delivery – its involvement was according to him minimal. Further he adds that many of the indicators chosen are highly ambiguous, an example he brings up of this is the "good governance"-variable. In short, Sweden wants the countries it gives aid to have good governance, but at the same time, it is an outspoken goal especially

consider countries in a state of conflict or post-conflict. These states, by definition, have a bad score in the "good governance"-variable.

The earlier mentioned *"combined connections"* can be split into two distinct factors. Sara comments on this; *"all of the MFA's policy areas were important in the final proposal. Aid policy, security politics and trade policy. Definitely, the other ones [referring to the latter two] were equally important"*. Peter confirms this by saying that *"you have to weigh the countries named, and from there make an assessment based on different criteria, like what relationship [in general], aid relationship etc. we have"*. Elaborating on this he further says *"A criterion was Sweden's other relations with a country, then, if it was security or other relationships ... I think it mainly was our economic relations which were of interest"*. Lastly, Peter emphasizes that the other factors mentioned by Gunilla Carlsson still in his belief were the most important. This is in sharp distinction to the debate article the aid minister published where other factors were not mentioned at all, while official documents only vaguely hints towards those. This is by choice all interviewees agree; the reasoning being that foreign policy is such a delicate matter for the state that it simply was not possible to have an open process. In this regard, Sara says the process was *"transparent as far as it was possible"*, in the sense that the political leadership was open with its ambitions.

As for the final selection of countries, both Sara and Peter say that it was not equal to the list of countries suggested by the MFA. Sara explains: *"The alliance government [referring to the 4 parties in the coalition ruling Sweden] – the Prime Minister's office – came back with suggestions to the first drafts [...] The list that the MFA advised was not the same as the one that later was adopted – the final one was larger and more inclusive than what the MFA's experts suggested. That's due to the difficulties of severing aid ties [...]"*, which is confirmed by Peter: *"It didn't look completely different [from the MFA's suggestion]. Of course it was changed all the time, it's a political dynamic since Gunilla Carlsson isn't making the decision, rather it has to be ratified by the government"*.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Decision type and levels in the decision making process

The decision to initiate a land focus process can be seen in multiple ways regarding what decision type it was. The strongest case can be made for the sequential decision. As stated in section 3.1, the idea of a land focus process had since long been circulating within' the relevant agencies. The Swedish aid policy certainly wasn't a new policy area; therefore it wasn't a one-shot decision. At the same time, the issue also had properties of a strategic-sequential decision since it involved a lot of cooperation other actors and the expected outcomes of what they would do. Still, it makes the most sense to label it a sequential decision – while considerations were made in regards to other countries, the main focus was that of Swedish aid efficiency and relations.

The most interesting thing regarding this decision making process, and probably the strongest contribution this thesis will do to the foreign policy decision making theory field, is the realization of multilevel analysis. The decision to lessen the number of countries Sweden gives aid to, was well realized and accepted in all the relevant institutions. This realization is expressed by all interviewees, although there seems to have been little to no communication between the agencies themselves. A couple of interesting conclusions can be drawn out of the above stated facts.

First off, the individual level was an extremely important one. All interviewees agree that Gunilla Carlsson has played a pivotal role in the process. There were multiple times when the groundwork for a land focus process was laid, albeit in different ways, and still the process weren't started. The previous government had not been willing to handle the issue, mainly due to the fact that it had long lasting ties to the countries it would affect. Simply put, the risk factor was not as strong with the new government. Nevertheless, the agreement about the fact that Gunilla Carlsson was a major reason for the process taking place is partially surprising. This is due to the fact that Sweden's democracy is one where the individual ministers, with few exceptions, aren't very seen as very active to the public. Still, the decision wasn't hers to make; the final decision was made by the government and, finalizing the decision into policy, parliament.

Therefore, in order to fully understand the decision making process, we have to consider what the coalition level meant for the process. In this case it added another layer of complexity. As noted by the interviewees, the draft of the list of countries which Sweden was going to continue giving aid to was bounced back and forth at least a couple of times between the prime minister's office and the

MFA. Even so, the final proposal from the MFA wasn't the one being adopted by the parliament. This is probably due to the coalition type of rule which in this case carried the side effects mentioned by Jakobsson (2006, p271).

Lastly the group level in decision making was poignantly present. The base materials used in the decision was collected and prepared in a group within' the MFA. Albeit it's disputed how much, SIDA also had influence on the decision. Lastly as previously mentioned, the prime minister's office/the government also had an impact on the decision. All these were separate groups working towards a common goal, albeit their methods of reaching it were different. The relation between SIDA and the MFA has been very omnipresent throughout the process. The practical decision making chain modeled in section 2.5 seems to have been a source of contention between the two agencies in this regard. The people representing the MFA say SIDA was very involved in the process, while the SIDA representative says SIDA's role was mere statistics delivery. This lays ground for two plausible hypotheses; one is that the expectations of participation were skewed at either agency, therefore resulting in an expectation mismatch. Another is that due to the history of power disparity between the two agencies, the MFA decided to make a point of just letting SIDA be a part of the non-vital parts of the process. This hypothesis is further strengthened by one of the MFA interviewees saying *"Well, the relation between SIDA and the MFA has always been a bit of little brother-big brother"*. In light of this, it seems reasonable to assume that the *Turf battles leading to suboptimal decisions*-bias could be applicable.

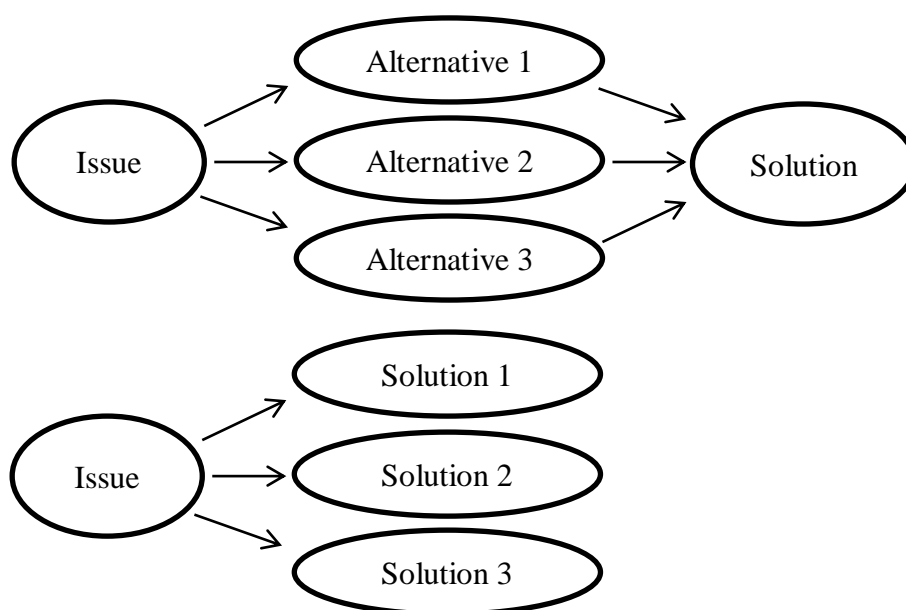## 4.2   Factors in the decision making process

Like Peter alludes, time was of the essence when it came to the land focus. The process was due to the nature of the issue, very delicate and in need of a hasty solution. In other words, there was an apparent time constraint present. Still the evaluation of each country's needs had to be properly investigated, and weighed to other countries' needs. Combined with the relation between SIDA and the MFA this led to further issues with the process itself. As Klas mentioned, several of the chosen indicators can be seen as ambiguous and/or hard to measure. In addition if Klas is to be believed the expertise that SIDA had regarding aid related issues in general, and country specific knowledge especially, were largely an untapped resource other than as statistical figures. This point is debatable however and could be a potential subject for further studies.

Regardless of exactly how much information constraints is to be considered a factor in the decision making process the earlier mentioned turf battles-bias implies that this was the case at least to some extent. It's safe to assume both SIDA and the MFA had clear but separate visions of how the land focus process would proceed for maximum efficiency. It's once again important to stress that this thesis does not seek to evaluate the outcome. Consequently there is nothing to say that SIDA's proposal would've fared better or worse than what was decided.

However due to the ambiguity in indicators and the quantitative approach taken, it seems plausible that information constraints combined with biases were a contributing factor to the outcome of the process. The approach chosen can in this case be said to be a consequence of the time constraints. Doing a qualitative investigation into each country's needs would simply have taken too much time. The list of countries decided upon by the parliament was not the same as the one suggested by the MFA, which would indicate that additional factors outside of the chosen indicators were just as important. As to those factors, Sara and especially Peter give insight to what those factors might be: economical and/or (possible future) trade. So in addition to the actual needs of aid to a country, the importance of a relation with certain countries also was of significance. This is a significant realization which most definitely wasn't described or even alluded to in official documents regarding Swedish aid in general and the land focus in particular.

4.3   The rational actor model

Combining what Sara, Peter and Klas is saying about the process of the land focus reveals an expected result; when it comes to decisions, the RAM has a strong theoretical point, but its assumptions are simply not realistic. While both Sara and Peter agree that the process was open for critique and alternative formulations of the problem at hand, meaning what the RAM calls options, these were (for reasons unbeknownst) dismissed. This can be said being a consequence of the "locking on one alternative"-bias; the goal was already set, the alternatives presented were simply ways to reach the already decided solution instead of being solutions in themselves. In relation to this Peter adds that had they listened to every credible actor who had something to say in regards to each country, the process would never have finished.

In this regard it's interesting to note that all actors involved in the process had been having internal or external discussions regarding the need for a land focus. As an example of an alternative solution of the land focus, SIDA's proposal of doing a region based land focus comes to mind.

Previously, all countries giving aid had been doing so by identifying a need, investigating possible solutions and finally allocating resources. However there was no communication between states making sure another country wasn't doing the same thing. This leads us back to a game theory scenario;

Decision	Country 2: Give Aid	Country 2: Don't give aid
Country 1: Give aid	Efficiency loss	Project starts
Country 1: Don't give aid	Project starts	No help given

The preferred outcome is of course that either of the countries gives aid, and the other country doesn't. However since there previously was no communication between aid donors it was pure serendipity if this was the outcome. Most often this meant that aid donors were working on projects designed to solve similar if not the same problem. The land focus process, combined with other multilateral agreements like the Paris declaration, was mainly an attempt to solve this problem. That is, the problem of individual rationality – which RAM is based on – leading to sub-optimal collective rationality.

5 Summary

This thesis has through the use of foreign policy decision making theories and the rational actor model shown that the decision to lessen the number of countries Sweden gives aid to was fundamentally flawed in a few, but key, ways.

Firstly, the land focus process can be seen as a way of bypassing the challenge presented by game theory to the RAM. While the land focus together with the Paris declaration and the subsequent Accra agenda for action will not completely solve these problems, they are a promising start. Making aid more effective is crucial, both for receiving countries as well as giving countries.

Moreover the thesis has highlighted the need of multilevel analysis in the study of foreign policy decision making. Focusing too much on one actor would not have been sufficient to understand what factors were important; there is a case to make for each level being essential. All actors studied, regardless of level, had a key role in making the land focus occur. At the same time, each level has no single actor who unanimously can be credited for making the process transpire.

Thirdly, in hindsight the flaws of the land focus process are apparent. Even the aid minister herself has later admitted that the quantitative goal set was a mistake, implying that additional solutions should've been looked at. The focus on statistical data, albeit perhaps necessary to complete the process within' the time constraints, introduced ambiguity into the process. The historical power disparity between SIDA and the MFA introduced unnecessary friction into the process.

Finally the final selection of countries were not only based upon the actual needs found. That's not to say that the countries with needs didn't get all the aid they would have, had the process only focused on needs of aid. The list proposed by the MFA was expanded to include countries which didn't need aid as much, but were deemed to be important to have relations with, mainly out of economic reasons.

In conclusion, the need of aid was a guiding principle in the decision making process which precluded the land focus. Whether the needs were sufficiently evaluated remains a topic of debate to this date. That said it was not the only factor considered in the process, as Sweden's interests – mainly economic and trade related – were just as important.

6 References

6.1 Interviews

Interviews with Sara and Peter at the MFA (pseudonyms to protect anonymity)
Interview with Klas at SIDA (pseudonym to protect anonymity)

6.2 Books and articles

Esaiasson, Peter (2012). *Metodpraktikan: konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad*. 4., [rev.] uppl. Stockholm: Norstedts juridik

Hermann, Charles F. (red.) (2012). *When things go wrong: foreign policy decision making under adverse feedback*. New York: Routledge

Kvale, Steinar (1997). *Den kvalitativa forskningsintervjun*. Lund: Studentlitteratur

Mintz, Alex & DeRouen, Karl R. (2010). *Understanding foreign policy decision making*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Sage, Andrew Patrick (red.) (1990). *Concise encyclopedia of information processing in systems & organizations*. 1. ed. Oxford: Pergamon Press

Teorell, Jan & Svensson, Torsten (2007). *Att fråga och att svara: samhällsvetenskaplig metod*. 1. uppl. Stockholm: Liber

6.3 Electronic resources

Blühdorn, Ingolf (2006). Democracy, Efficiency, Futurity: Contested Objectives of Societal Reform. in Blühdorn, Ingolf & Uwe, Jan (2007). *Economic Efficiency – Democratic Empowerment. Contested Modernisation in Britain and Germany*. Web. 9 May. 2012. Available: http://people.bath.ac.uk/mlsib/public%20access/Democracy,%20Efficiency,%20Futurity.pdf

Carlsson, Gunilla (2007). Den nya utvecklingspolitiken. *Dagens Nyheter*. Web. 8 May. 2012. Available: http://regeringen.se/sb/d/8582/a/86576

Doeser, Fredrik (2011). Domestic politics and foreign policy change in small states : The fall of the Danish 'footnote policy. *Cooperation and Conflict*. June 2011; vol. 46, 2: pp. 222-241. Web. 20 May. 2012. Available: http://lu.summon.serialssolutions.com/link/0/eLvHCXMwQ5wuASsPEJ031K

l3LGWCkRnopFpj8O6yiFAjH0fzUBdLH6QC302UQcvNNcTZQxdyrmd8Ae
RMhnjQKckumWGO8flF6fHFGfHAWt_ClI_F4sPZX5t9H8x9eHwrC5vvAw
ChqzLt and/or http://cac.sagepub.com/content/46/2/222.full.pdf+html

Hökerberg, Josefine (2009). Björklund vill ge omdömen från förskolenivå.
Dagens Nyheter. Web. 28 Apr. 2012. Available:
http://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/bjorklund-vill-ge-omdomen-fran-
forskoleniva

Kesgin, Baris (2010). "Foreign Policy Analysis." in *21st Century Political
Science: A Reference Handbook*. Ed. John T. Ishiyama and Marijke Breuning.
Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2010. 336-44. SAGE Reference Online. Web. 28
Apr. 2012. Available:
http://xu2la7ud9l.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx_ver=Z39.88-
2004&ctx_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-
8&rfr_id=info:sid/summon.serialssolutions.com&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev
:mtx:bookitem&rft.title=21st+Century+Political+Science%3A+A+Reference+
Handbook&rft.atitle=Foreign+Policy+Analysis&rft.date=2011-01-
01&rft.pub=Sage+Publications&rft.isbn=9781412969017&rft.externalDocID
=9928191 and/or http://sage-
ereference.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/view/21stcenturypolisci/n40.xml

Nordström, Anders (2009). Starkt svenskt stöd för biståndet. *Svenska Dagbladet.*
Web. 15 May. 2012. Available: http://www.svd.se/opinion/brannpunkt/starkt-
svenskt-stod-for-bistandet_3063237.svd

Marteleur, Maria (2012). Björklunds drömskola: Betyg i fyran. *Expressen.* Web.
28 Apr. 2012. Available: http://www.expressen.se/nyheter/bjorklunds-drom--
skola-betyg-i-fyran

Moderaterna (2008). *Vår tids arbetarparti. Handlingsprogram för nya
moderaterna.* Web. 20 May. 2012. Available:
http://www.moderat.se/MediaBinaryLoader.axd?MediaArchive_FileID=b657
e40e-671f-4dd2-9e28-e53242cb44b8&MediaArchive_ForceDownload=True

Munhall, Patricia L (2008). "Perception." in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative
Research Methods.* Ed. . Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2008. 607-08. *SAGE
Reference Online*. Web. 9 May. 2012. Available: http://sage-
ereference.com/view/research/n314.xml?rskey=NBHBmM&result=1&q=perc
eptions and/or http://xu2la7ud9l.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx_ver=Z39.88-
2004&ctx_enc=info%3Aofi%2Fenc%3AUTF-
8&rfr_id=info:sid/summon.serialssolutions.com&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev
:mtx:bookitem&rft.title=The+SAGE+Encyclopedia+of+Qualitative+Research
+Methods&rft.atitle=Perception&rft.date=2008-01-
01&rft.pub=Sage+Publications%2C+Inc&rft.isbn=9781412941631&rft.volum
e=2&rft.spage=606&rft.epage=607&rft.externalDocID=3073600322

OECD (2008). *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda
for Action.* Web. 15 May. 2012. Available:
http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/30/63/43911948.pdf

OECD (2009). *Sweden (2009) DAC Peer Review - Main Findings and
Recommendations*. Web. 16 May. 2012. Available:
http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/37/43278517.pdf

Regeringen (1988). *Regeringens proposition 1987/88:100 med förslag till statsbudget för budgetåret 1988/89*. Proposition. 15 May. 2012. Available: http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Forslag/Propositioner-och-skrivelser/med-forslag-till-statsbudget-f_GB03100/?text=true

Utrikesdepartementet (2003). *Gemensamt ansvar: Sveriges politik för global utveckling*. Web. 17 May. 2012. Available: http://www.regeringen.se/download/874fe3e0.pdf?major=1&minor=773&cn=attachmentPublDuplicator_0_attachment

Utrikesdepartementet (2007A). *Den nya utvecklingspolitiken*. Web. 8 May. 2012. Available: http://regeringen.se/sb/d/9381/a/86586

Utrikesdepartementet (2007B). *Ett fokuserat bilateralt utvecklingssamarbete*. Web. 16 May. 2012. Available: http://regeringen.se/download/2c37d9ae.pdf?major=1&minor=101186&cn=attachmentDuplicator_0_attachment

Utrikesdepartementet (2008). *Sveriges politik för global utveckling*. Writing (skrivelse). Stockholm, Utrikesdepartementet. 15 May. 2012. Available: http://www.regeringen.se/download/03480187.pdf?major=1&minor=101082&cn=attachmentPublDuplicator_0_attachment

Appendix A

- History at the department/ministery

- Decision making
  - In general, from where does the request to investigate most often originate? Who's the most common actor to raise issues?
  - Factors that may influence? (personal opinion, group/peer pressure, international factors?)
  - How are materials that serve as a base for decision making prepared?
    - Single individuals or groups?
    - Communication with eventually affected departments?
    - Influence factors during the process?
  - How is the decision making process ensured to be factual and free from bias? Is the necessary knowledge always available with the people handling issues? How are conventional wisdoms discouraged?

- The nation focus
  - Type of decision – had the process been ongoing for a longer time or was it a hasty one?
    - Did the critique from the OECD DAC have any effect? The moderate party's party-program? The individual – Gunilla Carlsson "I don't know whether there has been another time when we've discussed the need for aid reform or need for direction in aid related issues during the tens of years before I became aid minister"
  - Gunilla Carlsson says there was a lack of focus on results before she came to her current post – is that true? And if so, does this change depend on her or other factors such as the Paris declaration?
  - Your role as an individual in the decision making process – how did you affect it?
  - Controlling of decision making – was the result, in your experience, already given at the time of the start of the decision making process?
  - How did the decision making process work generally during the process itself? Was it your experience that the process was open for new ideas?