



Magnus Schönning: Promoting Public Awareness of the UN's MDG's: the experience in Sweden

The Group of 78 – Luncheon February 15 2005

"Promoting Public Awareness of the UN's MDG's: the experience in Sweden"

Magnus Schönning, First Secretary, Embassy of Sweden

Outline of presentation

- Sweden and the MDG:s;
- The Tsunami
- Three strategies to implement the MDG:s;
- Sweden's direct support to poor countries
- International action among other rich countries
- Campaign towards the general public
- The Millennium Project
- Government Bill 2002/03:122.
- Conclusions

This presentation is not about Swedish aid in detail or MDGs in general. Information about Sweden's development policies in detail can be found at: www.sida.se, www.ud.se and www.sweden.se .

Sweden and the MDG:s

- Involved in the whole MDG-process (preparation, declaration, implementation);
- The MDG:s presupposes the political will to implement the necessary measures, in poor and rich countries alike, as well as supportive public opinion (three arenas);
- Three strategies to implement MDG:s are pursued for the three different arenas indicated above;
- Holistic approach. Government Bill 2002/03:122 "Shared responsibility – Sweden's policy for global development", was the first integrated policy for global development involving all policy areas and all Swedish ministries

The Tsunami catastrophe

"Tsunami: a word none of us will ever forget ... We probably lost more children on Boxing Day morning than on any other day in the history of Sweden." Statement of Foreign Policy February 9th 2005

The natural disaster has underlined two important things:

- 1). Global threats and challenges affect us all and need to be tackled with global efforts.
- 2). The great engagement and generosity people all over the world has shown in the wake of the disaster stresses that the public is prepared to, or more accurately - demands, that the broad spectrum of development issues encompassed in MDG are properly addressed.

Swedish emergency relief aid:

- 1). Government spending SEK 500 million
- 2). Voluntary contribution by the public SEK 1000 million (appr. 175 MCAD)

However, these contributions will not affect the stated Swedish ODA level.

Three strategies

- Bilateral/multilateral support to developing countries' own efforts to reach MDG:s
- Support/encourage international action among the developed countries, in accordance with MDG:s
- Public campaign for sustainable and fair global development (domestically and internationally)

Sweden's Direct support to Poor Countries

- Sweden's ODA will in this years' budget be 0,93% of GNI (3 Billion USD, 341 USD/capita);
- ODA-level will be 1,00% of GNI in 2006 (yearly increase of 0,07 percentage points);
- 5 MUSD to trade-related technical assistance and capacity building (2003);
- More than 1 BUSD dollar to debt relief and economical reform (so far);
- Sweden contributes with 20% of the amount demanded by the UN, for creating a Tsunami warning system in the Indian Ocean.

International actions – Sweden

- Pushing the Goal 8 further, and is one of the first wealthy countries to report;

- Supports the creation of an international framework for reporting. Sweden has been discussing this matter within the OECD/DAC, and has also pushed the issue within the EU (the EU will now report);
- Establishing a task force on Global Public Goods (with France), major financial and intellectual support over the next five years;
- Acting strongly within the EU to reduce agricultural subsidies.
- The Swedish Government has taken the decision to contribute SEK 70 million to a newly established IMF fund to subsidise loans to poor countries affected by natural disasters. (February 10th 2005)

International actions – Nordics I

- Officially declared/manifested on 24 October 2003 (the UN-day) by the five Nordic Ministers responsible for development co-operation;
- Strive forward in harmonisation of development assistance procedures;
- Encourage EU countries to reach ODA equivalent to 0.39% of GNI (as promised in Monterey);
- Encourage more EU countries and other OECD countries to reach the UN's 0.7% target;
- Work, together with developing countries, within the EU, WTO and the global trade negotiations to ensure larger market access for products from developing countries.

International actions – Nordics II

- Contribute to a sustainable debt situation for the most indebted countries;
- Work to ensure that developed countries report fulfilment of the MDG:s, particularly goal eight;
- Support an international framework for reporting on goal eight (Nordics intends to be among the first);
- Continue to support, initiate and present proposals, within the UN and other international bodies, aiming at achievement of the MDG:s

Campaign directed toward the general public

- Importance of development education. Has been a Swedish priority for a long time (contributed to high public support for development policies);
- Postcards and ads in newspapers and other media (show campaign material);
- "Världens chans!" dual significance in Swedish;
- It means both "The chance of a lifetime!" (official slogan in English), and "The chance for the World"
- Goals are:
 - mobilise general public through increased awareness and co-operation,
 - inspire, and be a good example for, other developed countries;

- Joint effort by Sida, MFA, UNDP in Sweden and the Swedish UN Association.
- Co-operates with campaigns in other countries (esp. the Nordics) and the UN.

Millennium Project – I

- 2005 is a crucial year. In September a summit will be held where the world leaders will discuss the continued implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.'
- The Millennium Project, headed by Jeffrey Sachs, is one of two reports, the other one being the Report of High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, feeding into the summit in September.
- Sweden welcomes and support the key recommendations of the Millennium Project. Most of them are well in line with Sweden's policy for global development; shared responsibility between developed/developing countries, a coherent policy, holistic approach, visions beyond 2015, development created by people not government, long-term commitment etc.

Millennium Project – II

- Two recommendations in the report, in line with Swedish policy, that especially needs to be highlighted:
 - Rural development; including market accessibility
 - Women's and girls' rights; gender equality, sexual and reproductive rights

And the message that the MDGs are possible to reach!

- Weak points in the report:
 - Must not limit our focus to 2015. We must have perspective that extends beyond 2015, and ensure that our measures are sustainable over the course of time.
 - When it comes to the idea of focusing on a limited number of so-called fast-track countries it is important that countries which do not meet the

criteria do not be subject to a second hand treatment, quite the contrary, these countries need special attention.

- More emphasis on sustainable development and environmental issues.

Bill 2002/03:122, I

- Process of the origins of the Bill (parliamentarian committee, Globkom which coincided in time with Millennium-process);
 - Built on and inspired by the Millennium Declaration and the MDG:s;
 - "Shared responsibility – Sweden's policy for global development"
 - endorsed by the Swedish Parliament on 23 May 2003;
-
- first report on the Bill will be presented to the Parliament in the autumn 2004, all Ministries participates in the report;
 - Goal is "to contribute to an equitable and sustainable global development"
 - Keywords

- responsibilities (by developing AND developed countries alike)

- supportive (of poor people's own efforts) complement (to countries own efforts and actions in other areas)

Bill 2002/03:122, II

- Integrated policy for global development;

A rights perspective; all humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights, democracy and human rights reinforce each other, gender equality, rights of the Child

- Encompasses all areas of policy;

Emphasising trade and investments, security and defence, social welfare and public health, and environment

- Coherence strengthens Sweden's international efforts;

Increased co-operation and co-ordination with other countries, within the UN and the EU, with civil society, with private sector and trade unions

Bill 2002/03:122, III

- Increased efficiency:
 - fewer sectors and areas;
 - donor co-operation and co-ordination;
 - harmonisation of procedures and routines;
 - untying ODA.
- Management and learning:
 - independent evaluation
 - annual report to the Parliament
- Citizens' Forum

Conclusion - Case of Sweden

Three strategies

- support
- encourage
- educate/inform

Three arenas

- developing countries
- developed countries
- general public

Bill 2002/03:122, "Shared responsibilities..." (substance)

- integrated (rights-based)
- all-encompassing (all policy areas)
- coherent (co-ordinated, internally and internationally)

Bill 2002/03:122, (function)

- increased efficiency
- follow up/evaluation

General conclusion

- There is a crucial role to play for wealthy countries!
- A real and successful fulfilment of the MDG:s is built on:
 - shared responsibility (all involved)
 - coherence (between different policy areas)
 - co-operation (with developing countries);
 - co-ordination (with other developed countries);
 - education (of general public);
 - allocation (of adequate resources).
- Quote from page 33 in "We the peoples...2004":

"One of the MD:s directly concerns rich countries, i.e. Goal 8 on enhancing global partnerships for development. Among other things, this means that the global volume of IDC allocations must increase, that market access for poor countries must improve, and that a sustainable debt situation must be achieved for the LDCs"
- Halving poverty by 2015 – it can be done!