Sweden’s agriculture ODA

Agriculture is not a top funding priority; focus on women and links to food security are increasing

Agriculture and rural development are not among the key priorities of Swedish official development assistance (ODA). ODA to the sector amounted to US$230 million in 2016 (latest year for which complete data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is available), or 5% of Sweden’s total ODA. This is less than the 7% average among member countries of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Within the 2016 Aid Policy Framework, agriculture is part of the broader theme of ‘international trade and sustainable investments’ and focuses on small-scale agriculture. It pays particular attention to women, and links agriculture to food security and economic development, as well as to health. There is no dedicated strategy for agriculture; the most-relevant policy documents include the ‘Strategy for sustainable economic development’, and the ‘Strategy for sustainable environment and climate change’.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, focuses on promoting small-scale farming, e.g., by improving equal access to natural resources, investing in infrastructure, improving knowledge about markets, and reforming laws to increase income and employment. Against the backdrop of Sweden’s feminist foreign policy, introduced in 2015, Sida focuses on women, and on strengthening their financial independence through agriculture.

Sweden channeled 47% of its agriculture and rural development ODA through core contributions to multilateral organizations in 2016 (US$108 million, up from US$99 million in 2015). The largest recipient was the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA), through which Sweden channeled 17% of its total agriculture ODA. Other key recipients of agriculture ODA include the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD; 12%), European Institutions (10%), and the African Development Fund (AfDF; 5%). Increases in Sweden’s multilateral contributions for agriculture are due to a US$28 million disbursements to IFAD. In parallel, support to the Global Environment Facility is increasing, and Sweden pledged SEK2 billion (US$234 million) for 2018 to 2022. Parts of this funding will be used for sustainable forest and land management.

Bilateral ODA to agriculture and rural development went from US$97 million in 2015 to US$154 million in 2017. This corresponds to 4% of the country’s total bilateral ODA. 37% of bilateral funding to agriculture went to agricultural development. Other focus areas included rural development (17%), agricultural research (13%), and forestry policy and administrative management (8%).

The ‘economic and sustainable development’ unit takes the lead on programming within Sida

Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the United Nations (UN) Policy Department, the Global Agenda Departments, and the Department for International Development and Cooperation are the main departments that focus on agriculture. The third of these departments coordinates the development of strategy for Sida, including on agriculture-related topics. Within Sida, besides the geographic departments in charge of country-specific programming, the most relevant unit is Economic and Sustainable Development Unit in the Department for International Organizations and Policy Support.
SWEDEN'S ODA TO AGRICULTURE
US$ millions

RECIPIENTS OF SWEDEN'S AGRICULTURE ODA, 2016
Total: US$230 million

OECD CRS and imputed multilateral contributions to the agriculture sector. DAC secretariat estimates. In 2017 prices.