

# A transparency guarantee in Swedish development assistance

**On 1 January 2010, a transparency guarantee was introduced into Swedish development assistance. The guarantee means that all public documents and public information will be made available online. The information must explain when, to whom and why money has been made available, and what results have been achieved.**

## **Why a transparency guarantee?**

Sweden is a leading aid donor with a long tradition of openness. Democracy and human rights are a priority in Swedish development cooperation and in Swedish foreign policy in general. Sweden therefore has particular reason to meet the requirements for transparency that have recently gained attention in international development cooperation.

The promotion of a transparency guarantee in Swedish development cooperation derives from the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), both highlighting the importance of transparency and accountability. Along with other donors, Sweden has in this context undertaken to increase transparency in development assistance. These commitments take concrete form in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), which Sweden and many other donors have signed.

Openness and transparency are fundamental prerequisites for democratic accountability. The Swedish Government therefore emphasises the importance of transparency and access to information about the central government administration, which is also laid down in Government Bill 2009/10:175 on Public administration for democracy, participation and growth.

Today's digitised world makes it possible to apply the principle of public access to official documents so that information is made available not only upon request. Within Swedish aid administration, all information not subject to secrecy will be made available online. Within development

cooperation, information and communication technology tools will be used to enhance openness and transparency in aid administration.

## **What are the objectives?**

More accessible information on aid is expected to

- provide a better basis for planning, governance, decisions and priorities
- enhance the visibility of development assistance results
- strengthen conditions for accountability at multiple levels
- limit the scope for corruption, duplication and misuse of resources.

In brief, more accessible information will contribute to increased effectiveness and predictability in development cooperation.

## **What does the transparency guarantee mean in practice?**

- The Swedish aid administration will share information generously.
- Aid information subject to the principle of public access to official documents will be made available online in an open format.
- The idea is to make it possible to follow the whole chain of aid information, from overall decisions to implementation and monitoring.
- Tax revenue used for development cooperation will be traceable.
- Sweden will encourage other development actors and partners, including multilateral organisations and civil society organisations, to increase transparency.
- In the long term, aid information will be made available in each partner country and will, when possible, be published in both Swedish and English.



REGERINGSKANSLIET

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## Summary of the transparency guarantee

1. The transparency guarantee applies to all public actors who have been allocated funds under expenditure area 7 (International development cooperation). These are primarily the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida, but may also include other government agencies. Since 1 January 2010, these actors – together known as ‘the aid administration’ – are required to make available all public documents and all public information relating to development assistance.

2. The information includes all documents and data from a chain leading from decisions on the direction and distribution of aid, via decisions, payments and implementation of specific projects to monitoring of projects also at an aggregated level. The aid administration will account for when, to whom and for what purpose money has been paid, based on which decision-making information, which conditions and with which results.

3. The information will be made available for as many users as possible, for as many purposes as possible. The information will be available to all, free of charge and without licensing or registration requirements. The information will be searchable and structured so as to make data processing possible. The information will be published without delay.

### *Useful links*

Paris Declaration  
[www.aidharmonization.org](http://www.aidharmonization.org)

Accra Agenda for Action  
[www.accrahlfn.net](http://www.accrahlfn.net)

IATI (International Aid Transparency Initiative)  
[www.aidtransparency.net](http://www.aidtransparency.net)

Access Info  
[www.access-info.org](http://www.access-info.org)

AidData  
[www.aiddata.org](http://www.aiddata.org)

aidinfo  
[www.aidinfo.org](http://www.aidinfo.org)

Publish What You Fund  
[www.publishwhatyoufund.org](http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org)

OpenUSAID  
[www.openusaid.ideascale.com](http://www.openusaid.ideascale.com)

DFID Project Information  
[www.projects.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.projects.dfid.gov.uk)

Open aid  
[www.sweden.gov.se/openaid](http://www.sweden.gov.se/openaid)

