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Evaluation of the Development Cooperation between Norway and Nicaragua

Final Report
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Preface

This report has been prepared by the team selected by the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, for the evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation with Nicaragua.

The team consisted of Ms. Myrna Moncada, Social Scientist, Nicaragua, Ms. Martha Zamora, Social Scientist, Nicaragua, Ms. Vibecke Kubberud, Social Scientist, Norway and Jens Claussen, Economist, Norway (team leader). In addition Mr. Jean Paul Daudelin, Political Scientist, Canada, Mr. Sven Nilsson, Agriculture Economist/Environmental Specialist and Mr. Stener Ekern, Anthropologist/Human Rights Specialist, acted as resource persons to the core team.

The team has enjoyed professional support from the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs providing the initial overview of the strategy and cooperation by giving access to background information and providing a comprehensive brief of the cooperation. They have provided professional assistance to us throughout this exercise. By interviews of the various executives in both the Ministry and NORAD we gained additional briefs and background to our work. From NORAD we were accorded professional assistance to identify core documentation and were provided a complete database of all aid disbursements to Nicaragua.

The NGOs in Norway assisted us in gaining an overview of their project portfolios and by their generous cooperation they have enabled us to widen the perspective concerning aid to Nicaragua.

Last, but not least, the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Managua, the focal point for this wide and varied cooperation, provided us excellent support both in terms of logistics, background information and professional feedback to our discussions and presentations. Despite their exhaustive schedule to monitor the cooperation, they reserved time and resources enabling us to implement our task of gaining an overview of the project portfolio and perform additional interviews with the numerous project holders in Nicaragua. Their professional services has been highly appreciated by all team members.

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List of abbreviations

ABB	Asea Brown Boveri
ADDAC	Asociación para la Diversificación y Desarrollo Agrícola Comunal (Nicaraguan NGO)
APC	Asociación de Promotores de la Cultura (Nicaraguan NGO)
ASCAN	Asociación de Cantautores Nicaragüenses (Nicaraguan NGO)
BANADES	Banco Nacional de Desarrollo (national Development Bank)
CARUNA	Caja Rural Nacional (Nicaraguan National Rural Bank)
CATIE	Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza
CDC	Centro de Derechos Constitucionales (Nicaraguan NGO)
CENIDH	Centro Nicaragüense de Derechos Humanos (Nicaraguan NGO)
CEPAD	Consejo de Iglesias Evangélicas Pro Alianza Demoninacional (Nicaraguan NGO)
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest
CICO	Community Childhood Development Centres
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIEETS	Centro Inter Eclesial de Estudios Teológicos y Sociales (Nicaraguan NGO)
CIPRES	Centro de Investigación para la Promoción y el Desarrollo Rural y Social (Nicaraguan NGO)
CIS	Commodity Import Support
CONAPI	Consejo Nacional de la Pequeña Industria
CS	Country Strategy
CSE	Supreme Electoral Council
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of OECD
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
EEC	European Economic Commission
ENEL	Empresa Nicaraguense de Electricidad
ENIMPORT	Empresa Nicaragüense de Importaciones
FACS	Fundación Augusto César Sandino (Nicaraguan NGO)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FIDEG	Fundación Internacional para el Desafío Económico Global (Nicaraguan NGO)

FMM	Fundación Manolo Morales (Nicaraguan NGO)
FOMIN	Multilateral Fund for Investment (IDB)
FONDERUNA	Fondo de Desarrollo Rural Nacional
FONMUNIC	Fondo de la Música Nicaragüense (Nicaraguan NGO)
FVG	Fundación Víctimas de Guerra (Nicaraguan NGO)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
IDA	International Development Agency (World Bank)
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDR	Instituto de Desarrollo Rural
IFS	Intermediary Financial Credit
INEC	The Nicaraguan Energy Institute
INIM	Instituto Nicaragüense de la Mujer
INTA	Instituto Nicaragüense de Tecnología Agropecuaria
IS	Import Support
MAGF	Ministry of Agriculture, Cattle and Forestry
MINGOB	Ministerio de Gobernación
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid (Norwegian NGO)
NDF	Norwegian Development Fund (Norwegian NGO)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NOK	Norwegian Kroner
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPA	Norwegian Peoples Aid (Norwegian NGO)
NVS	Norwegian Volunteer Service
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAMIC	Programa de Apoyo a la Micro Empresa
PNDR	Programa Nacional de Desarrollo Rural

RB	Redd Barna (Save the Children, Norway - Norwegian NGO)
SAIH	The Students' and Academics' International Aid Fund (Norwegian NGO)
SFNV	Selskapet for Norges Vel (Norwegian NGO)
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SOYNICA	Asociación Soya de Nicaragua (Nicaraguan NGO)
UNAG	Unión Nacional de Productores Agropecuarios (Nicaraguan Farmers' Association)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USD	United States Dollars
WB	The World Bank

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objectives of the evaluation

This report presents the findings and conclusions from an evaluation of the Norwegian Development Cooperation with Nicaragua during 1994 to 1997. The main objectives of the evaluation were:

- to make an assessment of the outcome of Norwegian development cooperation with Nicaragua during 1994 to 1997,
- to assess to what extent the agreed strategy for cooperation with Nicaragua has been implemented, and
- to assess to what extent the strategy has been conducive in giving guidance and served as a management tool for the cooperation.

Methodology

The evaluation was divided into three phases:

- Phase I included data collection, study of documents and interviews with key departments of the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NORAD and NGOs in Norway. The output was presented in an inception report.
- Phase II was implemented by a visit to Nicaragua during 7 - 24 September 1998. During the visit a number of interviews with core institutions involved in aid coordination and major stakeholders to core programmes and projects receiving support were conducted.
- Phase III has been implemented in Norway with emphasis on data analysis and follow-up interviews with core persons in the Norwegian aid administration and Norwegian NGOs.

During 1994-97 Norway provided support to some 230 projects through some 15 public sector institutions, 23 Norwegian NGOs and some 80 Nicaraguan NGOs. From the total portfolio of projects, the main projects and recipient institutions within each sector were selected for a more in-depth assessment. In total their support accounted for some 93 percent of total Norwegian development assistance during the years subject to our evaluation.

The approaches adopted and the methodology selected are based on the Mandate's emphasis on this evaluation being conducted mainly as a *desk study*. The assessment of the cooperation was to a large extent based on project progress reports, and reviews and evaluations already conducted. It has been outside the scope of this evaluation to make separate evaluations of impact of the individual projects and programmes.

In our assessments we have distinguished between what has been *external reviews and evaluations* (not influenced by the project holders) and *internal progress reporting and reviews* (with participation and/or guidance by project holders).

The procedure and quality of project reviews and evaluations vary considerably. At the one end co-financing projects appear to be subject to external reviews and evaluations as part of a regular procedure for project monitoring and evaluation while at the other end, projects by Norwegian NGOs seem rarely to be subject to external reviews or evaluation by the Norwegian aid administration. This issue has been important to consider in the assessment of the output and impact from the cooperation.

The Country Strategy

Norway introduced a *proposed strategy* for cooperation to Nicaragua in July 1993 by a Memorandum. The strategy was later agreed upon in policy consultations in Nicaragua in August 1993. It is the framework for cooperation as expressed in the *agreed minutes* from these consultations which is considered the *strategy* in our evaluation.

The overall long term objective of the cooperation according to the strategy is to contribute to a sustainable development of society, i.e. to strengthen the capacity and ability to fulfil the basic needs of the population. Based on this main objective, the following four specific objectives were agreed upon:

- Strengthen human rights and democratic development
- Increased production within selected sectors
- More ecologically sustainable management of natural resources
- Strengthen Nicaragua's human resources

In accordance with the main goals and guiding principles of Norwegian development cooperation in general, due attention should be paid to the following aspects:

- focus on the poor segments of the population;
- special emphasis on improving the situation for women and integrating the gender perspective into the cooperation programmes;
- institutional development and competence building in partner institutions;
- gradual implementation of the principle of recipient responsibility, based upon the administrative capacity of the recipient;
- ecological and financial sustainability.

Government institutions were to be the main channels for country programme cooperation. However, on the basis of the current situation within the different sectors and the on-going transformation of the role of the public sector in Nicaragua, other forms of cooperation supported by the country programme would also be considered, either NGOs or multilateral organisations. However, *all assistance should be coordinated* according to the strategy.

Main findings

Outcome of the cooperation

During the period subject to our review, aid inflows to Nicaragua have increased significantly both in terms of volume of aid and number of donors. In per capita terms Nicaragua has become the largest recipient of aid among Norwegian partner countries. Norway's share of overall assistance to Nicaragua declined from some 9 percent up to 1990 to some 3 percent during 1994-96. Accordingly, from a macro perspective, an assessment of the assistance from a comparatively small donor like Norway must take the totality of aid inflows into account.

Using macro indicators the following observation can be made:

- The real per capita growth rate of the economy and changes in social indicators do not conform with a high level of impact of donor assistance, thus aid efficiency appears to be low from a macro perspective. A major share of the population

continue to live in poverty (some 50 percent of the population) with low income and limited access to basic social services.

There is no clear consensus as to the causes of this observation. Some claim that the aid inflow compensate for adverse impact of Government policies; i.e. poverty would even be more widespread without donor targeted interventions. Others claim that aid efficiency is low due to relatively high inflow of aid compared to the absorptive capacity of the country; i.e. volume of aid is too high for all the aid to be effectively utilised. Some studies indicate that the high level of aid creates a number of distortions in the domestic market. It is claimed to have adverse impact by creating aid dependent employment and income generating activities substituting mobilisation of domestic resources for long run sustainable growth and social development.

From a micro perspective the following constitutes our major findings concerning the Norwegian development cooperation;

- Some 51 percent of total aid have supported projects which with a high degree of certainty can be claimed to have produced adequate output with potentially high impact. In addition to debt relief, it includes the bilateral projects in support for democratic development and respect for human rights, the support to the petroleum sector as well as support in the form of co-financing in the health sector.
- Some of the main projects supporting agriculture, natural resource management, enterprise development, health and social welfare have partially achieved their goals, but questions may be raised to issues like cost effectiveness and outreach to the target group. In total these projects account for some 9 percent of total Norwegian aid.
- A number of project interventions, most prominently by NGOs cannot be assessed to any degree of certainty (no external review or evaluation), however, based on their own assessments most projects are claimed to be well performing, producing intended outputs with potentially high impact. In total these projects have received some 20 percent of total Norwegian aid.
- Some projects have been implemented without any visible impact (like the hydro power study) or

may be considered to have had an adverse impact (like a major share of the import support). Altogether these projects account for some 10 percent of total disbursements.

- Some projects, accounting for some 6 percent of disbursements, are in the initial stages of implementation with no major outputs produced and subsequently no assessment of impact can be made. Finally, some projects have not been subject to any systematic monitoring of performance by the project holders and accordingly no assessment could be made. These projects have received some 4 percent of total aid.

The above may suggest that of the total aid contribution some 80 percent has been provided to projects which fully or partially have met the objectives (with the main contribution in the form of debt relief). For some of this portfolio questions may be raised to cost efficiency, outreach and sustainability and for some the finding is based on the assessment by the project holders themselves (internal reviews and evaluations).

The above observations of difference in performance at the micro level compared to performance at the macro level is a phenomenon observed in many donor dependent countries. Various studies of aid effectiveness indicate that even if aid may be successful at project level, their contributions to economic and social development in the long run will depend on a conducive policy and institutional framework in the country concerned. Furthermore, impact of project output on economic and social indicators may not become visible before the outcome of the projects have been fully absorbed in the years following project completion. Thus the above observations of Norwegian aid at project level may show real impact only in the years to come. Finally, Norway is only one small donor among many donors. With limited coordination of aid flows to Nicaragua, it may be that individual donor supported projects show adequate performance, however the previously mentioned low aid effectiveness may be due to duplication of efforts among donors and limited absorptive capacity by Nicaragua to effectively utilise the contributions from the numerous projects supported.

In relation to main strategy objectives, Norway has made a significant contribution to strengthening human rights and democratic development using the findings at the micro level. Furthermore, it has provided important contributions to promote production

in selected sectors, although questions may be raised concerning outreach, cost effectiveness and sustainability. However, the main contribution has been to debt relief which did not feature as one of the main areas of priority in the strategy.

Implementation of the strategy

The cooperation implemented has shown an overall programme to a large extent targeting the poorer segments of society and the cooperation has overall been poverty focused. The strategy also emphasised the need to specifically consider the institutional capacity of recipient institutions in planning and executing projects. The strategy also emphasised the need to address cross cutting issues like gender and environment. The actual implementation of the cooperation suggests that the above considerations have been taken into account.

In terms of sector allocations support to agriculture and other areas to support employment generation has gradually increased its share of development assistance. In terms of increased priority to human rights and democratic development it has been significant in financial terms up to 1996. The number of projects supported has also increased significantly during 1994 to 1997. In financial terms, however, it has not remained a major area of cooperation after 1996.

In terms of other strategy guidelines, the following observations have been made:

- The major shift in the profile of cooperation has been the large debt relief operations, gradually on account of import support. These two forms of balance of payments support have received some 36 percent of total Norwegian aid. Project targeted aid has not increased as called for in the strategy.
- Health and social welfare have been and continue to be the main sectors of support despite that these sectors are not given any specific priority in the strategy.
- The energy sector; petroleum and hydro power sub-sectors, were indicated as other areas of support. In the former case it has been implemented, in the latter case the focus has been on power distribution while the study to examine hydro power potential has not been subject to any follow-up (no visible impact).

The major weakness in the implementation of the strategy is related to lack of coordination. Norway has directly and indirectly supported sectors, institutions, NGOs and projects through country program allocations, special allocations, multilateral cooperation, Norwegian NGOs and Nicaraguan NGOs. In many cases the support provided through different modes of cooperation have reached the same organisation and beneficiaries, but monitored as individual projects without taking the totality of the support into consideration.

During the period subject to our evaluation there has been an increasing number of donors and volume of aid "competing" for projects in the public sector with weak capacity to design and implement new projects. In a political environment where the Government has difficulty in securing necessary backing from the national assembly and with a policy to contain public expenditure at a low level, new Government interventions will take a long time before they are approved and implemented. Subsequently, Norway has been in a position of "supply push" rather than "demand driven" cooperation throughout the period. The above may serve as some of the main explanations for the deviations between strategy guidelines and actual cooperation implemented.

The strategy as a tool in development cooperation

Our assessment of the strategy as a tool to guide the cooperation has been assessed from different perspectives; the need for a tool in guiding overall cooperation, the content (design) of the strategy and actual implementation.

The evaluation has shown that the strategy has provided guidance at the *policy level* to translate overall policies for Norwegian aid into policies and priorities concerning cooperation with Nicaragua (areas and sectors of priority). However, it has also shown that there is a need for guidance in how to respond to changes in Government policies and priorities, especially in a country where changes of Governments creates a significant change in the policy and institutional environment. A strategy of cooperation agreed upon with one Government in Nicaragua (in 1993) may not

necessarily reflect the priorities of a new Government (in 1996).

The strategy has been instrumental in focusing aid on some sectors and areas of priority. The assessment of actual implementation, however, has shown that the aid has been spread thinly among numerous Government and NGO projects. This may be explained by the fact that the strategy has been too broad in terms of which sectors and areas to give priority. Interventions in the form of sudden change of priorities in Norwegian aid policies have reduced the value of the strategy as guidance since it did not consider what sectors to be substituted to ensure sector concentration.

The evaluation has also shown that there is a need to more effectively coordinate all Norwegian aid to Nicaragua to avoid duplication of efforts (low efficiency) and to ensure a consistent approach in aid utilisation. The strategy could have served as an important tool in this respect, but it has not been widely shared by the Norwegian development administration, in particular concerning support to Norwegian NGOs.

Although the strategy has been conducive in focusing aid on some sectors, it has been too detailed in terms of what projects to be supported and how. In this respect it should have been limited to the scope of giving guidance at *policy level*, and not aimed at also being a detailed *management tool* for implementation. Decisions concerning which projects, what mode of cooperation and allocations to use in the aid budget are the subjects for annual management plans and the annual bilateral consultations.

When considering the above, the evaluation shows that there is a need for a tool (strategy) guiding first and foremost *the Norwegian aid administration*. This "tool" should focus on the *policy level* translating Norwegian aid policy objectives into some priority areas or sectors where Norway as *one donor among many* may concentrate its aid effort. The actual implementation within these areas and sectors should be guided by operational procedures for development cooperation, like the annual management plans and consultations as well as through the continued dialogue between Norway and Nicaragua.

2. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This report presents the findings and conclusions from an evaluation of the Norwegian Development Cooperation with Nicaragua during 1994 to 1997. The mandate for the evaluation is provided in annex I.

The main objectives of the evaluation are considered to be the following:

- to make an assessment of the total Norwegian development cooperation with Nicaragua during 1994 to 1997
- to assess to what extent the agreed strategy for cooperation with Nicaragua has been implemented
- to assess to what extent the strategy has been conducive in giving guidance and served as a management tool for the cooperation

The above have been translated into the following tasks:

- A study of the profile and content of the development cooperation between Nicaragua and Norway during 1994 - 97 compared to the strategy objectives and guidelines.

The task has been implemented by an analysis of the portfolio of programmes and projects supported through country programme allocations, regional allocations, support through and to NGOs, the Norwegian Volunteer Service, financial schemes in support of commercial cooperation, special allocations for environment, women, human rights, and other allocations.

- A study of changes in policies both by Nicaragua, Norway and other donors and their possible impact on the profile and content of the development cooperation, which may serve to describe any deviations from the agreed strategy.

This task was implemented by assessing political and economic developments of Nicaragua and its possible impact on the direction and content of the development cooperation. It included an assessment of activities by other donors and development finance institutions which may have had an impact on the development cooperation. Finally, it included an assessment of Norwegian policy decisions and an

assessment of joint decisions taken in the programme consultations between Nicaragua and Norway as well as through the continued dialogue between the two parties.

- Study of individual projects and programmes supported to assess to what extent the goals set by the strategy have been achieved.

This task was based on project reviews and evaluations of various sector programmes and projects supplemented by interviews with the main project/programme promoters in Nicaragua and Norway. It has been outside the scope of this evaluation to make separate evaluations of impact of the individual projects and programmes (both due to time frame and resources). Accordingly, the assessment of actual performance of programmes and projects has been based on project progress reports, reviews and evaluation reports available.

The evaluation was divided into three phases:

- Phase I included data collection, study of documents and interviews with key departments of the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NORAD and NGOs in Norway. The output was presented in an inception report, which provided an outline of the areas in need of follow-up and focus for the field visit to Nicaragua. During this phase background documents and data was collected and screened for follow-up under phase II.
- Phase II was implemented by a visit to Nicaragua during 7 - 24 September 1998. During the visit a number of interviews with core institutions involved in aid coordination and major stakeholders to core programmes and projects receiving support was conducted. Interviews with other institutions which could provide input to the analysis of political, economic and social developments were conducted. In addition, the team reviewed documents provided by Embassy staff and institutions visited, both regarding projects and programmes supported as well as statistics and information connected with the country's political and economic history and present situation.
- Phase III has been implemented in Norway with emphasis on data analysis and follow-up interviews with core persons in the Norwegian aid administration and Norwegian NGOs. The first

output from this phase was a draft final report. This final report has been produced following the comments and feedback from the presentation to the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The approaches adopted and the methodology selected are based on the Mandate's emphasis on this evaluation being conducted mainly as a *desk study*.

In assessing the performance of the cooperation we have conducted a review of the main areas, sectors, projects and programmes. During 1994-97 Norway has provided support to some 230 projects through some 15 public sector institutions, 23 Norwegian NGOs and some 80 Nicaraguan NGOs.¹ From the total portfolio of projects, the largest projects and recipient institutions within each sector were selected for a more in-depth assessment. In total their support accounted for some 93 percent of total Norwegian development assistance during the years subject to our evaluation. A detailed presentation of these assessments is made in annex II, while annex III provides an overview of the total disbursements to projects and NGOs.

In our assessments we have distinguished between what may be termed *external reviews and evaluations* (not influenced by the project holders) and *internal progress reporting and reviews* (with participation and/or guidance by project holders).

The procedure and quality of project reviews and evaluations vary considerably. At the one end, projects co-financed with multilateral organisations appear to be subject to external reviews and evaluations as part of a regular procedure for project monitoring and evaluation. At the other end, projects by Norwegian NGOs seem to be rarely subject to external reviews or evaluation by the Norwegian aid administration. In the latter case, the basis for monitoring of performance appears to be the internal reporting by the NGO itself. The above are important to consider when making an assessment of the performance of the total cooperation and will be addressed when presenting our assessment of the individual programs and projects.

The proposed strategy was introduced by Norway to Nicaragua in July 1993 by a Memorandum² and later agreed upon in policy consultations in Nicaragua in

August 1993³. Although a more elaborated and final version of the strategy has been produced in Norwegian it is the *Agreed Minutes* from the above mentioned consultations that is considered the *Country Strategy* in this evaluation.

An overview of the total cooperation has been based on analysis of a database provided by NORAD covering all disbursements to programmes and projects from Norway during 1994-97⁴. In addition analysis of the disbursements during 1991-93 has been made to compare actual changes in the profile of cooperation after the strategy was approved.

It should be noted that the classifications of projects/disbursements in this database both in terms of sectors and priority objectives (environment, gender, etc.) is not always consistent. In some cases the classification of may be questioned (e.g. the World Bank supported health sector project as well as some NGO supported social welfare projects were classified as direct interventions to support improved management of natural resources). In other cases the definition of projects deviated substantially from the project definitions by the project promoters (e.g. for a number of NGOs the definitions and classifications of projects in the database did not conform with the records of the NGOs). However, with supplementary interviews and review of documents, we were able to adjust the classifications and definitions of the projects.

When assessing changes in the profile and content of the cooperation to be associated with the agreed strategy, it is important to keep in mind that the process of identifying, formulating, appraising and subsequently approving and implementing new projects and programmes is a *time consuming exercise*. With the limited public sector capacity and with the time consuming procedures involved both on the recipient and the donor side for project submissions, screening and approvals, it may take some one to two years (sometimes even more) before new projects are implemented and materialise as disbursements. The same observation can be made concerning projects to be

1. The support to Norwegian Church Aid disbursing funds as untied budget support to two Nicaraguan NGOs has been counted as two projects although the NGOs themselves executes several hundred projects.

2. *Memorandum on the Strategy for Development Cooperation between Nicaragua and Norway*, Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 1993.

3. *Agreed Minutes from Policy Consultations on the Strategy for Development Cooperation between Nicaragua and Norway*, Managua, 2 August 1993.

4. The database from NORAD contains some 1125 project entries for the total Development cooperation between Norway and Nicaragua. It has classified project disbursements by sector, form of cooperation, source of the aid budget as well as other classification categories.

phased. Accordingly, the profile of cooperation may not have undergone major changes before 1996-97.

Finally, when considering possible observed changes it should be kept in mind that the strategy also to a large extent reflects changes already under implementation prior to its approval. Commodity import support was being downsized, support for industrial fisheries about to be phased out, a new programme for the Norwegian Volunteer Service had already been approved,

and Norway was already supporting interventions in the energy sector and in agriculture. Debt relief was already high on the agenda due to the exceptionally weak capital account of the balance of payments for Nicaragua.

For these areas the strategy did not represent new priorities to be implemented, but rather confirmed priorities already under implementation.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 THE COUNTRY FRAMEWORK

An assessment of the Norwegian development cooperation with Nicaragua needs to take into account the political, institutional and economic environment in the country. However, there is no clear consensus of the development of this environment in Nicaragua during the time subject for our evaluation.

Official economic and social indicators are by some considered to reflect only part of the picture or not at all. The indicators are claimed to underestimate the large and growing informal sector as well as a "parallel" economy of transactions between Nicaragua and foreign countries. Different household surveys and surveys of living conditions indicate different levels and volume of poverty. These different "images" of developments in Nicaragua must be reviewed in light of a specific historic and political development; Nicaragua remains a country with strong political differences and where political consensus is not the order of the day. Some claim that the political history in the Nicaraguan setting shows that the "winner takes it all" with not much playroom or empowerment for others.

The following may serve to illustrate two different "images" of Nicaragua from analysts trying to describe a political economy which has undergone a significant transition during the last two decades⁵:

"Nicaragua is best known not for its landscape or cultural treasures, but for the 1979 Sandinista revolution and subsequent Contra war, in which the country rose up in hope only to be let down by US interference. The Sandinistas are no longer in power and the prevailing economic ideology, dictated by the likes of the World Bank and the IMF, involves massive privatisation and deregulation. This high-speed 'structural adjustment' has reduced inflation, provided ready cash for the business elite, and left much of the rest of the country unemployed or in a state of shock. The good news is that throughout this period, human rights have largely been respected and the country's battles are now confined to the political arena."

"Over the last eight years, Nicaragua has witnessed a very significant transformation: From a nation torn by

war, with its economy plunged into chaos, it has re-emerged as an inclusive democracy where the foundations for economic growth and sustainable development are being laid. Notwithstanding this progress, Nicaragua still remains among the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, with half of its population living in poverty. For the nation's recovery to be fully accomplished, it is essential that the economic and social reforms put in place during the last years move forward swiftly."

Despite the above differences in observations, it remains a fact that Nicaragua has been submitted to some kind of structural adjustment since 1988. Over the last ten years, its governments have tried to limit the fiscal deficit, to control government expenditures, to contain inflation and to encourage private investments, both domestic and foreign. These adjustments have been increasingly comprehensive and ambitious, increasingly effective, and increasingly tightly guided by multilateral institutions and donor countries.

One can distinguish three phases in the process:

- From 1988 to 1990, government efforts were limited and mostly ineffective because of the remaining effects of the civil war.
- From 1990 to 1996, under the government of Violetta Barrios de Chamorro, an IMF-designed structural adjustment package was devised, but aside from severe cuts in public administration, subsidies and government services, most of its efforts to liberalise the economy and create a sound investment environment lacked the support of the National Assembly. Under this Government donor cooperation was invited without any strict guidance in terms of priorities (all foreign aid was welcomed).
- After the first six months of the administration of Arnoldo Aleman, in 1997, the executive established the legal framework needed to fully implement the adjustment. The even tighter monetary and fiscal policy has had an impact on donor assistance in the sense that Government counterpart funding cannot be provided to all donor interventions as before, and subsequently some donor projects are phased out or implemented outside the Government budget (off budget expenditures).

The key changes in the last years lie not so much in the specific policies adopted, but in the weakening of the state capacity to implement any kind of policy.

5. The analysis have been collected from Government sources as well as research institutes in Nicaragua with a political bias to the opposition.

Core issues for development cooperation in this setting remains in our view the following:

- Nicaragua is among the poorest countries in the region and has a severe poverty problem in terms of share of population (World Bank claiming 50 percent, some other institutions claiming 75 percent⁶). Some 19 percent are claimed to live in absolute poverty, i.e. their consumption basket is too low to sustain any acceptable social and economic life. Even though various institutions disagree on outreach of poverty, whatever level it is, even the most optimistic estimates clearly indicates that there is an agenda for any Government to allocate significant resources for poverty alleviation. Thus rather than entering into any lengthy discussion of what is the exact level of poverty, there is a clear need to address poverty as an issue and specifically in the rural areas (which all agree have the most severe incidence of poverty and the least resources to deal with it).
- Even if economic indicators underestimate real growth and social indicators overestimate the actual situation, the large and increasing inflow of aid to the tune of 44 percent of official GDP shows that aid efficiency is low. The real growth

6. Nicaragua - Poverty Assessment, World Bank 1995. FIDEG Household survey and price index.

Table 3.1 *Per capita total official development assistance and share of official GDP for main partner countries for Norwegian aid (country average 1994-96)*⁷

	ODA per capita (in USD)	ODA as percent of GDP
Nicaragua	168	44 %
Mozambique	67	84 %
Tanzania	31	26 %
Bangladesh	12	5 %

As the above table indicates Mozambique has a higher "dependency" level measured as share of GDP, however Nicaragua is by far the country receiving most aid per capita. In per capita terms Nicaragua is thus the most aid dependent partner in Norwegian development cooperation, however it has also the highest GDP per capita. Accordingly, from an external financing point of view Nicaragua should have less need for aid in financing project interventions compared to other Norwegian partner countries.

7. Source: "Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries", OECD/DAC, various issues.

rate of GDP and changes in social indicators do not conform with a high level of impact of donor assistance unless it can be explained by a lag of at least five years before aid supported interventions will show a positive impact at macro level. The opposition to the current policies however, claim that aid contributes to alleviation of the *adverse* impact of policies.

- Finally, as previously indicated, Nicaragua's political setting still remains fragile and there is a long way to go in achieving consensus for a road ahead to development. The political backing and capacity to coordinate the large inflow of aid still remains weak.

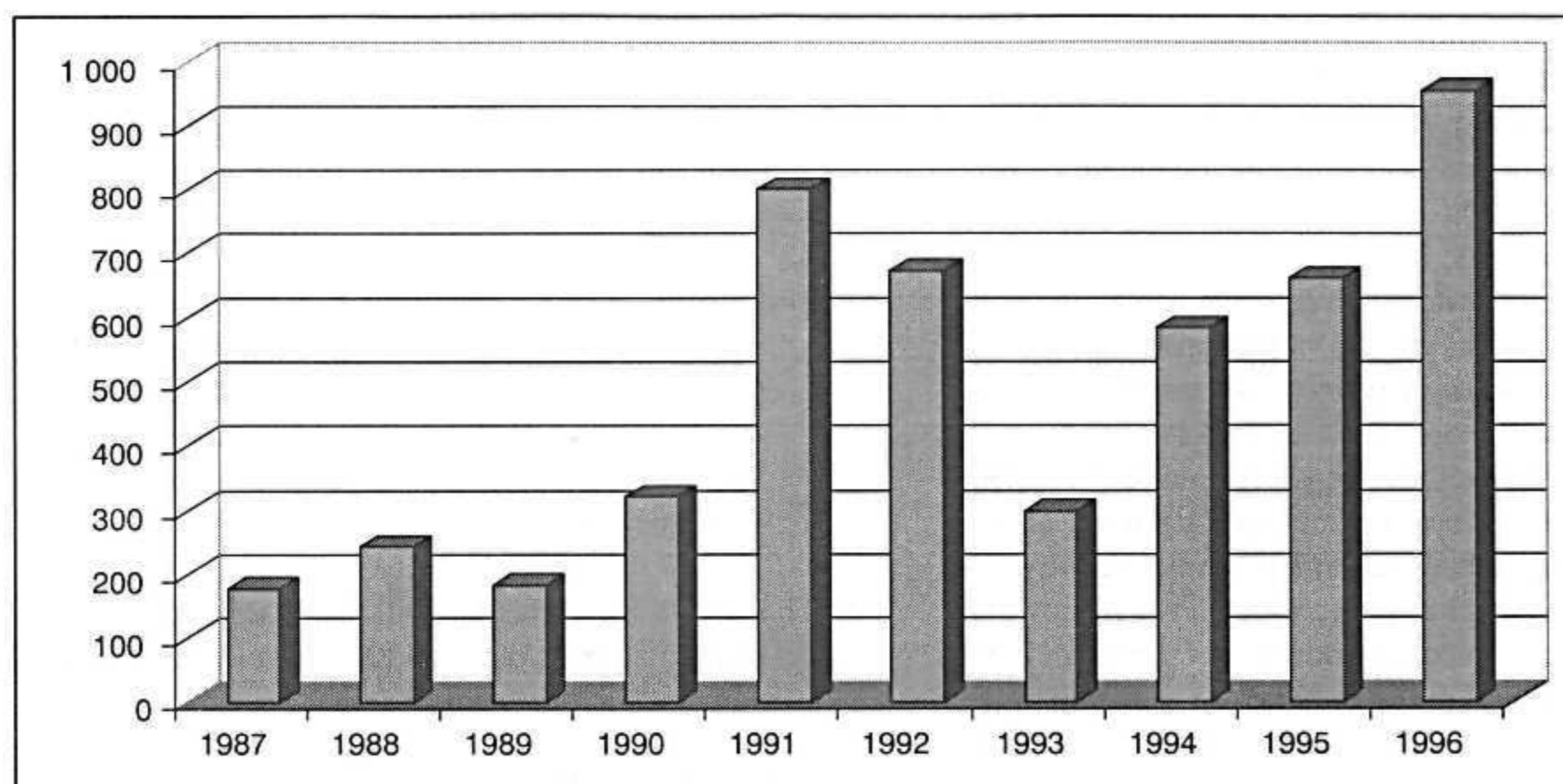
The above observations will be discussed in more detail in relation to our overall assessment of the Norwegian development cooperation.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Nicaragua is receiving a high level of donor aid measured as share of GDP as well as per capita compared to some of the other main partner countries for Norwegian aid. In table 3.1 we have shown the average net disbursements of official development assistance to some of the main recipient countries of Norwegian aid.

Prior to 1990 the total assistance evolved around 200 mill. USD per year while from 1990/91 total ODA flows to Nicaragua made a significant increase with 1996 as the latest recorded peak at some 950 mill. USD (ref. figure 3.1). In 1993 a sharp fall in ODA disbursements were recorded due to the political unrest and consequently lack of progress in implementing agreed policy reforms.

Figure 3.1 Total net Official Development Assistance to Nicaragua 1987-1996
(in million USD)⁸



The total Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Nicaragua made a significant upturn following the elections in 1990 mainly due to the lift of sanctions by the United States against the previous Sandinista government. Since 1993 the total assistance has increased partly due to increase in the multilateral assistance and partly by the entry of new bilateral sources of aid. The multilateral assistance from the World Bank and IDB increased in the form of adjustment operations backing a new stabilisation and structural adjustment programme launched by the Chamorro Government. From bilateral sources, countries like Germany, Italy and Japan have gradually increased their overall contributions.

If we compare the sources of development assistance to Nicaragua through the three periods 1987-89, 1990-93 and 1994-96 the following picture emerges (ref. table 3.2):

During 1987-89 approximately 75 percent of total ODA was provided by bilateral sources. The Nordic countries were the major sources of funding accounting for some 43 percent. Following the elections in 1990 total aid flows increased significantly with USA as the new major source of funding. The contributions from the Nordic countries as share of total ODA fell to some 21 percent during 1990-93 even though the USD value remained almost the same as during the previous period.

From 1994 to 1996 Germany, Japan, IDB and Italy have been the main sources of funding accounting for some 57 percent of total ODA while the Nordic countries' share has been further reduced to some 13 percent. Accordingly, the significance of Nordic and *Norwegian aid* to Nicaragua has not been reduced measured in USD value but as a share of total ODA with the increase of other bilateral and multilateral aid.

8. Source: "Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries", OECD/DAC, various issues.

Table 3.2 Share of total Official Development Assistance (percent distribution)⁹

Year 1987-89	Percent	Year 1990-93	Percent	Year 1994-96	Percent
Sweden	22	United States	34	Germany	27
Netherlands	14	Sweden	9	IDB	10
EEC	10	Germany	9	Japan	8
Norway	9	IDA	7	IDA	6
Finland	7	Japan	7	Italy	6
IDB	5	Norway	5	United States	5
Denmark	5	IDB	5	Netherlands	5
UNHCR	4	EEC	5	Sweden	5
Italy	4	Netherlands	4	EEC	4
Germany	4	Denmark	4	Denmark	4
Canada	3	Finland	3	Spain	4
Switzerland	3	Canada	2	Norway	3

In terms of sector allocations there are limitations in reliable sources of information. The Government has been unable to capture all donor assistance through the public sector in its annual budgets. The statistics produced underestimate significantly the actual donor disbursements.

In table 3.3 below, donor assistance to *Government programmes and projects* are presented. The sector allocation does not deviate substantially from what has been previously presented even though it only includes *Government interventions* (not the private sector and NGOs). As the table indicate, a major share of aid to the Government has been provided as balance of payments support both before and during the period sub-

ject for our evaluation, (in the former years as import support, in the latter as debt relief).

Donor disbursements to Nicaragua recorded by OECD¹⁰ deviates substantially from donor disbursements recorded in the balance of payments¹¹ with the former some 40-50 percent higher than the latter. The aid inflow recorded in the public expenditure is less both due to the fact that large inflows of aid are channelled through NGOs, some of the aid is provided in kind (goods and services procured directly by the donor like technical assistance) and, finally, some aid flows are not recorded or underestimated.

10. Based on donor country reporting.

11. Based on recorded transfers by the Central Bank of Nicaragua.

9. Source: "Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries", OECD/DAC various issues.

Table 3.3 External aid by sector in public expenditure

Sector	1991-93	1994-96
Programme aid (debt relief and untied import support)	52	33
Health and Social Welfare ¹	11	16
Industry ²	8	8
Agriculture ³	10	7
Transport and communications	3	7
Energy	1	5
Water and sanitation	4	5
Other	12	19
Total	100	100

1. In the table, support for the electoral process, human rights etc. are labelled under health and social welfare.

2. Includes import support/commodity assistance tied to an importer, eg. the Norwegian Import Support.

3. Includes import support/commodity assistance tied to an importer, eg. the Norwegian Import Support.

An exercise funded by the Dutch embassy in 1996/97 (covering some 26 official bilateral and international donors) showed that donors disbursed a total ODA of 567 million USD to 548 projects. The sector allocation of this aid shows a high concentration to some specific sectors; health and social welfare (not including education), agriculture, and human rights/democratic development.

The significant increase of development assistance since 1990 from a number of new donors in the same sectors and the limited capacity by Nicaragua to identify and implement new projects and programmes, explains why many donors faced a situation where high level of disbursements could only be accommodated by quick disbursing balance of payments support

(import support and/or debt relief). The above may serve to explain why donors are facing a high level of "competition for projects" and why NGO assistance has been and continues to be a major channel for development aid.

The above may serve to explain the limited ability by the Government of Nicaragua to identify new projects within the priority areas of the agreed *strategy with Norway*. Not only did the Government have limited capacity, but the donor demand for projects was also increasing with new donors to a large extent supporting projects in the same sectors. The continued request by the Government to shift donor support for debt relief and balance of payments rather than project tied aid, may support the latter assumption.

4. NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

4.1 OVERVIEW OF COOPERATION

Norwegian development cooperation with Nicaragua started after the 1979 revolution. The assistance was initially channelled through non-governmental organisations (NGOs), but from 1984 Norway has also channelled its assistance within the framework of government-to-government cooperation ("Country Programme"). The latter kind of support was initially limited to a consultancy fund, commodity assistance, and to multi-bilateral aid¹².

In 1986/87¹³ Norwegian Government officially gave Nicaragua status as a main partner country, and in 1988 Nicaragua was given status as a Programme Country. During this time Norway established a representative office of NORAD in Managua to coordinate and monitor the development cooperation. The Norwegian Volunteer Service was established in Nicaragua in 1987, and sector agreements for the two main sectors, agriculture and fisheries, were signed in 1989.

From 1988 the long term objectives for Norwegian development cooperation with Nicaragua were to contribute to a social and democratic development and strengthen the development towards real pluralism and a just distribution in economic and social terms. This was to a large degree based on the current political situation in Nicaragua and the region. Especially important were the dramatic conditions during the Sandinista period with a Civil War and the transformation of the economic policy in 1988.

From 1988 throughout 1992 the Country Programme was dominated by commodity assistance and import support. *The commodity assistance* was targeted to finance specific imports of essential commodities in priority sectors. The bulk of the assistance was provided for imports to agriculture and fisheries; such as fertilizers and fishing-tackles. *The import support* was given as support to the import of crude oil in 1990 and in 1992.

Dramatic changes continued to appear in Nicaragua, and in 1990 there was a change of government, which introduced a different development policy, especially concerning the role of the state, and with relative

peace in the country for the first time in more than ten years.

These changes were reflected in the goals for Norwegian aid to Nicaragua in the country programme that covered the period 1992-94; "The main goal for Norwegian aid to Nicaragua is to contribute to a rapid transformation of the economy, in order to achieve economic growth within the framework of sustainable development. A reduction of the negative social impact of the transformation will be emphasised."

4.2 THE COUNTRY STRATEGY 1994 - 97

The new Country Strategy was developed in 1992/93. The process of developing the strategy was based on a mandate prepared by the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway. The Mandate gave directions concerning which sectors and issues that should specifically be subject to review as possible areas of future cooperation. These were:

- Sustainable economic development with emphasis on employment generation and equal distribution of wealth.
- Health and population issues.
- Environment and natural resource management.
- Democratic development.
- Possibility for implementing the principle of the recipient's responsibility.

Based on this Mandate a team from the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, prepared and submitted a draft *Country Strategy* for internal review and consideration by the Ministry in late 1992. Some adjustments and modifications to the draft Country Strategy were made internally in the Ministry, and a *Memorandum* on the strategy for development cooperation between Nicaragua and Norway was produced and presented to Nicaraguan authorities in July 1993. The *Agreed Minutes* from the policy consultations in Managua, 2 August 1993 are based on the Memorandum. Finally, a new Norwegian version of the Country Strategy based on the *Agreed Minutes* was produced in October 1993.

12. Multi-bilateral means aid channelled through project agreements with multilateral development institutions.

13. St.meld. (White Paper) nr. 34 (1986/87).

Given that a greater degree of macro economic stability had been achieved in Nicaragua, while the economic and social conditions of large segments of the population remained extremely difficult, it was considered important to provide direct support to activities aimed at specific target groups. The cooperation was therefore to be reoriented towards a larger degree of project- and sector programme support.

It is also emphasised that some of the problems Norway had experienced in the implementation of projects, as well as in the implementation of the recipients' responsibility, were partly due to Nicaragua's weak administrative capacity. Thus, in addition to gradually transmitting the responsibility to the recipient country, support for competence and institution building should be included in all programmes and projects as this would help to improve the ability of the recipient organisations to plan and implement specific development activities.

The overall long term objective of the cooperation according to the strategy is to contribute to a sustainable development of society, i.e. to strengthen the capacity and ability to fulfil the basic needs of the population. Based on this main objective, the following four specific objectives were agreed upon:

- Strengthen human rights and democratic development
- Increased production within selected sectors
- More ecologically sustainable management of natural resources
- Strengthen Nicaragua's human resources

In accordance with the main goals and guiding principles of Norwegian development cooperation in general, due attention should be paid to the following aspects in the operationalisation of the objectives:

- focus on the poor segments of the population;
- special emphasis on improving the situation for women and integrating the gender perspective into the cooperation programmes;
- institutional development and competence building in partner institutions;

- gradual implementation of the principle of recipient responsibility, based upon the administrative capacity of the recipient;
- ecological and financial sustainability.

Government institutions were to be the main channels for country programme cooperation. However, on the basis of the current situation within the different sectors and the on-going transformation of the role of the public sector in Nicaragua, alternative channels for implementation of cooperation activities within the country programme would also be considered, either NGOs or multilateral organisations. However, *all assistance should be coordinated* according to the guidelines given in the Country Strategy.

An outline of the priority sectors and areas is presented under the channel through which the allocations would be directed.

From 1994 on, according to the new strategy, the following areas should be given *priority within the country programme*:

- Strengthening of the democratic development and respect for human rights - Considering the importance accorded to this field of cooperation, regular discussions should be held on the specific activities to be supported. Support to the Supreme Electoral Council and other institutions working with promotion of democratic attitudes are mentioned as possible areas of cooperation. Further, training activities, strengthening of the juridical system, special activities aimed at solving the land tenure problem, promotion of women's and children's legal rights, and conflict resolution between employees and employers could represent possible areas.
- Agriculture - The cooperation should concentrate on activities directed towards small-scale peasants producing basic crops, and the programme should promote an ecologically sustainable use of resources. Subject to a favourable security situation a geographical concentration of the cooperation to region I, V and VI (i.e. Estelí, Jinotega and Matagalpa) was proposed.
- Natural resources management - The cooperation in this area was suggested to include a prolongation of the support for research on fish and shellfish, including an extension of the programme to

the Pacific Coast. Institutional strengthening was also emphasised. Furthermore, components related to natural resources management and environmental issues should be included in the programmes within the agricultural and industrial sectors.

As to other areas of cooperation within the country programme, priority was suggested given to the following:

- Small-scale enterprises - Support to small scale industry was considered as an important contribution to increase employment and income generation, and agriculture-based industry was considered important to meet a high demand for agricultural products. Further, the cooperation could also include support for credit to small-scale fisheries.
- Petroleum sector - A continuation of the cooperation regarding upgrading of data marketing of the potential for petroleum resources was proposed.
- Family education programmes - Nicaragua and Norway would discuss further alternatives for the continuation of activities that Norway had supported through the UNFPA.

According to the strategy, *subject to available financial resources* support could also be considered for:

- Hydro-electric power - Limited support to planning and construction of hydro power plants, preferably in the form of co-financing with other donors could be considered.
- Commodity assistance/import support were to be limited mainly to sectors where Norway already was involved in other cooperation activities. A satisfactory system for payment of counterpart funds was set as a prerequisite.

According to the Country Strategy, support to *NGOs* should continue, based on specific objectives of development cooperation between Nicaragua and Norway. Allocations channelled through NGOs had mainly been utilised within the social sectors up to 1994. It was emphasised that *coordination between NGO assistance and other parts of the cooperation programme should be improved.*

According to the Country Strategy, the cooperation through *multilateral organisations* should continue. Such cooperation could to a limited extent be included in the country programme, but should primarily be covered by the allocation for multi-bilateral cooperation. The multi-bilateral cooperation was to *a larger extent to be coordinated* with the rest of the cooperation programme.

The agreement concerning the *Norwegian Volunteer Service* was signed in 1987. Norwegian volunteers were involved in various sectors, such as small scale industry, fishery, agriculture, vocational training, and in the social sector. In the Country Strategy it was suggested that as soon as some experience had been gained from the new volunteer service programme, the possibility of improving the coordination between this programme and other parts of the overall cooperation programme should be considered.

It is emphasised in the Country Strategy that attempts should be made to make active use of Norwegian expertise in efforts to promote economic growth. Small-scale industry and the energy sector was considered to be particularly relevant to *commercial cooperation* with the Norwegian business community.

The special allocations for *environment, culture, women oriented activities, and the prevention of AIDS*, were suggested to continue to play an important role in the cooperation, and the use of these allocations were to be adapted to the objectives and guidelines of the overall strategy. The use of the special allocations were to be coordinated with the Country Programme and with the use of the NGO allocation.

Nicaragua would also be eligible for support from *other allocations*, such as the allocations for refugee aid and human rights, the research allocation, the fellowship programme, and the regional allocation for Central America.

Finally, Nicaragua would continue to be considered for *debt relief*.

The major changes which were introduced by the strategy was within the framework of the Country Programme (i.e. government-to-government cooperation). Project and sector programme cooperation were to be expanded on the account of commodity assistance and import support, and the support to industrial fisheries was to be phased out. In addition, support to the strengthening of Human Rights and Democracy devel-

opment was to be established within the framework of government to government cooperation.

The strategy gives limited guidance as to how the priorities and principles are to be implemented. It is not mentioned whether some of the cross cutting issues are to be considered as individual projects and programmes or only to be components reflected in priority sectors. Human resource development e.g. can be an integrated component of an agriculture sector programme but also allow for a project supporting technical training and support to projects in the education sector. Nor does the strategy specify any quantitative targets to monitor implementation e.g. a major share of funding allocated for specific sectors, projects and/or forms of aid.

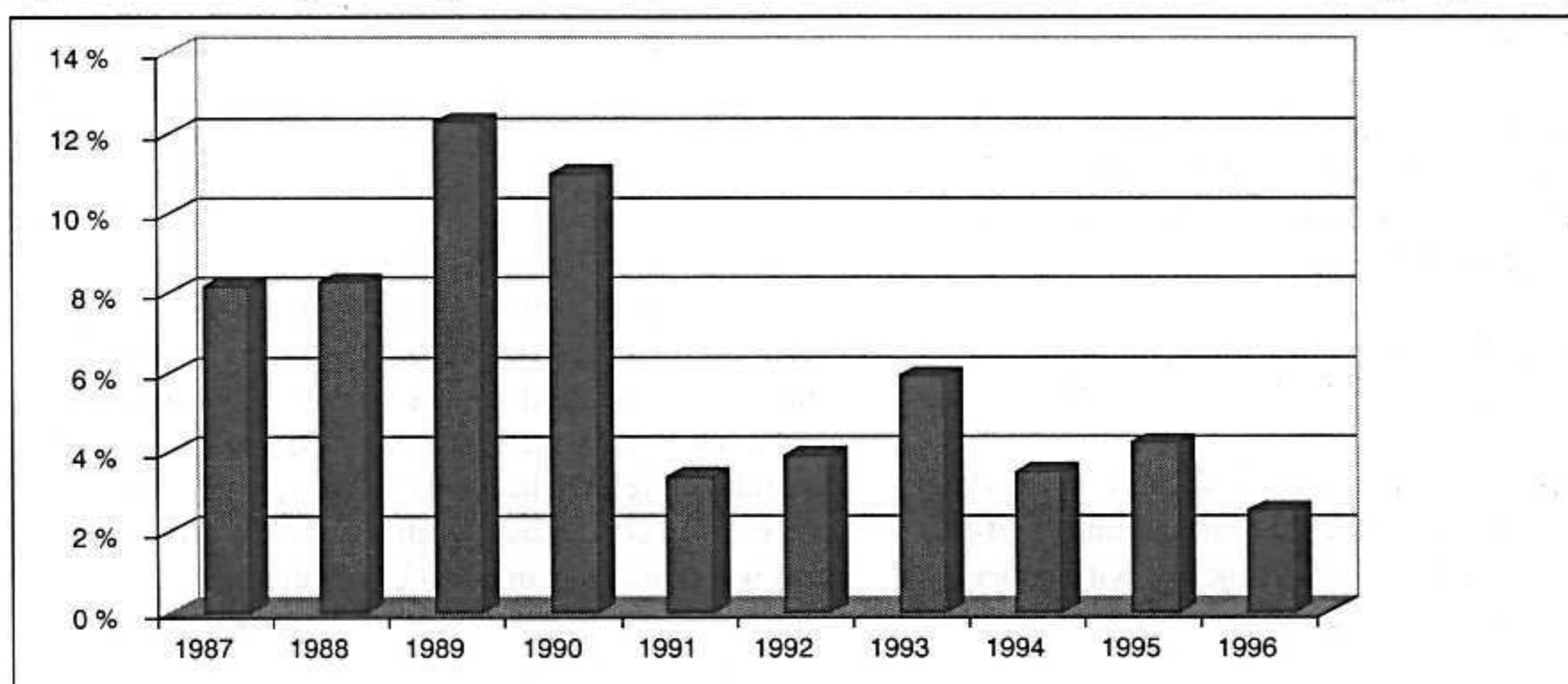
When taking all the priorities and guidelines expressed in the strategy together and adding the forms of coop-

eration and possible other areas of support mentioned, one interpretation may suggest that few projects and sectors fall outside the scope of the strategy (other than sectors like industrial fisheries, transport and basic education).

4.3 NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION 94 - 97

Norwegian Development assistance has been relatively constant in financial terms fluctuating between 17 and 35 million USD since 1987 with highest level recorded in 1990. However, during the implementation of the strategy 1994 - 97 the Norwegian *share* of bilateral as well as total ODA has, as previously mentioned, *declined* due to the increase in total ODA flows from multilateral as well as bilateral sources (figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Norwegian net Official Development Assistance as share of total ODA to Nicaragua (percent)¹⁴



While Norwegian aid contributed some 8 - 11 percent of total ODA up to 1991, the increase in other donor inflows reduced the share of Norwegian development contributions to 3 - 5 percent of total development assistance from 1991.

The strategy called for a shift towards support to projects and sector programmes¹⁵. As can be observed in table 4.1, Norwegian support to sector programmes and projects (project tied aid) as share of total assistance did not make a significant increase during the

first period of the strategy. The major change in the composition of Norwegian aid was mainly due to a shift from import support to debt relief.

15. In OECD/DAC terms programme aid means untied budget support to the Government usually with associated policy conditions (like various forms of balance of payments support or untied contribution to the budget for a sector investment program). In the Norwegian aid terminology programme aid means support to sector investment programmes consisting of interrelated projects while import support is classified separately. However, debt relief is classified by Norway as programme aid. In the table the Norwegian definition has been used.

14. Source: "Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries", OECD/DAC, various issues.

Table 4.1 Share of Norwegian ODA between various forms of assistance to Nicaragua (percent distribution)¹⁶

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	94-97
Project aid	73	59	61	63	43	69	72	62
Programme Aid (including debt relief)	13	2	8	23	48	22	28	31
Import support	14	39	31	15	9	8	-	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4.2 below may serve to illustrate composition of aid by main forms of aid i.e. the allocation between main sources of funding. However, it does not picture

sector distribution or necessarily modality of assistance.

Table 4.2 Share of Norwegian ODA by source in the Norwegian aid budget (percent of total Norwegian ODA)¹⁷

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1994-97
Country and Regional Allocation	51	55	56	43	18	38	39	34
Debt relief	-	-	-	17	45	18	26	28
Bilateral Assistance through Multi-lateral Org.	8	6	3	2	4	7	2	4
NGOs	23	24	27	26	22	25	29	25
Other allocations (special allocations, Norwegian Volunteer service, Technical assistance, etc.)	18	15	14	12	11	12	4	9

The main observations which can be made from table 4.2 are the following:

- Country and regional allocations shifted from import support to project targeted aid. However, as share of total development assistance this mode of support was reduced.
- Allocations for debt relief have become a major source of funding in the aid budget on account of commodity import support funded through regional allocations.

- The allocation for NGOs in the aid budget has continued as the other major mode of funding in addition to country and regional allocations and debt relief.

When looking at the distribution of aid between various projects/NGOs, these observations may be described in more detail. In table 4.3 the main projects have been ranked by total size of disbursement during 1994-97 (ref. the list of disbursements to projects and NGOs in Annex III).

16. Source: NORAD's database of total bilateral and multi-bilateral assistance.

17. Source: NORAD's database of total bilateral and multi-bilateral assistance. Zero values means less than 0.5 percent while - means no disbursement was made.

Table 4.3 Distribution of Norwegian ODA by main projects (mill. NOK)¹⁸

Project	94	95	96	97	Percent of total 94-97
Debt relief	25	80	28	35	28
NIC 100 Import Support	21	15	13	-	8
Save the Children Fund, Norway	8	11	9	10	6
NIC 025 Supreme Electoral Council	10	7	21	-	6
Norwegian Volunteer Service	10	9	8	5	5
Norwegian Church Aid	5	5	5	5	3
Norwegian Peoples Aid	4	4	5	5	3
CARE Norway.	4	5	5	3	3
NIC 032 Agriculture Extension Service	-	-	5	10	3
World Bank Health Sector Programme	-	7	8	-	2
NIC 040 Enel (Power Substation)	-	-	-	12	2
NIC 021 Credit Micro Enterprises	8	1	-	1	2
NIC 017 Local NGOs	4	2	4	4	2
The Development Fund, Norway.	2	2	3	3	2
Other Projects/NGOs	44	27	42	45	25
Grand Total	143	176	155	137	100

Import Support succeeded Commodity Assistance¹⁹ as the mechanism for balance of payments support from 1994. In line with the strategy recommendation import support has been gradually phased out during 1994-97. An even larger contribution was instead provided as support to multilateral debt relief operations. The debt relief operations increased the share of balance of payments support compared to project and sector programme tied aid. In total this form of assistance was the major contribution of the Norwegian aid accounting for 36 percent of total aid during 1994-97. The

other main contributions were managed by NGOs in addition to a three year project as a runner up to the 1996 elections (support to the electoral council) and the Norwegian Volunteer Service.

Table 4.3 shows that the 10 largest "recipients" (projects and/or NGOs) in terms of disbursements during 1994-97 accounted for some 67 percent of total contributions while the remaining 33 percent were distributed among some 220 projects, some larger scale projects about to be phased out but with the major share for numerous small scale interventions by Nicaraguan and Norwegian NGOs as well as through the volunteer service.

From the peak in 1994 with some 194 projects in the portfolio, the total number of projects each year²⁰ has remained more or less at the same level around 140 to

19. The use of the terms Import Support, Commodity Import Support, Balance of Payments Support etc. varies between donors agencies. In this evaluation we use the main definitions by the multilateral institutions, and as agreed upon in the OECD/DAC classification principles. Commodity Support or Commodity Import Support (CIS) means foreign exchange tied to finance the import of a specific commodity. Import Support (IS) means foreign exchange provided to the Government (the Central Bank) which it can sell to importers according to specific guidelines for their foreign exchange regime. The is not tied to any specific commodity nor an specific importer (competitive market). In this case the importers are to buy the foreign exchange with local currency generating counterpart funds to be used by the Government. Balance of payments support (BOP) is a general term covering both the above including also debt relief operations.

20. The number of projects include all projects large and small guided by separate project agreements. Debt relief is considered one project. Also the individual projects by Norwegian/international NGOs and NVS are counted, however local NGO projects are excluded. With local NGO projects included one may expect the number of projects to increase significantly.

18. Source: NORAD's database of total bilateral and multi-bilateral assistance. Zero values means less than 0.5 percent while - means no disbursement was made.

150 during 1995-97. The number of Nicaraguan NGO supported projects has been reduced however the num-

ber of projects supported by Norwegian NGOs has remained almost the same.

Table 4.4 Sector distribution of Norwegian Development Assistance 1991-97 (percent of total)²¹

Sector	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	94-97
Multi-sector or unspecified	15	10	14	28	53	27	36	39
Agriculture	21	16	22	19	7	14	18	16
Health and Social Welfare	13	17	9	10	13	22	17	16
Industry	10	34	27	12	11	10	2	9
Democratic Development/ Human Rights	7	0	0	11	7	17	6	7
Energy	7	0	6	5	1	0	8	3
Other sectors	26	23	22	15	8	10	13	10
Grand Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

When comparing table 4.3 (distribution by projects) and table 4.4 (distribution by sectors) the following picture emerges:

- Support to debt relief operations have become the largest area of support, in the table above classified as Multi-sector.
- Support to democratic development and human rights were reduced after elections in 1996. However the number of projects supported in this area has increased significantly during 1994-97 compared to the previous years.
- Support to agriculture declined as a share of Norwegian development assistance in the initial years of the strategy, however some new projects have emerged supported under the country programme. A number of projects by NGOs are also supported (most prominently by CARE, the Development Fund and SFNV). The observed decline in agriculture sector support in 1994 to 1995 is also due to the reduction of commodity import support which was previously classified as agriculture sector support (imports of fertilizers and pesticides).

- Health and Social Welfare continued to be other sectors receiving a major share of the support by co-financing larger scale multilateral projects and supporting numerous small scale projects by NGOs.
- Support to Industry continued to be a major sector up to 1996 largely due to some import support classified under a specific sector (imports of aluminium). Since 1997 only some small projects by NGOs and the NVS remains as support to the sector.
- The sudden increase in share of disbursements for public utilities are associated with one power project (ENEL substations).

The above overview has shown a cooperation implemented through numerous projects and NGOs. In addition to debt relief and import support, the cooperation has mainly focused on support to democratic development and human rights, agriculture and natural resources, health and social welfare, and energy. Although there was a reduction in number of projects from 1994 the development assistance has continued to be spread thinly among numerous smaller projects and NGOs.

21. Zero values means less than 0.5 percent while - means no disbursement was made.

5. ASSESSMENT OF COOPERATION

5.1 ASSESSMENT BY MAIN SECTORS AND AREAS

In the following the findings from assessment of performance for main projects within each sector are presented. A more detailed overview of each main project is provided in annex II (project matrix) and annex III (table of total disbursements). The tables present the total disbursements to each project and percent of total disbursements under the period subject to this evaluation. In addition, the tables include the figures for total allocations in accordance with project agreements. As these tables will indicate, except for debt relief, import support and a few other larger scale projects, Norwegian aid has been distributed thinly to numerous projects in each sector.

Balance of payments support

The term balance of payments support will in this context follow the general terms used by the international donor community. All aid has an impact on the coun-

try's balance of payments, i.e. either as transfers (grants) from abroad (improving the current account) or as long term concessional lending (change in the capital account of the balance of payments). However some of the support is provided as support for specific project interventions (project support) while some is provided as untied foreign exchange with the core objective to improve the country's foreign exchange position. It is the latter which in the following is called balance of payments support. This support may be provided as import support to improve the country's import capacity or as debt relief to reduce the debt service obligations of the country.

Norway has been providing balance of payments support in two forms, as a contribution to the multilateral debt relief operations, and as tied import support; i.e. commodity assistance (ref. table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Norwegian contribution as balance of payments support (figures in million NOK)²²

Project title	Total 94-97	Percent of total aid 94-97	Total Allocation ¹	Duration
Debt relief	168.4	28	168.4	1994-
NIC 0100 Import Support	49.2	8	392.0	1991-96

1. Total allocation means the total amount disbursed to date plus future allocations in accordance with agreements.

Nicaragua was rated as a highly indebted poor country with a debt stock of 5.5 times its GDP and a debt service ratio of 309 percent in 1993-94. After various forms of debt relief operations the current debt stock is now two times GDP and the debt service ratio some 40 percent of export revenue.

A major share of the debt relief can be associated with the 1995 buy back of some 81 percent of Nicaragua's commercial debt at a 92 percent discount (representing some 1.4 million USD), the 90 percent discount of debt to the Russian Federation (representing some 3.1 million USD), the Paris club reduction of 600 million USD and the payment of the USD 310 million of IBRD and IDB arrears, bringing the total external debt stock from some 11 billion USD to some 5.5 billion USD in 1997 with the remaining debt on more concessional terms. For Nicaragua more debt relief / debt

restructuring is still required to achieve a manageable debt service level.

According to the strategy Nicaragua would be considered for debt relief, and this mode of assistance has become the major one in financial terms accounting for some 28 percent of total development assistance to Nicaragua during 1994-97.

Even though the Norwegian contribution only accounts for some 0.5 percent of the total debt relief and some 4 percent of total relief of multilateral debt, it has played an important role as part of a joint donor effort in bringing the debt service down to a more manageable level.

The debt relief operations have provided public resources for priority areas of intervention and have promoted private investments to increase production

22. Source: NORAD's database on total bilateral aid to Nicaragua and Project Executing Agency.

capacity (improved credit and risk rating by the international community). The assessment is based on the analysis of macroeconomic performance, changes in balance of payments positions as well as public expenditure.

In Nicaragua, Norway initially provided import support in the form of commodity assistance, e.g. procurement was managed by Norway while the recipient company in Nicaragua received the goods to be paid in local currency to the Government. Given the highly subsidised exchange rate, the goods were accordingly provided with a high element of subventions. As the exchange rate regime changed and with the introduction of a crawling peg to reduce and subsequently eliminate the spread between market and official exchange rates (by 1995), so did also the subsidy element. However, the highly concessional rates applied in terms of payment of counterpart funds made import support still attractive for Nicaraguan companies.

Norway continued to provide import support tied to a specific commodity, specific beneficiaries and also sometimes tied to a specific (Norwegian) supplier. The Norwegian import support has not observed important criteria to ensure value for money, effective allocation of resources for production and public expenditures. The support has in some cases been tied to supplier (reduced value for money), tied to specific importers (contradicting policies to promote competitiveness) and in some cases counterpart funds have been tied to specific state interventions.

Rather than providing support on a reimbursable basis, support has been provided as advance payments to selected importers given concessional terms in payment of counterpart funds (subsidy to selected some times non-performing importers). Some importers under the programme faced severe financial constraints leaving the Nicaraguan procurement agency ENIMPORT with the task of auctioning the commodities to recover the counter value.

In one case the support was tied to imports of pesticides with the countervalue funds tied to a training program for pesticide management. One may ask whether import support is the best mechanism to promote pesticide management, especially on an ad hoc basis only to ensure that the contract with the Norwegian supplier can be secured, when Norway at the same time supported various projects for improved pesticide management.

According to the strategy, import support was to be phased out in favour of project targeted support. Although it was gradually phased out it continued to be a major area of assistance during the first years of the strategy accounting for some 8 percent of total disbursements during 1994-97. The commodity support should also, according to strategy, be concentrated exclusively in sectors where Norway was already involved. This has only partly been pursued in practice; Commodity assistance has been given to the industry sector, where Norway is not involved with other projects. Some commodity assistance has been given to the agriculture sector, where Norway is supporting numerous other projects.

Overall, in terms of balance of payments support, the debt relief operation supported by Norway has made a significant contribution. It has contributed to bring the debt service for Nicaragua down to a more manageable level, assisted in the creation of an environment for increased private sector investments and enabled the Government to allocate more resources to priority sectors. However, Nicaragua has still a long way to go before it has a manageable debt stock. The Norwegian modality of import support did not follow the guidelines agreed by the international donor community which have reduced the value for money and maintained internal distortions in the domestic market, sometimes even entertaining non performing state enterprises in need of substantial restructuring. It should also be noted that the import support has not been subject to any evaluation, only reviews of administrative procedures.

Support for Democratic Development and Human Rights

Support for Democratic Development and Human Rights is one of the priority areas under the agreed strategy for cooperation. The main project in financial terms has been the support to the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE). Jointly with other bilateral donors Norway provided support to the preparation of 1996 elections to assist in issuing of identity cards for electoral and civil purposes, modernisation of the Civil Register and civic education campaigns.

For INIM Legal Rights for Women, Norway has been one of the main donors providing support to the training of personnel in charge of the "Comisarías de la Mujer y la Niñez" and the technical staff in judiciary, social and police related aspects, in order to service victims of rape and domestic violence. The outputs

from the project have been a Legal Framework, five Comisaría Units operating support teams for each Comisaría, institutional strengthening of specialised services, awareness raising amongst the population and establishing a monitoring system. The INIM project began in December 1994 for a three year period. It has been subject to an external evaluation in August 1998. Norway is the largest donor, and Nor-

way's contribution has been directed to establish and keep functioning five Police Stations for women in the Departments of Matagalpa, Managua²³, and Boaco. Other donors to the same project are GTZ, Holland, UNDP, CIDA and AECI.

23. There are three Comisarias in Managua that attend to a population of 1.5 million in Managua and the surroundings.

Table 5.2 Norwegian support to democratic development and human rights (figures in million NOK)

Project title	Total 94-97	Percent of total 94-97	Total Allocation ¹	Duration
NIC025 CSE - Supreme Electoral Council	37.0	6	42.7	1989-99
NIC026 INIM Legal Rights for Women	6.0	1	10.2	94-98
Other projects	6.9	1	-	-

1. Total allocation means the total amount disbursed to date plus future allocations in accordance with agreements.

Among other projects, Norway supported a project for disarmament of ex-combatants, a public campaign for women and land reform (which could also be labelled under agriculture) as well as the elections for the regions at the Atlantic coast. In addition to the above, Norway has directly (through Nicaraguan NGOs) and indirectly (through Norwegian NGOs) supported a number of projects executed by Nicaraguan NGOs, sometimes supporting the same Nicaraguan NGO however through different modes of cooperation.

In terms of the two main projects, external reviews and evaluations show planned output despite delays, both in issuing ID cards for the electoral process (CSE) and the implementation of the Comisariás. The projects have produced significant outputs related to building institutional capacity. The support to the CSE also ensured financial autonomy under a process with high political pressure and even though it did not manage to issue more than 70 percent of the identity cards planned prior to the elections, many of the 30 percent without permanent ID cards were able to exercise their voting rights by contingency documents.

The project review for INIM confirmed the importance of the project by pointing out the acceptance felt by the general population towards the Comisariás. The evaluation recognises that the project has managed to create a holistic response to violence, through actions coordinated between the state and the civil society, particularly between the Police and women's organisations. Women's organisations provide the complementary

services needed in these cases, for health, psychological and legal advice to women.

Overall, projects to strengthening democracy and respect for human rights have made significant contributions, especially in terms of the two important institutions CSE and INIM. Although some questions may be raised to the cost effectiveness of this support, the support to CSE should also be considered in light of its relevance to maintain CSE's status as an executive body without direct intervention from the Government. The effectiveness of the support provided to the Nicaraguan NGOs may however be questioned, since the reviews conducted have not taken into account the previously mentioned lack of coordination with other support provided, both direct and indirect (through Norwegian NGOs) sometimes supporting the same projects.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Norway has supported various agricultural and environmental projects, by allocating support through the country programme, and by channelling allocations through Norwegian NGOs. The largest projects supported through the country programme are INTA - Agriculture Extension Services, PNDR - Pikin Guerrero Sustainable Agriculture. In addition, a major share of the support has been provided to Norwegian NGOs. The following table gives an overview of Norwegian support to the sector.

The PNDR Pikin Guerrero Project aims at developing a model for integrated sustainable development and to reduce the degeneration of the ecosystem. The project was closed down by the government in 1998.

The INTA General Agriculture Extension project aims at increased productivity of small and medium scale farmers through the generation of agro-economic sustainable technologies.

A major share of the activities in a regional project, CAM 007 CATIE²⁴ Integrated Pest Management, has been implemented in Nicaragua. The CATIE project

works with capacity building concerning the management of pesticides. Both CATIE and CARE include components to address sustainable agriculture and the diversification of crops. The Development Fund emphasises ecological agriculture, including forestry, and The Royal Society of Norwegian Farmers also have major environmental components in their projects, in addition to institutional strengthening.

24. This is a regional project and is not recorded as development assistance to Nicaragua even though Nicaragua benefits from the project.

Table 5.3 Norwegian contributions to the agricultural sector (figures in million NOK)²⁵

Project title	Total 94-97	Percent of total 94-97	Total Allocation ¹	Duration
CARE Norway	16.8	3	-	-
NIC 032 - INTA Agriculture Extension	15.4	3	17.0	1994-98
Norwegian Development Fund (FACS & FMM)	9.7	2	-	-
Royal Society of Norwegian Farmers	9.0	1	-	-
NIC 027 PNDR - Pikin Guerrero Sustainable Agriculture	7.2	1	7.8	1995-98
NIC 012 Agriculture Sector Program	7.2	1	98.4	1989-94
NIC 009 Environment Grant	5.8	1	-	-
Other projects	8.4	1	-	-

1. Total allocation means the total amount disbursed to date plus future allocations in accordance with agreements.

According to various review reports the projects have generally produced intended outputs, however some concern is raised in terms of actual outreach to main beneficiaries (the farm level) and cost per beneficiary (in particular for the INTA and PNDR implemented projects).

The INTA project has been assessed as a major contribution in terms of institution building. In terms of the PNDR project to be closed down by 1998, it has not been integrated with existing institutions in servicing the target area which may affect the potential for long term impact.

Most projects operating within this sector have integrated capacity building as an important component. The issue of gender is addressed in many projects by

specific components however some may be "mis-guided" components (like arranging courses for women in reproductive health within an agricultural project).

All projects may be considered as targeting sustainable management of natural resources, i.e. they may be classified as direct environment interventions (like the projects to promote safe and rational use of pesticides, the diversification of crops and alternative ways of production taking environmental issues into consideration).

Due to the political adjustments in the country, the agricultural sector has undergone various changes of strategies and policies implemented by the different governments during the last two decades. One of the

25. Source: NORAD database on total bilateral aid to Nicaragua and Project Executing Agency.

main constraints during the 1990s has been the lack of a distinct sector policy. However, the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) elaborated a policy for the 97-98 period in the middle of 1997, which points out the lack of profitability in the agricultural production to be the main challenge in the sector. The many public institutions and programmes within the agriculture sector are now in a process of adjusting to the new policy, which seem to create some discrepancy and contradictions between and within institutions.

There is also a lack of an overall strategy for Norwegian support to the agricultural sector. The contribution given by Norway has been disbursed to various projects without any internal coordination or with limited cooperation between the projects (especially the case for Norwegian NGO supported projects). Some organisations working within the same sub-sectors (like pesticides) supported by Norway, are not even aware each other's existence.

Overall, projects supported in agriculture and management of natural resources have generally performed according to objectives. The reviews of the bilateral cooperation with INTA and PNDR however, have not taken into account the high cost per beneficiary. In some cases projects have focused on institutional

strengthening, research and information dissemination, and less on actual intervention and outreach to the target group. One project is being phased out without a mechanism established for follow-up and sustaining the outputs produced to have a long term impact (Pikin Guerrero). The projects supported by Norwegian and Nicaraguan NGOs have produced planned outputs (in most cases this assessment is based on their own reporting). However, some of the NGO projects include a multiple approach with elements of extension services, training and in many cases even highly specialist services like micro credit which in many cases leads to overall lower level of efficiency.

Small scale enterprises

Projects within the sector of small scale enterprises falls under the strategy objective to support selected industries. The rationale for the support is to promote income generating activities and employment creation for the poorer segments of society. The cooperation has focused on projects providing financial services (credit), to a less extent non-financial services (extension services). The latter has been provided through some smaller projects by Nicaraguan and Norwegian NGOs.

Table 5.4 Norwegian contributions to enterprise development (figures in million NOK)²⁶

Project title	Total 94-97	Percent of total 94-97	Total Allocation ¹	Duration
NIC 021 PAMIC	10.1	2	11.4	1989-
NIC 037 CARUNA	3.9	1	28.5	97-
NPA Support to CONAPI	3.0	1	-	83-98
Other	3.0	1	-	-

1. Total allocation means the total amount disbursed to date plus future allocations in accordance with agreements.

The main project has been support to the Government institution PAMIC providing wholesale lending and institutional support for financial intermediaries with credit programmes for small and medium scale enterprise. PAMIC was created in 1991 as a decentralised autonomous institution of the Government that gives credit to micro and small scale enterprises. In 1994 it was reformed and became an institute. The project is a joint donor operation with the participation of UNDP, Sweden, Norway, and Switzerland, as well as Nicaragua. The project addresses three major components:

impact on public policy, institutional development and cooperation with the commercial banks.

The project functions as an umbrella financial scheme, with the Norwegian funds disbursed to seven specific Intermediate Financial Institutions. Through the project some 10,800 clients have been serviced of which some 60 percent are women. Activities financed were commerce, services, industry, agro-industry, handicrafts, and livestock. Agricultural credits were not given. Some 25 percent of the initial fund for on lending was provided by Norway.

26. Source: NORAD database on total bilateral aid to Nicaragua and Project Executing Agency.

PAMIC has been partly successful in achieving its objectives and there is a consensus by the various evaluations conducted the main goal achieved by PAMIC is in the area of institutional capacity building to the financial intermediaries being serviced. More modest results are shown with the creation of links with commercial banking. The sustainability of PAMIC and its network of intermediaries, is an issue which according to various assessments needs specific attention. There is a need to make an external evaluation of the credit portfolio of each of the intermediary that receives PAMIC funds.

CARUNA was created in 1993 as a Savings and Loans Co-operative. It is a non-conventional financial institution that works with co-operatives in rural areas. As of 1997, CARUNA was made up by 97 co-operatives as associates. Under the Norwegian support 20 would be selected using predetermined criteria to be the beneficiaries of FONDERUNA. At this stage, Norway is the only donor to CARUNA.

One evaluation report states that the qualification of co-operatives working with CARUNA varies significantly. This is considered the main risk of the project, due to the unstable environment for co-operatives²⁷. Many have undergone a difficult process of restructuring and ended up dissolving the organisational links. The fact that the project contemplates credit mainly addressed to co-operatives creates a higher concentration of risk. Since the project supported by Norway has just recently commenced, it is too early to make an assessment of outputs and impact.

Through Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA), Norway has provided support to CONAPI to promote the survival and the development of small scale industry and arti-

sans, particularly of co-operatives and the strengthening of their union organisation. The project consisted of organisational training for CONAPI leaders, institutional support for regional structures, credit for co-ops and micro-enterprises, technical training, support in marketing, and creation of design centres.

In addition Norway has provided a lump sum for on lending to fishermen and support to various NGOs operating a variety of credit programmes, often as one component of a sector or multi-purpose project (like ADDAC, FMM, FACS, etc.). This finding may cause some concern considering that savings/credit schemes are highly specialised form of services, also in the Nicaraguan environment. Most of the credit programmes, large and small, suffer from higher than a 5 percent rate of default, a benchmark for ability to achieve commercial viability.

Overall, the assessment shows that the credit programmes generally suffer from weaknesses in design with not sufficient emphasis on cost recovery. Some even apply subsidised interest rates, which will not ensure financial sustainability and commercial viability in the long run. The binding constraint to be addressed by these programmes are access to credit on market terms and conditions, not cost of credit. In terms of the institution strengthening component they have generally been successful in outreach and training for the application of management information systems.

Energy Sector

Norway has supported a few projects in the energy sector, in financial terms accounting for some 23 million NOK of disbursements during 1994-97. The major ones are presented in table 5.5 below.

27. ECODEPA is the previous experience of credit to co-operatives and ended in bankruptcy.

Table 5.5 Norwegian contributions to energy sector (in million NOK)²⁸

Project title	Total 94-97	Percent of total 94-97	Total Allocation ¹	Duration
NIC 040 ENEL substation	11.5	2	30.0	1997-98
NIC 010 Petroleum Sector Study	4.3	1	12.5	1991-98
NIC 037 ENEL transformer	4.0	1	5.0	1993-95
NIC 023 Water Master Plan/Hydro Study	3.5	1	9.5	1992-94
Other projects	0.002	0	-	-

1. Total allocation means the total amount disbursed to date plus future allocations in accordance with agreements.

Of the three main projects the supply of transformer from ABB National Transformers of Norway and the Hydro Power Study was already under implementation prior to the strategy. A completion report has been produced verifying the procurement and installation of the transformer. None of these projects have been subject to any evaluation.

The Hydro Study commissioned by INEC (the Nicaraguan Energy Institute), resulted in a feasibility report with some recommended options to be pursued in terms of hydro power potential and investments in irrigation. The recommendations from the study, however, have not led to any follow-up as yet pending among others the possible privatisation of ENEL and the new policy allowing private sector investments in power generation.

The newly approved support for a substation to be installed by ENEL has just started, and no tangible outputs or outcome can be assessed at this stage.

The support to the petroleum sector was also initiated prior to the strategy. The project has been subject to external reviews. An evaluation report following Phase I in 1995 concludes that the project has produced adequate outputs and this is further confirmed by subsequent reviews and annual progress reports for phase II. The interest shown by international oil companies in accessing data and move into exploration are indicators of adequate output and potentially high impact.

Overall, the petroleum sector support stands out as an important contribution with potentially high impact. In terms of the power sector, a study to assess the hydro

power potential has so far not been subject to any follow-up (no visible impact) and the support to investments in power distribution has only been subject to technical reviews and evaluations, not assessment of impact.

Health and Social Welfare

During the strategy period, Norway allocated funds to the health and social welfare sector by co-financing multilateral projects and programmes, and through non-governmental organisations. The multi-bilateral projects were co-financed with multilateral organisations such as the World Bank (WB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and United Nations' Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA). Bilateral projects have also been supported either directly from the Embassy through special allocations such as the AIDS Grant (projects executed by Nicaraguan NGOs), or as technical assistance provided by the Norwegian Volunteer Service. The largest Norwegian NGOs that operate in this sector are Save the Children Fund of Norway (Redd Barna), and The Students' and Academics' International Aid Fund (SAIH).

The projects within this sector are focused on health issues and community development, such as strengthening the Ministry of Health (MINSa), the upgrading of hospitals, emphasis on reproductive health, the prevention of AIDS and the improvement of children's living conditions.

The Norwegian Save the Children Fund executes more than 30 projects to provide preventive actions for children nation-wide. During the period of the strategy,

28. Source: NORAD database on total bilateral aid to Nicaragua and Project Executing Agency.

they concentrated their work within three areas; (1) Community development focused on children (pre-schools, community based social promotion, and children's reading); (2) Work with children in especially difficult circumstances (special needs, working children, children's home, foster-homes, alternative to institutions, and (3) Defence of children's rights (radio stations, web page, cultural activities, Mayors' network). The *internal* annual reports show high degree of relevance and satisfying results.

In an "external" evaluation (team leader from Save the Children Fund) from 1996 the difficulties in measuring performance in social sectors were pointed out. Furthermore, impact may be difficult to assess, because of the complexity of the social situation. The evaluation nevertheless stated that even though there

was a need for an improvement of the evaluation and follow-up system at project and programme levels, all projects supported have contributed to the improvement of the living conditions of children in need of special attention.

The World Bank Health Sector Reform Project is a co-financing operation approved directly by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The main objective is to provide support to strengthen MINSA (Ministry of Health), Maternal and Child Health Care, Pharmaceutical Supply System and Rehabilitation and Maintenance of main hospitals and other health facilities. According to a review with participation from Norway, the project has made important contributions to the Ministry of Health in capacity building.

Table 5.6 Norwegian contributions to health and social welfare (figures in million NOK)²⁹

Project title	Total 94-97	Percent of total 94-97	Total Allocation ¹	Duration
Save the Children, Norway	37.9	6	-	-
WB Health Sector Project	15.0	2	15.0	1995-96
NIC 035 IDB - Integrated Early Childhood Development and	8.7	1	21.0	1996-99
Students' and Academics' International Aid Fund (SAIH)	8.8	1	-	-
NIC 036 UNFPA - Reproductive Health	7.9	1	10.6	1996-99
NIC 019 - AIDS Grant	5.9	1	-	-
Others	2.2	0	-	-

1. Total allocation means the total amount disbursed to date plus future allocations in accordance with agreements.

The IDB - Integrated Early Childhood Development and Day-Care Services for Children is co-financed with the Inter-American Development Bank with regular bilateral funding from NORAD. The project's objective is to assist in strengthening and upgrading network of community centres and NGO/community organisations that provide day-care services, improve child-caring practices in families and support low-income mothers in their various responsibilities. NORAD is co-financing the component for Community Childhood Development Centres, (CICO) run by NGOs. The project has suffered delays among others due to changes in the Government from 1997.

SAIH is working within the social sector - with health and education - on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. They are focusing on higher education, teacher training, nurse education and health projects, such as the prevention of AIDS. Internal annual reports show progress and relevance. There has been no external evaluation since 1993-94. Performance during the strategy period (1994-97) is accordingly difficult to assess. Compared to the guidelines of the strategy SAIH works outside of the priority regions, concentrating all their projects on the Atlantic Coast.

The health and social welfare sector is not an explicit priority area according to the strategy, however in

29. Source: NORAD database on total bilateral aid to Nicaragua and Project Executing Agency.

financial terms it has remained one of the main sectors of support for project targeted interventions throughout 1994 to 1997.

There is a significant lack of coordination in the sector also between projects supported by Norway. Norway has no coherent approach to the health and social welfare sector. However, externally, when co-financing multilateral projects, Norway coordinate their support with other donors.

Overall, Norwegian support in health and social welfare is a "success story" judging from the reviews and evaluations. The health sector rehabilitation project supported in co-financing with the World Bank will be extended into a second phase based on the positive results from the phase supported by Norway. Another major project, the UNFPA family planning, despite too ambitious objectives, has successfully implemented major planned components, however at higher cost than planned. This may be attributed to a weakness in design rather than implementation. The Save the Children Fund, Norway (Redd Barna) and other NGOs have, according to their own assessments, made significant contributions, but issues like cost effectiveness and performance indicators have not been addressed, nor the fact that impact may be due to a number of other projects operating in the same area (due to lack of coordination).

Other sectors and areas of support

In addition to the above sectors, Norway has supported Government as well as NGO interventions in numerous other sectors. A new joint donor project to provide institutional support to the auditor general, and a number of smaller projects by local as well as Norwegian NGOs have been accorded support. The projects ranges from research type projects like FIDEG to culture cooperation in music, theatre and literature by support from a grant for culture and the Norwegian Volunteer Service (ref. summary of projects in the annex II and III).

Support through the Norwegian Church aid has been granted to two Nicaraguan NGOs as general budget support. The NGOs implement numerous projects in the field of community and rural development as well as pastoral promotion. Their programmes have not been subject to any external evaluations by the Norwegian aid administration, and monitoring is based on numbers of people trained, seminars conducted, etc. Support to the fisheries sector continued mainly through the NPA project implemented in the Pearl

Lagoon. A large scale cooperation to promote local musicians was implemented with the use of the grants allocated to culture. The two latter ones have been subject to external reviews and evaluations which indicate outputs produced with potentially high impact.

5.2 ASSESSMENT BY MODE OF COOPERATION

Support to Government implemented projects

The major support through this mode of cooperation has been in the form of balance of payments support, support to agriculture and natural resources, democracy and human rights, health and social welfare, energy and small scale enterprise.

Import support continued up to 1996 with only some minor procedural changes. As previously mentioned, the Norwegian form of support did not observe a common set of guidelines to ensure value for money, avoid market distortions and to secure counter part funding.

The support to agriculture and natural resources have according to reviews and evaluations shown adequate output however some concern is raised regarding outreach to actual beneficiaries. The issue of cost effectiveness has not been fully addressed and assessments based on external reviews indicate that the cost per beneficiary is high.

The support to human rights and democratic development has featured as one of the core areas for the strategy. The support by Norway has produced important outputs and the support for legal rights for women may even serve as a scheme considered for replication in other Norwegian partner countries.

In terms of support for credit to promote small and medium scale enterprise development, the main project PAMIC, has according to review reports produced adequate output. The credit programme suffers however from higher than expected default rates in some of the financial intermediaries. Norway also provide support to a variety of other credit schemes through numerous NGOs.

The main contributions within the energy sector are related to the support in the petroleum sub-sector, the funding of transformers for the power distribution network, and a study to examine the hydro power irrigation potential. The petroleum sector support has produced outputs with potentially high impact. The hydro study, however, has so far not been subject to

any follow-up (limited impact). The support for ENEL transformers has not been subject to any assessment of impact.

The basis for the assessments are suffering from the fact that despite clear procedures for reviews and evaluations of the support provided to Government interventions, the quality of the reports vary considerably. In some cases reviews are mostly concerned with procedures rather than outputs, cost effectiveness and impact (import support, transformers to ENEL).

With the import support programme and the hydro study as the exceptions, Norwegian aid through the Government implemented projects (regional and country programme) has generally produced planned outputs with potential high impact. The issue of cost effectiveness and sustainability of some of the outputs may however be questioned.

Support through co-financing

In total, co-financing operations account for some 32 percent of total Norwegian disbursements during 1994-97, which means that this is the most significant form of assistance during the period.

Debt relief is the major co-financing project in addition to some of the large scale projects labelled under health and social welfare. Monitoring of co-financing projects have followed the procedures laid down by the respective multilateral organisations. Overall, the assessment of performance of the projects show adequate output produced for those which have been partly or fully implemented (World Bank, UNFPA as well as Debt Relief).

Some deficiencies have been noted in terms of over-ambitious goals for the UNFPA project and the IDB project has been substantially delayed due to institutional changes following the last elections.

Support through NGOs show a mixed picture. Overall the reporting on performance show adequate outputs. However, the basis for assessing NGOs are weak since most of the monitoring in the form of reviews and evaluations are left to the NGOs themselves. This is especially the case for Norwegian NGOs.

The extent of monitoring of projects vary considerably between the Norwegian NGOs with different focus and different level of sophistication in the approach. NPA produces annual reports even at project level and it may serve as an indicator of the quality of their mon-

itoring that they in fact decide to close down projects considered non performing rather than to continue in an attempt to "make the best of it". The same may be attributed to the Norwegian Development Fund and CARE who also commissions external evaluations to assess output and impact. Some provide support to an organisation rather than to specific projects (like NCA), which makes it more of an intermediary in transferring money from the Norwegian aid administration to the Nicaraguan NGO leaving the latter to decide on how to apply the resources provided.

In Nicaragua, the term NGO covers a wide range of organisations from membership based voluntary organisations to foundations which more resemble consulting companies with profits transferred to the "owners" in the form of generous remuneration packages. A number of them are headed by officials from former Governments, some with prominence in the business community. Even though review reports and evaluations suggest adequate output, the cost effectiveness of the support provided to some of these NGOs may be questioned.

The main concerns regarding support through the NGOs are related to the fact that they do not seem to be subject to *the same procedures* for external reviews and evaluations as other projects; i.e. the Norwegian Aid Administration seems to exclude the NGO portfolio in their efforts in ensuring that adequate performance and outputs are being produced. In most cases the basis for monitoring is the NGOs own assessment. Thus even though the support in most cases are reported as "success stories", it is difficult to assess whether this mode of support has given reasonable value for money.

Norwegian Volunteer Service

The overall objective of the Volunteer Service is to provide technical assistance in order to improve the living conditions of poor sectors of the society. Transfer of knowledge and institutional strengthening are emphasised, within the areas of natural resource management, health and social welfare, small scale industry and vocational training.

An assessment was undertaken in 1996, concluding that single projects within the Volunteer programme show good performance, but that the relation between the projects in the programme for Technical Assistance and between the programme and the rest of the Norwegian support in the country are so arbitrary and weak that it does not function as a coherent and coor-

dinated programme. The report also pointed out the need for better management and organisation of the programme as a total, as well as improved routines in the preparation phases of projects in order to save administrative costs at later stages.

Other forms of support

During the time subject for our review, a major share of the cooperation has been funded either as Government projects, Norwegian NGOs, Nicaraguan NGOs or as co-financing with multilateral finance institutions. In addition to the above, Norway has assisted some emergency relief operations and provided some small allocations by industrial and commercial cooperation.

The cooperation with the Norwegian business sector has been most prominent in terms of the tied import support and cooperation in the energy sector (transformers for ENEL) through country and regional allocations. The strategy indicated that support for small and medium scale enterprise may also be considered as an area of relevance for participation by the Norwegian business community however there has been no participation recorded from Norway in the projects supported.

5.3 ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

In this sub-chapter, we briefly assess the performance of the development cooperation according to the four specific strategy objectives; strengthen human rights

and democratic development, increased production within selected sectors, more ecologically sustainable management of natural resources, and strengthen Nicaragua's human resources. The first two objectives have been operationalised in terms of targeted support and may easily be associated to sectors, while the two latter objectives may be considered cross-cutting issues not targeting specific sectors or areas of cooperation.

When considering the two first objectives some 30 percent of total development assistance have been directed to projects which may be directly linked to these objectives. The majority of the projects supported have contributed to the objectives, however, for some of the projects supporting increased production within selected sectors, issues have been raised concerning cost effectiveness, outreach to the target group and sustainability. Some project does not specifically address employment and income generation as overall objectives (like some projects in the energy sector).

When considering the latter two objectives of the strategy, these cross cutting issues have either been addressed as specific components for projects in the above mentioned sectors or as projects to promote capacity building in other non-priority sectors (like health and social welfare). Since the strategy itself is not specific on how the objectives are to be interpreted in the form of sectors and areas of support, it is not possible to assess the actual contribution to the latter objectives.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

Assessment according to strategy guidelines

In the following we will provide a summary of our assessment in relation to the overall agreed strategy. As previously indicated, the strategy focused on certain operational objectives (priority areas of cooperation), some general guidelines concerning its implementation (focus on capacity building, environmental impact, gender, project targeted rather than programme aid, etc.) and mode of cooperation (country programme, NGOs, multilateral organisations, the Volunteer Service).

In accordance with the criteria mentioned in chapter 2 we will in the following present some overall findings using the "macro perspective" described in chapter 4 and the "micro perspective" presented in the previous chapter (chapter 5).

Import support versus project targeted aid

According to the strategy, project tied aid should be given priority on the account of Commodity Assistance/Import Support. During the period subject to our evaluation, Norway has not disbursed more resources as project tied support within the framework of Government to Government cooperation. Our findings seem to indicate that this "problem"³⁰ may be due to the following:

- The strategy was implemented during a time when aid flows and number of donors to Nicaragua increased significantly. Thus the "competition" for viable projects increased. This finding is also supported by the fact that Nicaragua receives a very high volume of aid both in per capita terms as well as a share of GDP (ref. chapter 3).

Due to the previously mentioned political constraints (ref. chapter 3) the Government has limited capacity to design and implement new interventions at a level that can meet the increased donor demand. This issue was also high on the agenda when Norway formulated its strategy.

Although the Norwegian form of import support was finally phased out in 1996, debt relief became the core mechanism for support enabling Norway to maintain a

high level of development assistance to Nicaragua. In addition numerous Norwegian NGOs and Nicaraguan NGOs have continued to play an important role for Norway in providing targeted aid.

Sector distribution

The strategy does not set any financial or other quantifiable targets for sector distribution of Norwegian aid. However it provides some guidance by stating operational objectives and priority areas for support.

The strategy calls for a focus on two major areas; support for *democratic development and human rights*, and support to *production in selected sectors*. In addition, support to ecological sustainable *management of natural resources* and strengthening of *human resources*. While the two former are clearly defined areas to target support, the latter two are cross sector issues which in some respect may invite projects and programmes from all sectors.

- In terms of support for strengthening democratic development and respect for human rights, Norway has put a lot of effort and provided resources to some important interventions. In addition, numerous projects supported through Norwegian and Nicaraguan NGOs may be considered to fall under the same objective. In terms of number of projects it is clear that a major attempt has been made to comply with strategy guidelines. In financial terms, however, only support for the supreme electoral council has been given a major share of the support.
- The strategy has been implemented in as much as the support for agriculture and natural resource management is concerned. The projects have according to our assessments to some degree been successfully implemented. Rural agriculture is not only the sector to be considered for employment and income generation but also one of the key sectors to address the main environmental issues in Nicaragua. Accordingly, both in design and implementation the agriculture sector support has to a large extent complied with the strategy guidelines.

In terms of other areas to be considered under the cooperation the following observations can be made:

30. Internally in the Norwegian aid administration there has been raised a concern on several occasions that Norway has not been able to disburse more of the funds allocated to projects (ref. comments to the NORAD Management Plans).

- Norwegian support to small scale enterprises have been pursued and despite some areas of concern appears to have provided intended and adequate outputs.
- The petroleum sector study has been continued and has in accordance with the evaluations produced adequate outputs with potentially high impact.
- Family education through co-financing with UNFPA has also been implemented. The project suffered from being too ambitious in design, and is thus so far only partly successful in implementation.

According to the strategy, some other areas could also be considered subject to available funding like hydro power and import support. In terms of hydro power, this has been limited to the completion of an already ongoing study which has still not been used as guidance for investments. In terms of import support, as previously mentioned, this form of cooperation did not observe the guidelines agreed upon by the international donor community to ensure value for money and avoid distortions in the domestic market.

In addition the strategy turns to other forms of cooperation (like NGOs, multilateral institutions, the Norwegian Volunteer Service, Commercial cooperation and other allocations) including debt relief, culture, AIDS and other areas of support. Of these other areas of support, debt relief, as previously mentioned, has been the major area of support in the total Norwegian development cooperation.

Both through co-financing and by support through Norwegian and Nicaraguan NGOs, Health and Social Welfare has remained one of the main areas of project targeted aid. It is difficult to find support for this observation in the strategy document.

Despite the fact that Norwegian and Nicaraguan authorities had agreed that Norway should not engage in the education sector in 1993, Norway decided in 1995 (ref. Management Plan for 1995) that it should extend its development cooperation to include the social sectors, with a special focus on basic education and primary health care. Norway entered into a dialogue with Nicaraguan authorities to also include basic education as an area of support. However, a proposal has not yet been presented from Nicaraguan authorities.

Institutional strengthening

When assessing the various projects' emphasis on institutional capacity, this issue has been high on the agenda in most of the projects supported. It is a major issue in Government supported projects as well as projects supported through the NGOs. Even in terms of import support Norway took the lead in an attempt to streamline procedures to relieve the Government of the burden to comply with individual donor requirements for reporting and accounting. In many of the projects the issue is addressed by specific components to support the management of the recipient institution or project.

Recipient responsibility

Recipient responsibility is a term subject to a variety of interpretations. Rather than using this term we have tried to assess the extent of *ownership* by the recipient in the various stages of project implementation.

For the Central Government it has been difficult to effectively manage and coordinate the total volume of aid and many of the projects have been left as an issue between the implementing agency and the donor. The following may serve as an example:

- In Nicaragua, donor interventions have led to the formation of new autonomous and semi-autonomous public institutions driven by donor support giving access to resources. In the agriculture sector, the unfavourable experience with cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture led the World Bank to establish a Programme Management Unit for extension services which today is one of the key public institutions in the sector (INTA). The IDB launched a rural multipurpose fund to be implemented by a programme management unit, PNDR³¹ which recently was given the status as an institution (secretariat) under the president. None of these institutions are however directly subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture, even though it is the main Ministry in charge of the policy and regulatory framework for the sectors supported by the above mentioned institutions.

In Nicaragua donor cooperation has suffered from lack of guidance by the Government in terms of operational strategies, both overall and at sector level. Furthermore, lack of continuity from one Government to the other and weaknesses in the overall management have

31. PNDR has changed name to IDR (Instituto de Desarrollo Rural).

made it difficult to apply recipient responsibility and find a clear sense of ownership at the central Government level, even often at the sector level. The strategy pursued by Norway and other donors to focus more on the level of implementing institutions thus seems a viable approach as long as there is no comprehensive strategy and investment programme (often even at the sector level) backed by sufficient management capacity and political sense of ownership.

Poverty alleviation

Focus on the poorer segments of society was an issue to be reflected in the total cooperation. In general terms the projects under the cooperation has targeted the poorer segments of the population, both in the support for selected production and in health and social welfare. Our assessment of the individual projects clearly indicates that both in terms of the sectors supported and the projects selected, the poorer segments of the society have in most cases been the target group.

On the other hand, Government policies are by some claimed to be non conducive to the poor. Should this be the case, then debt relief and import support, giving the Government more leverage in implementing the policies, contributes to an even more unequal distribution of income and wealth. If this *is* the case, the Norwegian cooperation has been inconsistent and contradictory in its approach by on the one hand supporting targeted interventions for poverty alleviation, and on the other provided general support to an overall policy non-conducive to the objective.

It is outside the scope of this evaluation to assess impact on poverty of the policy pursued in Nicaragua (ref. chapter 3), however we have noted that this issue has not been addressed in the overall cooperation. Norway has supported both Government interventions as well as the numerous Nicaraguan NGOs advocating against the prevailing policy being implemented. Thus, the overall level of success in contributing to poverty alleviation cannot easily be assessed.

Geographical concentration

The issue of geographical concentration to regions I, V, and VI was raised by the Government of Nicaragua during the policy consultations for the strategy. At that time the Government felt that more resources was required to some areas suffering from political unrest and with high incidence of poverty.

The data on distribution of resources between regions clearly indicates that this has not only been put on the agenda for Norwegian aid, but for a number of donor interventions. In terms of actual implementation, in a situation where there has been limited capacity even to formulate and identify new projects by the Government, this additional criteria for project selection has reduced ability to maintain a high "push" for disbursements.

According to strategy, the Atlantic Coast should not be given a high priority, due to the cultural and ethnic differences between the two parts of the country, and due to the fact that the majority of the population is located at the Pacific Coast and in the highlands.

In the Management Plan for 1997, the Embassy points out that the emphasis on regions I, V, and VI may have had a limiting effect on the possibility for taking into consideration project and programme proposals from other parts of the country. It is further suggested that the Atlantic Coast should be included in long term programmes in the future, considering it being the less developed region in Nicaragua.

In terms of the NGOs only a few have even reflected on this issue. In most cases they have pursued their programmes following their own policies and guidelines with focus on geographical areas in accordance with identified needs on a case by case basis. However, a number of the NGO projects are located within the prioritised geographical areas.

Addressing gender

Our assessments clearly show that the gender perspective has been integrated in most programmes and projects. In the main sectors/areas of support the projects have either specific gender components, are designed overall to address gender specific issues, or, at the appraisal stage, take the issue into account in project design.

Only to mention a few, in agriculture specific components have addressed the need for establishing extension services which also reaches women farmers and the need to provide legal titles for land. In support for respect of human rights, a major intervention has been the support for legal rights for women. The project addresses a major human rights issue in the Nicaraguan society; the comparatively high incidence of domestic violence.

The gender issue has overall been addressed both in Government supported projects as well as projects supported through the NGOs.

Environment

Environment has been a target issue in the projects supported in the agriculture sector as well as a component addressed in energy (petroleum sector). The overall cooperation may be claimed to have a strong environmental bias, where relevant, when looking at the overall distribution of funds to targeted areas.

Financial sustainability

At the macro level, donors are providing resources to programmes and projects which in the short to medium term cannot be entertained by Government revenue nor by NGOs. As previously mentioned, the agreed benchmarks for Government public expenditure do not comply with the present level of donor funded public expenditure leaving the Government with two options;

- To close down non core projects or
- to leave non core projects outside the Government budget solely dependent upon donor funding

In general, few projects under the Norwegian cooperation has taken the issue into account. In some sectors like credit programmes for small and medium scale enterprises, the issue of commercialisation is one success criteria. However, the ones supported by Norway (PAMIC and CARUNA) suffer from high administrative overhead and critical default rates if the CGAP assessment criteria are being used.

The agriculture sector support to INTA has a component to create a market for extension services through the private sector, however it will take many years before it can achieve some form of self sustainability if it is to target the small scale producers in the sector.

For some projects the financial sustainability will demand Government revenue to substitute donor funding. With the present scenario and benchmarks for public expenditures it is difficult to see that Government should be able to accommodate the needed requirement for funding unless it reduces the overall number of donor assisted projects to a more manageable level (ref. chapter 3).

The portfolio of NGO projects is to a large extent totally donor dependent. The cooperation with the Government appears often to be based on political rather than professional merit leaving many of the local NGOs with either international NGOs or donor organisations as their main source of funding.

Coordination

In terms of coordination the strategy calls for a more coordinated approach between the various modalities of Norwegian aid, i.e. Government supported projects, support through NGOs, private sector, etc. In addition, it calls for an improved coordination with other donors.

Our assessment, both at "macro" as well as "micro" level, seems to indicate that Norway has not been successful in co-ordinating its aid. We have previously given some examples of lack of coordination *internally* within the Norwegian aid administration both in relation to sector approach as well as in relation to overall cooperation.

One issue is worth noting concerning coordination within the Norwegian aid administration. In 1995 the Government of Nicaragua requested Norway to re-allocate undisbursed funds for balance of payments support due to limited ability in identifying new *projects* in priority areas of the strategy. Despite a clear message by Norway in 1995 not to accept a re-allocation of funds to import support rather than to targeted projects, a few months later, Norway decided to disburse some 80 million NOK for debt relief bringing the total development assistance from Norway to Nicaragua to its highest level during the 1994-97 period. On the one hand Norway tried to stress that the agreed strategy with more support for project targeted aid should be pursued, in reality Norway provided more *non project aid* than ever before during the same year.

The fact that Norway emphasised the need to pursue project targeted aid at the same time as it provided the largest balance of payments support ever is only one among many examples. The support for imports of pesticides at the same time as Norway provided support for pesticide management and alternative cultivation methods without linking the projects under one umbrella is another. However, the main weakness is related to the support through Norwegian NGOs.

Through NORAD in Oslo, Norwegian NGOs are granted funds to implement projects and programmes in various countries including Nicaragua. These NGOs

either transmit the same amount to a Nicaraguan NGO in general support of their programme (like NCA), implement or support projects in collaboration with Nicaraguan NGOs (like CARE, the Norwegian Development Fund, Save the Children Fund) or a mix of executing own projects and supporting projects by Nicaraguan NGO counterparts. Many of these Nicaraguan NGOs are already receiving support in the same field by direct contributions from special allocations or as partners in Government supported interventions. In addition, a number of these NGOs are also supported by other donors for the same.

Based on the documentation reviewed there are no evidence to show that these duplications and multiplications of support have been taken into account. This issue has also been raised in a study assessing the performance of Nicaraguan NGOs. For some NGOs this non-coordinated "generous aid" was claimed to have been supporting "remuneration packages" close to international consultants rates making some NGOs resembling more as private "consulting firms" even though they were pursuing a development objective.

A strategy elaborated by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry for the Norwegian aid administration cannot expect to be adopted by the NGOs, in as much as the NGOs are private sector organisations with their own agendas and strategies. To coordinate the total efforts of the various NGOs is thus not the responsibility of the aid administration. What should be coordinated, however, is the support given to NGOs through the various channels within the aid administration. Some of the NGOs have framework-agreements with NORAD, receiving funding more like "general budget support" rather than to specific projects. The strategy does not give any guidance as to how such support should be dealt with.

In terms of coordination among donors the case of Nicaragua deviates substantially from donor coordination in many other partner countries for Norwegian aid. Being a small country with high volume of aid and weak Government capacity lacking the essential tools

for coordination (three year rolling plan and forward budgeting based on national and sector strategies), the issue of some form of coordination among donors becomes even more important. However, none of the lead donors have been able to provide a reliable picture of actual external cooperation taking place, and many of the lead donors focus more on their own agenda rather than on the need to have a macro approach to total external cooperation. At the sector level there is only limited coordination and often limited to a few donors.

At the project level our assessments seem to reflect the above mentioned observations. In key projects there are usually many donors providing support however through separate agreements demanding individual donor procedures for disbursement, reporting, accounting and auditing rather than utilising the option of establishing "trust fund" operations managed by a lead donor to ensure one common procedure for the recipient institution. In agriculture, rather than proceeding with a bilateral arrangement with INTA, Norway could have explored the avenue of co-financing the largest donor, the World Bank, since the bulk of the Norwegian funds are supplementary to World Bank funding. This approach could have been implemented without the risk of delay in disbursements due to World Bank internal disbursement procedures. For INIM, Norway is the major donor and could have pursued the role of taking the lead by applying similar procedures.

Overall, the major weakness in the implementation of the strategy is related to lack of coordination. As shown, Norway has directly and indirectly supported sectors, institutions, NGOs and projects through country programme allocations, special allocations, multi-lateral cooperation, Norwegian NGOs and Nicaraguan NGOs. In many cases the aid that flows through different modes of cooperation has reached the same organisation and beneficiaries, but monitored as individual projects without taking the totality of the support into account.

7. THE STRATEGY AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The strategy for Nicaragua was intended to serve the following main purposes; a translation of Norwegian policies into country specific guidelines, as a guide for the Norwegian aid administration to concentrate and coordinate Norwegian aid and as a management tool for implementation of the cooperation. Despite the previously mentioned inconsistencies and lack of clarity of the strategy as it was formulated, it did give some guidance and has been used as a reference both in Nicaragua and Norway, and even by other donors to Nicaragua.

For the Government of Nicaragua, the important issue has been how they can utilise Norwegian aid to support priority programmes and projects. From their point of view the important issue has not been to agree on a specific strategy for each of the more than 30 donor countries, but to have a knowledge of what objectives, sector priorities and procedures are associated with each of them. Based on this information, they may be able to analyse which donor at any given time may be willing to consider a specific sector, program or project to be implemented.

For Norway, the strategy has been important to ensure some form of concentration trying to maintain the cooperation at a manageable level and focus the cooperation on some areas and sectors within Norwegian aid policies and priorities. It has most of all been needed to ensure coordination of aid from the different sources of funding *within the Norwegian aid administration*. As such the strategy has been more a guidance to the Norwegian aid administration than the recipient Government.

The evaluation has shown that the strategy has provided guidance to the Norwegian aid administration at the policy level by translating overall policies for Norwegian aid into policies and priorities concerning cooperation with Nicaragua (areas and sectors of priority). It has been instrumental in focusing aid on some sectors and areas of priority. However, the assessment of actual implementation has shown that the aid has been spread thinly among numerous Government and NGO interventions in many sectors and areas. This is partly due to lack of consistency in the strategy on which sectors and areas to give priority. Of the four operational objectives only two may be claimed to focus on particular sector and areas (support to selected production sectors, and democracy and respect for human rights). The other two objec-

tives have opened up cooperation in numerous other sectors and areas (depending on interpretation).

A strategy of cooperation agreed upon with one Government in Nicaragua (in 1993) may not necessarily reflect the priorities of a new Government (in 1996). If the policy implemented by the recipient Government deviates from Norwegian aid policies and principles, the question will be how Norway can operationalise the development objectives. One approach would be to try to influence Government priorities by targeting aid to areas Norway consider a priority despite that the Government has not put the issue on top of its agenda (however this may lead to a programme with limited Government ownership and contradicting the principle of recipient responsibility). Another intervention could be to bypass the Government by providing support to NGOs and the private sector (however this form of intervention may lead to a donor dependent NGO/private sector and contribute to increased market distortions). The third would be to provide program aid with strict policy conditions. The latter would however need to be well coordinated with other donors and multilateral financial institutions.

The above issues have not been not fully addressed in the development cooperation with Nicaragua and limited guidance to these issues were given in the strategy. This may suggest that the a strategy should have been limited to focus on *some sectors and areas* of support, however ensured *flexibility in the choice of modality of cooperation* (Government to Government cooperation, NGOs, etc.). Decisions concerning which projects and what mode of cooperation could have been left as issues under the formulation of annual management plans and in the annual bilateral consultations.

Interventions in the form of sudden change of priorities in Norwegian aid policies (like emphasis on social sectors) reduced the value of the strategy as tool to concentrate the aid effort on some sectors and areas. The intervention did not consider what sectors to be substituted to ensure sector concentration. Such interventions would need to take into account the possible need to revise the strategy if it is to continue to serve as the main tool guiding the cooperation.

According to the Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Strategy, paragraph 2.7 (ref. annex I) major changes like the above mentioned should have called

for a review and possible revision of the strategy to reflect changes in priorities and principles for cooperation. No such revisions of the strategy itself has taken place although the deviations from the strategy from annual consultations and consultations on social sectors (and specifically education) may be considered as amendments to the strategy.

In Nicaragua, Norway has gradually become just one small player in the field of development assistance. Even though Norway has a policy, guidelines and financial allocations in the development budget to support all sectors and areas, the role of Norway as one small donor among others has not been fully addressed. Although Norway has explored the option of co-financing in some sectors (like health and social welfare), it could have been further pursued and in some sectors and projects Norway could have taken the lead to ensure a more coordinated approach.

The evaluation has shown that there is a need for a strategy to coordinate all Norwegian aid to avoid duplication of efforts (low efficiency) and to ensure a consistent approach in aid utilisation. Even though NGOs have their own agenda and strategies for cooperation, those NGO projects supported by the Norwegian aid budget should be assessed within a common framework for the cooperation. The strategy could have served as an important tool in this respect, but has not been widely used in particular when it concerns support through Norwegian NGOs. This is an internal procedural issue which may be related to design of the strategy but most of all related to weaknesses in communicating the strategy objectives to all decision makers in the administration.

Based on the above the following may serve as lessons learned from the evaluation to be considered in future strategies for development cooperation:

- There is a need for "policy" guidance translating the overall policies and principles for Norwegian aid into *country specific* guidelines.
- These guidelines should take into account not only the political and institutional environment, but also the role of *Norway among all the donors*.
- Taking the above into consideration the main focus of a strategy should be to select *some few areas and sectors of concentration* if there is a role to play for Norwegian aid (policy level).

- Promotion of a specific modality of cooperation or use of a specific allocation in the aid budget should not feature in a strategy as an *objective by itself*. It should instead be left to be decided upon by the recipient Government and Norwegian aid administration for each individual project and programme to determine how they best can serve an agreed objective (management of implementation).
- For any *guideline* or *strategy* to be pursued it needs to be *widely accepted* by the total Norwegian aid administration and *communicated* to all project promoters, both recipient Government, NGOs as well as the business community.
- Finally, there is a need for a *common set of guidelines and procedures in monitoring* of all aid regardless of whether it is being implemented by NGOs or public sector institutions.

The above should also take into account the *available human resources* in the aid administration, especially at the level of an Embassy being the focal point for coordination of all Norwegian aid. The capacity needed to monitor quality of aid rather than being too concerned about quantity (level of disbursement) is an important issue in Nicaragua. The projects supported through NGOs, multilateral organisations and public sector institutions should all be subject to the same procedures for monitoring ensuring the highest level of output and impact per monetary unit disbursed. This requires sufficient capacity by the Norwegian aid administration. At the Embassy level in Nicaragua, only six executives have been charged with monitoring a cooperation including some 230 projects with some 15 public sector institutions, 23 Norwegian NGOs and some 80 Nicaraguan NGOs.

When considering all the above, the evaluation shows that there is a need for a tool (strategy) guiding first and foremost the Norwegian aid administration. This "tool" should focus on the policy level translating Norwegian aid policy objectives into some priority areas or sectors where Norway as one donor among many may concentrate its aid effort. The actual implementation within these areas and sectors should be guided by operational procedures for development cooperation, like annual management plans and consultations as well as through the continued dialogue between Norway and Nicaragua.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Performance of cooperation

From a macro perspective, aid efficiency in Nicaragua appears to be low when assessing changes in economic and social indicators compared to the high volume of aid per capita and size of the economy. Norwegian development assistance constituted some 3 percent of this aid during 1994 to 1997.

From a micro perspective the following main findings have been made concerning Norwegian development cooperation;

- The major share of Norwegian aid has been in the form of *debt relief*. The debt relief has contributed to a debt service at a more manageable level, assisted in the creation of an environment for increased private sector investments and enabled the Government to allocate more resources to priority sectors.
 - The other form of balance of payments support, the Norwegian modality of *import support*, did not follow the guidelines agreed by the international donor community which have reduced the value for money and maintained internal distortions in the domestic market, sometimes even entertaining non performing state enterprises in need of substantial restructuring.
 - Support to *strengthen democracy and respect for human rights* have made significant contributions, although some questions may be raised to the cost efficiency of this support.
 - Projects supported in *agriculture and management of natural resources* have generally performed according to objectives. For some of the major projects, questions may be raised concerning cost efficiency, financial and institutional sustainability and outreach to the target group.
 - Support to *small scale enterprise* in the form of support through credit facilities show adequate performance. However, concerns about efficiency and financial sustainability may be raised (especially in terms of some of the NGO programmes).
 - Norwegian support in *health and social welfare* is a "success story" judging from the reviews and evaluations. However, for a number of the projects this conclusion is based on internal assessments by the project holders (most prominently the NGOs), and in many cases issues like cost effectiveness have not been addressed, nor the fact that the impact may be due to a number of other projects operating in the same area.
- In the *energy sector*, the petroleum sector support stands out as an important contribution with potentially high impact. In terms of the power sector, a study to assess the hydro power potential has so far not been subject to any follow-up (no visible impact) and the support to investments in power distribution has only been subject to technical reviews, not assessment of impact.
- In addition to the above, Norway has supported projects in a number of other sectors spreading the limited resources thinly among many different institutions, organisations and projects. When taking all the above together, the evaluation can conclude with the following:
- Some 51 percent of total aid has supported projects which with a high degree of certainty can be claimed to have produced adequate output with potential high impact. In addition to debt relief, it includes the bilateral projects in support for democratic development and respect for human rights, the support to the petroleum sector as well as support in the form of co-financing (like the World Bank health sector project).
 - Some of the main projects supporting agriculture, natural resource management, enterprise development, health and social welfare have partially achieved their goals, but questions may be raised to some issues like cost effectiveness and outreach to target group. In total, these projects account for some 9 percent of total Norwegian aid.
 - A number of project interventions, most prominently by NGOs, cannot be assessed to any degree of certainty (no external review or evaluation) however based on their own assessments most projects are claimed to be well performing, producing intended outputs with potentially high impact. In total, these projects have received some 20 percent of total Norwegian aid.

- Some projects have been implemented without any visible impact (like the hydro power study) or may be considered to have had an adverse impact on the development (like a major share of the import support). Altogether these projects account for some 10 percent of total disbursements.
- Some projects are in the initial stages of implementation with no major outputs produced and subsequently no assessment of impact can be made. These projects have accounted for some 6 percent of disbursements.
- In addition, some projects have not been subject to any systematic assessment of performance by the recipient institution or organisation. In total these projects have received some 4 percent of total aid.

The above may suggest that of the total contribution from Norway during 1994-97, some 80 percent has been provided to projects which fully or partially have met the objectives (with the main contribution in the form of debt relief). For some of these projects, however, questions may be raised to cost efficiency, outreach and sustainability and for some of the projects the findings are based on the assessment by the project holders themselves (internal reviews and evaluations).

Implementation of the strategy

Overall the evaluation shows that the strategy has been implemented concerning allocation of aid to priority sectors and in addressing major issues like poverty, environment, gender and management capacity of recipient institutions. However, in terms of other issues related to the implementation of the strategy, the following deviations have been observed:

- The major shift in the profile of cooperation has been the large debt relief operations, gradually on account of import support. Project targeted aid has not increased as called for in the strategy.
- Health and social welfare has been and continued to be one of the main sectors of support despite that this sector is not given any specific priority in the strategy.
- The energy sector; and more specifically the petroleum and hydro power sub-sectors, were indicated as other areas of support. In former case it has been implemented, in the latter case the

focus has been on power distribution, not hydro power production.

- The major weakness in the implementation of the strategy is related to lack of coordination. In many cases the aid flows through different modes of cooperation (through country program allocations, special allocations, multilateral cooperation, Norwegian NGOs and Nicaraguan NGOs) have reached the same organisation and beneficiaries, but monitored as individual projects without taking the totality of the support into consideration.

The strategy as a tool in development cooperation

The strategy has only to a certain extent been implemented. As previously indicated the shift towards project targeted aid in priority sectors has only to a limited extent taken place. The main share of support has been provided for non-project aid like debt relief and import support. Health and social welfare, a sector not given any particular emphasis in the strategy, has remained one of the main sector in terms of project targeted aid.

The above may be explained by the following findings in our evaluation;

- A strategy approved by one Government in Nicaragua may not necessarily reflect the priorities of new Governments. In addition, the core issue for any Government has not been to agree on detailed strategies with each of the numerous donors to the country, but to know the donors sector preferences and procedures. The main issue for cooperation is to be able to direct resources in a flexible manner to areas of priority at any given time. The strategy has in this respect served as a policy guidance concerning which areas Norway would give priority, but been to inflexible in terms of what allocations in the aid budget, mode of cooperation and specific projects that will be considered. The latter are and should remain issues for the annual management plans and consultations.
- Policy interventions by Norway, like the sudden emphasis on social sectors and the large support to debt relief, have partly reduced the value of the strategy or changed the profile of cooperation to programme rather than project tied aid. The strategy has not been revised to take these changes into account as indicated in the guidelines for preparation of country strategies.

- The strategy has not been widely used by the Norwegian development administration, in particular when it concerns support through Norwegian NGOs accounting for some 25 percent of total aid and some 40 percent of project targeted aid.
- The strategy has not been clear and consistent in terms of what sectors and areas to give priority. Of the four operational objectives, only two may be claimed to focus on particular sectors and areas (support to selected production sectors, and democracy and respect for human rights).

The findings from the evaluation clearly indicates that there is a need for some policy level guidance to coordinate Norwegian aid and translate the general policies and principles for Norwegian aid into *country specific* guidelines. These guidelines should take into account not only the political and institutional environment, but the *role of Norwegian aid* among the donors. Taking the latter into consideration, one will be able to select *some areas and sectors* if there is a role to play for Norwegian aid as one source of external funding among many (as the case is for Nicaragua). Accordingly, a strategy should serve as a reference at the policy level concerning Norwegian preferences for sector and areas of priority.

At the operational level (as a management tool), the choice of modality of cooperation, what specific projects and the role of NGOs, Norwegian business community and Norwegian public sector institutions, should be based on *project assessments* to determine what kind of *inputs* may best serve the projects. These issues are addressed at the operational level in formulating annual management plans and during annual consultations without the need for a reference to a country strategy. Promotion of a specific modality of cooperation should not in any case be considered as an *objective by itself*. A strategy is accordingly not needed as a management tool for implementation of the above policy decisions in addition to what is already used by the Norwegian development Administration.

For any *guideline* or *strategy* to be *widely used* by the total Norwegian aid administration, more effort is needed and it should be *communicated* to all project promoters and recipients.

Finally, there is a need for a *common set of guidelines and procedures in monitoring* of all aid, regardless of whether it is being implemented by NGOs or public sector institutions. It also needs to take into account the *available human resources* in the aid administration, especially at the level of an Embassy being in the centre of the implementation of all Norwegian aid.

ANNEX I - MANDATE

EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH NICARAGUA IN THE COUNTRY STRATEGY PERIOD (1994-97)

1. BACKGROUND

Development cooperation with Norway's prioritized partner countries (programme countries) is based on country strategies. Country strategies for individual programme countries determine main goals, main strategies and the most important instruments and channels for bilateral development cooperation. A "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) or an "Agreed Minutes" (AM) formulates the common political foundation upon which cooperation will be based during the period concerned. The country strategy will be implemented through annual rolling country programmes in the form of specific measures with allocations.

A country strategy document for development cooperation with Nicaragua was drawn up in 1992/1993, as was an AM from political talks dated 5 August 1993. Rolling country programmes have been established through consultations which normally take place on an annual basis, and which are formulated in an AM. The most recent consultations on the country programme took place in Nicaragua on 23-25 April 1997. According to the resulting AM, the two governments agreed to re-evaluate the current country strategy (strategy of cooperation).

In order to facilitate the process of drawing up a country strategy for a new period of cooperation, it has been determined that the cooperation between Norway and Nicaragua in the period 1994-97 shall be evaluated.

2. PURPOSES

Taking the political and economic developments which have taken place in Nicaragua during the past five years as a point of departure, a summary shall be made of the results of and the experience acquired through Norwegian development cooperation. It shall be determined whether Norway and Nicaragua have made an active effort to follow-up the main goal and subsidiary goals stated in the "Agreed Minutes". Furthermore, an assessment shall be made as to whether this goal achievement can be viewed as being in reasonable proportion to the use of resources.

An additional goal of the evaluation is to assess the degree to which country strategy documents have been appropriate instruments for the purposes of steering and reference during this period, and whether this has affected the results of the cooperation.

3. MAJOR ISSUES

3.1 Assessing the main goal and principles of development cooperation

The overriding long-term goal of Norwegian development cooperation with Nicaragua is to promote sustainable social development, i.e. to strengthen the country's ability to provide for the basic needs of the general population. Thus the evaluation shall include the following:

3.1.1 It shall give an account of the developments of the past five years in Nicaragua, focusing particularly on political (including human rights and democracy), economic, social and environmental conditions. The influence of any regional factors on these developments shall be explained. Any consequences of the policies of international financial institutions shall be analysed.

3.1.2 An assessment shall also be made of the goals of Norwegian development cooperation with Nicaragua as they are expressed in the country strategy. Have the goals been clear and realistic enough to be implemented? To what degree have the framework conditions changed for the recipient/donor during this period? Have the goals been adjusted during the course of the period in relation to changes in the framework conditions for the recipient/donor. Has cooperation suffered from want of professional or financial resources, and have incorrect or unsuitable instruments been used to achieve the goals?

3.1.3 With regard to the implementation of the above-mentioned goals, in keeping with the areas of concentration designated in the country strategy, assessment shall be made as to whether development cooperation has to a sufficient degree been directed towards the poor members of the population, whether it has focused particularly on conditions for women and on integrating gender perspectives into Norwegian devel-

opment cooperation, whether institutional development and the development of expertise are tools within the various sectors, and whether increased emphasis has been placed on principles concerning recipient responsibility. A summary shall be made of the experience acquired through these efforts.

3.1.4 In the event that goals have not been followed up and principles have not been complied with, an assessment shall be made of why this has not occurred.

3.2 Assessing the subsidiary goals

Findings and conclusions relating to the problems discussed in item 3.1 shall be analysed, taking a point of departure in, among other things, an assessment of the results, relevance and effectiveness for the four subsidiary goals and on the basis of priority areas and main channels of development cooperation as stated below and in item 3.3:

- the strengthening of human rights and democracy in Nicaragua;
- increasing production within selected sectors (agriculture, small industry and energy);
- promoting the ecologically sustainable management of natural resources;
- the strengthening of human resources.

3.3 Priority areas, main channels, etc.

3.3.1 Country programme cooperation

The results, relevance and efficiency within state-to-state cooperation shall be assessed in relation to main and subsidiary goals.

3.3.2 Non-governmental organizations

The results, relevance and efficiency of assistance channelled through local non-governmental organizations and administered by the Norwegian Embassy in Nicaragua shall be assessed, as shall assistance which is channelled through Norwegian NGOs and administered by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation in Oslo. The extent of this cooperation shall be analysed, focusing particularly on whether coordination between assistance to NGOs and other forms of cooperation has been achieved.

3.3.3 Norwegian Volunteer Service

The results, relevance and efficiency of assistance through the Norwegian Volunteer Service shall be assessed, focusing particularly on the extent to which coordination has been achieved between the efforts of the Norwegian Volunteer Service and other forms of cooperation.

3.3.4 Special allocations

Special allocations for the strengthening of gender equality, culture, the environment, the fight against AIDS, and support for research and grants have been applied during the country strategy period. The results, relevance and efficiency of these schemes shall be assessed. The extent to which special allocations have been coordinated with other aspects of the country programme shall be analysed.

3.3.5 Support schemes for business and industry

An assessment shall be made of the results, relevance and efficiency of the above-mentioned support schemes, and of coordination of these schemes in relation to other areas of cooperation.

It shall be determined whether Norwegian commodity support is concentrated exclusively in sectors where Norway is already involved, and whether the system for payment of countervalue is functioning satisfactorily.

3.3.6 Multilateral organizations and international financial institutions

An assessment shall be made of the extent to which effective, coordinated cooperation with multilateral organizations, including international financial institutions, has been achieved, and of the results of this cooperation. An analysis shall also be made of the extent to which the multilateral cooperation scheme has been applied, and of the role played by this cooperation in relation to other forms of cooperation.

3.3.7 Use of regional allocations

Regional measures in which Nicaragua is one of several participants, shall be assessed in relation to any national measures financed through regional allocations (which are provided in addition to national support).

3.4 Country strategy as an instrument (suitability and utilization)

Country strategy documents in their current form have been used since 1993 (see annexed guidelines of 13 September 1993). A country strategy document with an MOU serves primarily as a political or strategic tool in the cooperation between Norway and the recipient country. It should also serve as a steering and reference document between the Norwegian participants in the cooperation, and between the political authorities in both Norway and the recipient country.

The evaluation shall assess whether the country strategy has been integrated as a key component of the cooperation process between the two countries, and whether it has been an appropriate instrument. It is desirable that the reasons be determined for any deviations from decisions laid down in the country strategy/MOU and the extent to which the authorities of partner countries have been involved in such decisions.

4. METHODS

Evaluation will need to be based on the following information:

- a) access to all relevant documents in Norway and Nicaragua (see annex)
- b) status reports for all relevant activities within the cooperation as of 31 December 1997
- c) access to information from and assessments by relevant people, both Norwegians and Nicaraguans, who have played an important role in cooperation during this period
- d) access to information from and assessments by other relevant people

Evaluation will to a great extent involve examination and analysis of documents (desk study).

Material and analyses resulting from the desk study will be supplemented and adjusted by means of interviews of central participants and other relevant people and, to a lesser degree, by impressions derived from field trips and interviews of target groups.

5. TIMETABLE

Evaluation should be accomplished within a period of two to three months in the course of 1998.

ANNEXES TO THE MANDATE

Evaluation must deal with all the documents relevant for cooperation during the period in question (see Mandate, item 4 a). The most important categories of documents to be considered are the following:

- a) final document from the political discussions on country strategy (Agreed Minutes of 5 August 1993), as well as the final country strategy document for the entire cooperation during the same period (both base-line and joint strategy documents)
- b) formal documents prepared in connection with follow-up of the country strategy in the annual country programme negotiations. (These will primarily consist of the "Agreed Minutes" from the country programme negotiations, but will also include instructions and follow-up documents and reports subsequent to the country programme discussion.)
- c) other formal documents including letters of allocation, activity plans, etc. which were prepared during the period in question
- d) evaluations, reviews, final documents, studies, etc. in connection with development cooperation implemented during the period in question
- e) other documents which can shed light on decisions concerning changes in priorities, readjustments, etc. during the period in question, and/or which have a bearing on cooperation during the period in question
- f) *Guidelines for the preparation of country strategy document*, dated 23 August 1993.

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF COUNTRY STRATEGY DOCUMENT (Revised as per 23. August 1993)

1. Contents

1.1 Make a survey of the political, economic, social and ecological development in the recipient country, including the conditions for human rights in general, the situation for women and for other social groups.

1.2 Make a survey of the international framework conditions of particular importance for the country's development.

1.3 Make a survey of the country's political objectives, overall plans and priorities, and assess these in relation to the budgets adopted and the practical measures implemented. In this connection, assess the administrative and institutional concerns of importance for implementation of the plans and priorities.

1.4 Make a survey of the total international assistance and assess the country's future needs for assistance.

1.5 Make an assessment of Norwegian assistance in relation to the total international assistance and of experiences in implementing Norwegian assistance.

1.6 On the basis of existing documentation, assess the total effect of the Norwegian assistance in relation to the established goals for Norwegian assistance to the country.

1.7 Assess the conditions for cooperation in other areas between Norway and the country concerned.

1.8 Make a recommendation for practical measures and for the strategy that should apply for Norwegian cooperation with the country during the next four years in view of experiences with assistance thus far and the effects of the assistance, Norwegian development cooperation policy objectives, the country's own priorities, future national and international framework conditions, access to assistance from other sources and the possibility of effective implementation of the assistance. As far as possible, clarify the main areas appropriate for assistance, the choice of instruments and appropriate channels for implementation of the assistance.

2. Process

2.1 The Department of Bilateral Development Cooperation has the main responsibility for preparing country strategy reports. This involves responsibility for managing, planning and implementing the process.

2.2 The Department of Bilateral Development Cooperation is to submit a tentative plan to the meeting of senior staff setting out the country strategies to be prepared during the following two years. This plan is to be revised at least once a year.

2.3 Normally, two strategies shall be prepared each year. In addition to this, it should be possible to pre-

pare a further strategy when there is a special need for this.

2.4 On the basis of such a plan, the Department of Bilateral Development Cooperation may itself initiate the necessary preparations for the country strategy process, and/or request that other departments, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation or relevant foreign missions carry out assessments, pilot studies, evaluations, etc. to elucidate major factors in respect of the recipient country.

2.5 The other development cooperation departments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation have a general responsibility to support the Department of Bilateral Development Cooperation in connection with the preparation of country strategy reports. In addition to any contribution to the preparation of written material, these departments, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and relevant foreign missions are to participate in an advisory group that is to function during the implementation of the country strategy work. The Department of Political Affairs and the regional adviser as well as Department of External Economic Affairs III may also be invited to participate. The advisory group is to be chaired by a representative from the Department of Bilateral Development Cooperation.

2.6 As part of the preparations, a memorandum is to be prepared for the political staff, which shall focus on issues of particular importance. In addition to this, a schedule is to be prepared for implementation of the country strategy work.

2.7 A normal country strategy that is prepared every four years will necessarily involve a more extensive review than the country strategy work arising out of specific changes in the recipient country's situation or other factors indicating a need for such a review or revision.

2.8 Consultations with the recipient country in connection with the preparation and implementation of the country strategy work are to be carried out continuously via Norwegian foreign missions. There will also normally be a visit from Norway to the recipient country during the course of this process.

2.9 When a draft of the country strategy report has been prepared, this is circulated for comment to the affected departments in the Norwegian Ministry of

Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and the relevant foreign missions. A revised draft is then submitted to be dealt with finally by the Tuesday Meeting.

2.10 The conclusion of the Minister will form the basis for preparation of a memorandum containing proposals for a country strategy to be sent to the government of the recipient country as a basis for political talks concerning cooperation during the following four years. According to needs, prior discussions may be held with the authorities at senior official level.

2.11 The result of the political talks with the recipient country shall be recorded in agreed minutes confirm-

ing the parties' approval of the country strategy. The approved country strategy is included as part of the agreed minutes.

2.12 Following completion of the political talks, the country strategy report and the agreed minutes are made public.

2.13 The Storting is normally informed by means of the annual reports or by a special letter. The need for a Government memorandum is considered in each case.

2.14 Information material concerning the strategy should be prepared in Norwegian and in the official language of the partner country.

ANNEX II - Matrix of main projects by sector.

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SUPPORT</p> <p>Debt Relief</p> <p>Reduce Nicaragua's total debt service to achieve a manageable debt service portfolio. Part of a multi-lateral debt relief operation (5th dimension) to clear the commercial IBRD debt.</p>	<p>The joint effort of Paris Club as well as 5th dimension debt relief operations has made a significant contribution in reducing the debt burden for Nicaragua to a more manageable level, provided public resources for priority areas of intervention and promoted private investments to increase production capacity (improved credit and risk rating by the international community). Assessment is based on the analysis of macroeconomic performance, changes in balance of payments positions as well as public expenditure. However still more debt relief/debt restructuring is required to achieve a manageable debt service level.</p> <p>According to the strategy Nicaragua would be <i>considered</i> for debt relief and this mode of assistance has been the major one in financial terms. Despite a clear message by Norway in 1995 not to accept allocation of funds for import support due to slow progress in identifying new projects, debt relief was provided at a level bringing the Norwegian development aid to Nicaragua at its highest level ever.</p>
<p>NIC 100 (Commodity) Import Support</p> <p>To promote economic growth by increased import capacity for selected key sectors. The funds have been tied to selected imports and as such has not been regular import support in accordance to the definitions of the international donor community. Previously the commodity assistance (or commodity import support) was recorded under the NIC 012 for agriculture inputs, and as sector investments in industry.</p>	<p>The Norwegian Import support has not observed important criteria to ensure value for money, effective allocation of resources for production and public expenditures. The support has in some cases been tied to supplier (reduced value for money), tied to specific importers (contradicting policies to promote structural adjustment) and in some case counterpart funds have been tied to specific state interventions. In addition, instead of providing support on a reimbursable basis, support has been provided as advance payments to selected importers given concessional terms of counterpart funds (bias to selected importers) with counterpart funds by concessional credits (subsidy to selected some times non-performing importers).</p> <p>According to strategy to be phased out in favour of project targeted support. Although it was gradually phased out, it continued to be a major area of assistance during the first years of the strategy.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>NIC025 CSE - Supreme Electoral Council</p> <p>Contribute to strengthen the development of Democracy & Human/Civil Rights & give legitimacy to the electoral process.</p> <p>Purposes:</p> <p>Contribute to the preparation of 1996 elections by issuing identity cards for electoral and civil purposes</p> <p>Modernise the Civil Register</p> <p>Give legitimacy to the electoral process through civic education campaigns</p> <p>Establish a permanent electoral roll</p>	<p>By Sept. 98, 2.282 million identity card applications have been received. From those, 1.55 million have been processed and 1.3 million are already in the hands of Nicaraguan citizens. There have been some problems in some cases with birth certificates, differences in names entered, lack of appropriate data processing system for verification of the data registered, and problems in the manufacture of the identity cards.</p> <p>The subprojects had different levels of completion ranging from 0 to 100%. Effort was made in order to accomplish the goals for the 1996 elections, and although there was an advance observed that contributed to assure the transparency and efficiency of the process, there were also problems in the process that created a climate of uncertainty and lack of confidence in the validity of the results. The national and international observers reassured the validity and transparency of the process. However, there is still a long road ahead in order to streamline the electoral process, and there will be a need of more international funds, thus, it seems to be a need for an evaluation of the allocation of financial resources, in order to ensure a more efficient use of the funds. The project generated a very inventive procedure for implementation raising capacity at community level and improving participation at all levels. Achievement of the overall objective will demand more financial support rather. An important externality is that more than half of the citizens that received the ID electoral card, were first time ID citizens. This sole fact enables the common citizen at rural area to cash a check in the bank or have an ID raising empowerment capacities within the population.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>NIC026 INIM Legal Rights for Women</p> <p>To train the personnel in charge of the "Comisarias de la Mujer y la Niñez" and the technical staff in judiciary, psychological and police related aspects, in order to attend the members of the population who are victims of domestic violence.</p> <p>The main plan outputs from the project was; Legal Framework, Five Comisaría Units operating Support Team for Each Comisaría Institutional strengthening of specialised services. Awareness raising amongst the population. Follow-up and evaluation system.</p>	<p>The project has been developed at a slower pace than was expected. There have been some advances in the completion of the outputs, such as the creation of the 5 "Comisarias de la Mujer y la Niñez" and an increased awareness in the population, the government and the national entities about the importance of the project. There are still some challenges to be met, it seems necessary to design a strategic overall plan so that all donor the funds are used in a coordinated manner aimed towards the achievement of one concerted objective. Right now there is a lack of a unified strategy and plan.</p> <p>An important externality of the Project is that the Police has had a strong appropriation of the concept and has allocated budget funds to support two Comisarias. Budget allocations and donors of the projects reflect on quality of services and equipment for each Comisaría. Further support should be given designing a financial mechanism through which many donors would allocate funds for the support of a number of Comisarias. This could be a more efficient way to empower the "partner" in giving better service to its clientele taking less time attending the particular style of each donor.</p> <p>Main Partner of this project, INIM, has become part of the new Ministry for the Family. During the implementing process, disputes between the Police and INIM for the hegemony of the project took place.</p> <p>In building institutional capacity and awareness generated at society level this project has produced important outputs.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES</p> <p>CARE Norway working through CARE Nicaragua Sustainable Agriculture Project (SAP II and VI)</p> <p>To promote diversification in agriculture production. Main components: community organisation, sustainable agriculture, diversification of crops, agro-forestry, natural resource management, alternative credit, training.</p>	<p>From 1989-94, the project "Safe and Rational Use of Pesticides" was implemented in León and Chinandega. From 1994 the project changed into "Sustainable Agricultural Project II" (SAPII). In 1997, the SAP II was put under the same administration and organisational structure as SAP VI; the Sustainable Agricultural Project VI in Matagalpa. In the first semester of 98, however, a phase-out stage was carried out in the western region (León, Chinandega) due to financial constraints in CARE Norway.</p> <p>Final internal report for SAP II (1998) shows high degree of participation at all levels. A thorough assessment revealing the participants' perception of project's performance, showing success in having implemented sustainable ways of diversified crop production, high level of technical knowledge concerning new crops, high level of participation, also among women, and well functioning workshops and organisation in general.</p> <p>Internal midterm evaluation of both SAP II and VI (1996) shows that PAS has motivated participants to learn, to improve their agricultural production techniques and to broaden their productive horizons, with a view toward attaining sustainability in the means by which they earn their livelihood. CARE Nicaragua seems to be well organised, to have a good reporting system, clear goals, and a high level of participation.</p> <p>Relevant according to strategy by emphasising institutional building, partnership, gender and environmental issues, as well as being targeted at poor groups.</p>
<p>Norwegian Development Fund (Utviklingsfondet) - working through FACS (Fundación Augusto César Sandino)</p> <p>Support to the protection of the highlands of Estelí, Limay, Pueblo Nuevo and Condega. 3 main components: Agriculture and Small Scale Enterprise (animal breeding), Ecology (planting and forestry), and Soil conservation.</p>	<p>Objectives are completed with 75-100 per cent according to internal reports. Many workshops held, and has had a high level of participation. Internal reports claim however a lack of registering and systematisation of information, which makes it difficult to assess the real impact of the project.</p> <p>External evaluation from 1997; positive in general terms, but recommends an improvement of the credit component, inclusion of agriculture in the production component, and a strengthening of the community organisation. In accordance with strategy as it is targeted at poor peasants within priority regions, and has incorporated environmental issues.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>Norwegian Development Fund (Utviklingsfondet) - working through FACS (Fundación Augusto César Sandino)</p> <p>Project: Support to the development of San Juan de Limay municipality. Components: Animal breeding, agriculture, (re-)forestry, soil conservation, credit and commercialisation.</p>	<p>Good performance according to internal annual reports. An agro-economic study and a nutritional diagnosis have been undertaken and have proven useful, "promoters" are trained. Nevertheless, the report claims that a lack of registering and systematisation of information makes it difficult to assess the real impact of the project.</p> <p>External evaluation from 1995 shows that the Technical Assistance spend a lot of time on administration. Apart from that, most objectives have been reached, and some have been "over-reached", except from the re-forestry, which is due to the drought. High emphasis on sustainability.</p> <p>In accordance with strategy as it is targeted at poor peasants within priority regions, and has incorporated environmental issues.</p>
<p>Norwegian Development Fund (Utviklingsfondet) - working through FMM (Fundación Manolo Morales)</p> <p>Project: Improvement of livelihood conditions of poor families in Diriomo asma, and integrated improvement of the environment.</p> <p>Sustainable agriculture, environment, credit for SME in order to provide alternative income opportunities for rural families. TA concerning health and nutrition.</p>	<p>External evaluation in 1997 concludes with having found generally positive results, but which also points out some challenges, like the lack of "credit culture", and lack of participation and cooperation among some of the peasants. The project has nevertheless succeeded in providing alternative income possibilities for rural families in the area.</p> <p>In accordance with strategy it is targeted at poor peasants, and has both gender and environmental issues and capacity building as components, but geographically outside of priority regions.</p>
<p>Royal Society of Norwegian Farmers (SFNV) NDR/UNAG and NORNICA - to improve the livelihoods of small peasants. Components: training, judicial support, institutional strengthening, experience exchange between Norway and Nicaragua. farmers, + re-integration of former Contra soldiers.</p>	<p>NDR/UNAG is implemented in Region IV; Carazo, Masaya, Granada and Rivas. Third phase initiated in 1994, and will expire in 1998. NORNICA is an expansion of the project to region II (and V); León, Chinandega, Managua and Boaco, from 1997.</p> <p>No external evaluations since 1994, but will be an external evaluation in 1998/99. High level of female participation. Some problems with the credit component. The organisation is yet not self-sustainable. In accordance with strategy as it is targeted at poor peasants, emphasises institutional strengthening, and has both gender and environmental components. Both outside and within priority regions.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>NIC - 032 INTA - Agriculture Extension Services</p> <p>Support to INTA for implementation of its extension services.</p> <p>Project for training and technical assistance for women farmers.</p>	<p>INTA is offering services to a target some 47,600 family producers through the execution of 26 projects. Main donors for INTA are the World Bank, NORAD, COSUDE, Japan and the Kellogs Foundation. NORAD is classified by the administration staff as the second largest donor and the one that gives INTA the greater degree of flexibility. Some 32 percent of the INTA budget is given by a reimbursable fund of the World Bank. The project consist of two components of which one is provided as budget support to complement the financing of the World Bank in strengthening the institutional capacity.</p> <p>The other component of the project is to "make women farmers the subject of extension services". This project has had as much as six responsible units from 1989 to 1998. During 1994/97 it was transferred from MAG to INTA. The target of families to be attended is 552 in Phase II. For many reasons the project has maintained within itself having very low impact on the overall gender policies of agricultural institutions. Nevertheless, the existence of the project has highlight the lack of policies in the mainstream of agricultural structures at all levels and has raised the grade of awareness of decision makers and technicians to improve in gender policies and to develop methodologies for women targets. The project has validated methodologies but lacks the data to establish a comparison of the improving conditions of women with the extension services than the ones that have not. Other constraint of the project is lack of good indicators to measure the right impact that could have had. Impact on economic improvement and lowering of work burden of women is still to be estimated. It is recommended to work on this figures to be able to impact more at other communities and for the sustainability of the project.</p> <p>The project has also generated the building capacity for the extensions personnel to develop expertise for the transferring of technology to women farmers. Evaluation concludes that support has been conducive in strengthening institutional capacity, but outreach to target group has been low compared to project cost.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>NIC 012 Agriculture Sector Program</p> <p>Increase sustainable production of basic crops for small farmers. Increase participation of women. Components from MAG: extension services, consultancies, scholarships and imports of fertilizer. Women farmers & Inst. Support. MARENA component: Pikin Guerrero.</p> <p>PROCATEPA Phase II. Make women farmers the subject of extension services</p>	<p>For the component to strengthen institutional capacity, this project has produced adequate output. However, the major share of the project has been financing of imports of fertilizers. This component has not been subject to any review or evaluation. Impact in the form of increased revenues to beneficiaries has not been monitored. Human resources strengthening has been successful.</p> <p>The project was a predecessor to NIC 032 and NIC 027.</p>
<p>NIC 027 PNDR - Pikin Guerrero Sustainable Agriculture</p>	<p>Assist in the development of the agricultural sector in Nicaragua. Objectives not properly defined in documents reviewed. Project in final phase supposed to be finished by March 1999. Since 1989 the project has been implemented by 5 different institutions. At the end¹ PNDR decided the closure of the project by December 1998. Main outputs of the project can be found at project level. Main constraint of the project is the lack of organisational sustainability and lack of a strategy to ensure long term impact after project completion.</p>
<p>Nic 030 INRA Promotion of women's access to land titles</p> <p>Foment peace, stability and increased productivity among rural families.</p>	<p>Outputs released as programmed. Promotions and advertisement outputs delivered as scheduled. Titling of land having women farmers as beneficiaries took place as a result of the project.</p>

1. Programa Nacional de Desarrollo Rural (PNDR). The Program became after September 1, 1998 the Institute for Rural Development under the Presidency of the Republic.

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>CAM 027 CATIE. Conservation for sustainable development in Central America Project.</p>	<p>This is a regional project. Development objective to the study farming systems of the population located in lowland forest and mangrove's agricultural frontier areas or in marginal zones through land use planning to achieve farming system improvements. Nicaragua as one of 4 countries¹ received during 1995 22.5%, and in 1996/97 10% of total allocation. Main components of the project in Nicaragua take place in León: evaluation of timber species in managed forests, updating the technical process of honey production and insertion within the communities. The project has developed relations with Danida supported project Estero Real. During the period 1994-97 Olafo Phase II (1992/1995) ended and Olafo Phase III started (1996-1998).</p> <p>Main outputs of Olafo Phase II in Nicaragua shows the following: strengthening of local groups at Las Peñitas, development of Mangrove Forest Management Plan for the project zone, validation of 3 production alternatives, participation of National Institutions as MARENA, PNDR and UCA, and finally the publishing of main systematizing documents.</p>
<p>CAM 007 - CATIE. Integrated Pest management (Phase II) 1995-98</p> <p>Secure, diversified, increased an environment friendly production among farmers focus on ecological reasoning and better decision making.</p>	<p>The development objective of the project is to generate integrated pest management capacity in the country. This task intends to change the culture of production of the country with non sustainable use of pesticides. The impact of the project is to be seen on a long term basis. Project has succeeded in reaching at least 15% of the total coffee producers and 55.6% of total extension officers. There has been networking with major ongoing projects. Phase III has started and is addressed to the objective of getting qualified extension work on MIP, as a consolidation phase of previous ones. Main institution for CATIE is INTA. Main weakness of the project is that they don't pursue a prize in the market for the production of less intensive pesticides production. Certification of environment friendly produced crops free of pesticides is still not promoted.</p>

1. Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panamá.

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>SMALL SCALE INDUSTRY</p> <p>NIC 021 PAMIC - Credit Micro Enterprises Promote SME enterprises. Expand credit to rural areas. Strengthen 30 IFC's. Institutional Support.</p>	<p>NORAD support 17% of the total contributions to PAMIC for 1997. PAMIC has been evaluated by PNUD and IDB with adequate results. The institution strengthening component produced major outputs however some concern raised to the sustainability of the financial services through the financial intermediaries.</p>
<p>Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA) - CONAPI Small Scale Industry</p> <p>Objective: the survival and the development of small scale industry and artisans, particularly of cooperatives and the strengthening of their union organisation. Components: Organisational training for CONAPI leaders, institutional support for regional structures, credit for coops and micro-enterprises, technical training, support in marketing, and creation of design centres.</p>	<p>From 1996, support to CONAPI was sub-divided into two NPA projects; Local Development in Matagalpa, and Masaya Small Scale Industry (Regions VI and IV).</p> <p>Annual progress reports well organised; show planned activities and achievements. CONAPI credit programme suffer from a 50 per cent recovery rate. Internal difficulties in CONAPI (change of leadership and most of the technical team resigned). Most of the planned tasks were re-programmed due to internal problems. The lack of organisational consistency in CONAPI in Matagalpa/Jinotega region led NPA to decide to conclude its support in 1997. As to the Masaya region, a mid-term evaluation was made of the cooperation with CONAPI that recommended an out-phasing of the cooperation. The cooperation relations were projected to close down in 1998, but the 1997 evaluation led to a reduction in financial support in 1998 which will be the last year for NPA cooperation.</p>
<p>NIC 037 CARUNA Rural Financial Services</p> <p>Contribute to increase in agricultural production. Strengthen network of sustainable financial services institutions. Improve living conditions of farm families.</p>	<p>This is a starting project. CARUNA has achieved legal and administrative independence, there has been continuous training, 20 LSLO's will be established by the end of 1998 and financial reports are above break even. The Norwegian allocation is almost the amount of money required to start a commercial bank. A feasibility study for CARUNA financial capacity to become sustainable beyond the project, is recommended at this stage in order to take all the necessary steps to assure the long run sustainability.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
ENERGY	
NIC 040 Benjamin Seledon - Sub-stations for ENEL.	Project just commenced. No outputs produced during 1994-97.
NIC 010 Petroleum Sector Support Mapping (seismic data) and training of INEC personnel in analysing and managing information to attract international as well as regional and national oil companies in exploring potential production.	<p>Evaluation report Phase I in 1995 concludes that the project has produced adequate outputs and this is further confirmed by review and annual progress reports. The interest shown by international oil companies in accessing data and move into exploration is an indicator of adequate output and potential high impact.</p> <p>Although not within the core priority areas of the strategy, it may be labelled as support to selected industries and has been specifically mentioned in the strategy as a project to receive continued support.</p>
NIC 022 Transformers to ENEL Supply and installation of transformer.	<p>The transformer has been installed (although delayed completion). Only technical assessment has been done (verification of installation). No assessment of impact.</p> <p>The strategy called for support to exploration of hydro power potential, not distribution. However, the project was approved prior to the strategy and is a contribution to energy efficiency (environment impact).</p>
NIC 023 Water Master Plan - Hydro Power Study of potential hydro power and water resources for irrigation purposes including potential for regional cooperation in utilising assumed major resources in Nicaragua.	Feasibility study produced, however, no recommended actions from the study has been pursued.

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE</p> <p>Save the Children Fund of Norway (Redd Barna)</p> <p>34 projects to provide preventive actions for children nation-wide. Objective: contribute to reduce psycho-social and economic problems affecting children from poor families; contribute to improve the living conditions of children in especially difficult circumstances, support promotion of children's rights and contribute to strengthen child protection through training. Special emphasis on working children in urban areas</p>	<p>3 focal areas: (1) Community development focused on children (pre-schools, community based social promotion, working children, and children's reading); (2) Work with children in especially difficult circumstances: (special needs, children's home, fosterhomes, alternative to institutions); and (3) Defence of children's rights (radio stations, web page, cultural activities).</p> <p>Good results according to internal reports and most projects reported to be well performing. "External" evaluation (from 1996) points out the difficulties in measuring performance in social sectors, dealing with changes of values and attitudes. The evaluation report nevertheless stated that even though there was a need for an improvement of the an evaluation and follow-up system at project and programme levels in Redd Barna, all projects supported by Redd Barna have contributed to the improvement of the living conditions of children in need of special attention.</p>
<p>Student's and Academ. Intern. Aid Fund (SAIH)</p> <p>Working within social sectors on the Atlantic Coast.</p>	<p>Focusing on higher education, teacher training, upgrading of "empirical" teachers, nurse education and health projects, such as the prevention of AIDS.</p> <p>Internal annual reports show progress and relevance. No external evaluation since evaluation of the health programme in Nicaragua and Zimbabwe from 1993/94.</p>
<p>WB Health Sector Reform Project</p> <p>Strengthen MINSA (Ministry of Health), Maternal and Child Health Care, Pharmaceutical Supply System and Rehabilitation, Maintenance of main hospitals and other health facilities.</p>	<p>According to review with participating from Norway the project has adequate progress and made important contributions to the Ministry of Health in building capacity. This project considered to fall outside the core strategy objectives.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>NIC 035 IDB - Integrated Early Childhood Development and Daycare Services for Nicaraguan Children.</p> <p>The project will assist in strengthening and upgrading network of community centres and NGO/community organisations that provide day care services, improve child-caring practises in families and support low-income mothers in their various responsibilities. NORAD co-financing component for Community Childhood Development Centres, (CICO) by NGOs.</p>	<p>Project has suffered delays among others due to changes in Government form 1997. It is also claimed that with the new Government, previous identified NGOs to participate in extension of services to the families have been disregarded and new ones have been selected (selection based on political merit rather than professional capacity). This project considered to fall outside the core strategy objectives.</p>
<p>NIC 036 UNFPA - Reproductive Health</p> <p>To influence 60 percent of the population in target regions (Jinotega, Matagalpa and RAAN) to improve family planning and reproductive health.</p>	<p>According to external review commissioned by UNFPA: to ambitious targets with higher than anticipated costs in providing services through primary health care institutions (Selais), especially in RAAN.</p> <p>Project not within the priority sector of the strategy, however, already identified and indicated as an area of support in the strategy.</p>
<p>NIC 019 AIDS Grant</p> <p>General allocation to support project interventions to combat AIDS. The main part of the allocation used for support to NGOs launching awareness campaigns.</p>	<p>According to an external evaluation NGOs have generally been successful in creating awareness. Could have had additional impact if efforts among the NGOs had been better coordinated.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>OTHER SUPPORT BY NORWEGIAN NGOS</p> <p>The Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) - working through CEPAD (Consejo de Iglesias Evangélicas Pro Alianza Denominacional)</p>	<p>NCA gives general budget support to CEPAD, i.e. they do not support special projects or specific work areas of the organisation.</p> <p>CEPAD works nation-wide within 200 communities, in social, communal and pastoral promotion; education; credits and production; promotion of human rights and reconciliation, community infrastructure, and gender issues.</p> <p>Internal reports show progress within most areas, though mostly reporting number of people attending meetings and number of meetings held. No impact analysis of activities.</p> <p>One external report concerning the credit programme concludes that the programme has achieved a high degree of financial sustainability.</p>
<p>The Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) - working through CIEETS (Centro Inter Eclesial Estudios Teológicos y Sociales)</p>	<p>NCA gives general budget support to CIEETS, i.e. they do not support special projects or specific work areas of the organisation.</p> <p>Working within three main areas: (1) Ecumenical/Theological Education, (2) Rural Development, and (3) Social Communication (i.a. translation of the Bible to Miskito and Sumo), in 7 of the country's 9 regions. In 1997 some 37 per cent of the funding is allocated to rural development. The rest covers theological contextual education, social communication and administrative issues.</p> <p>Internal reports show number of graduated students, and number of publications, and number of persons participating in activities, but no analysis of impact. It is reported that 90 per cent of the objectives were reached, but no concrete references are made.</p> <p>External report from 1996 concentrates on institutional and organisational issues.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
<p>The Norwegian Latin America Solidarity Groups (LAG)</p> <p>2 projects; Palcila and Brigades</p> <p>Palcila: components: development and strengthening of ecological methods in agriculture, credits, training and technical assistance, organisation of co-operatives, and management.</p> <p>Brigades: Norwegian youth to Nicaragua (2 brigades consisting of 12 persons each year) in order to provide unskilled labour, such as digging latrines and picking coffee.</p>	<p>La Cumplida (Palcila, Matagalpa) 1989-96 (Phase 2 1994-96).</p> <p>Internal final report concludes with some results achieved, but reports to have been working under difficult circumstances, due to conflicts concerning land rights. Due to continuously increased conflicts, the project was phased out in 1996.</p> <p>Brigades (1980-)</p> <p>According to internal annual reports, the Brigades seem to function satisfactorily. No external evaluations, as far as the team has been able to determine.</p> <p>The Palcila project was relevant according to strategy inasmuch as working within the agricultural sector in a priority region, taking environmental and gender issues in to consideration. Palcila project not sustainable because of political conflicts. The Brigade project is also relevant according to strategy, inasmuch as it is targeted at poor sections of the society, and is recipient oriented, as the "brigadistas" work within projects run by local organisations.</p>
<p>Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA)</p> <p>Fishery Development Pearl Lagoon</p> <p>Long term development objective: to contribute to the sustainable development (economical, cultural and autonomy) of the communities of Pearl Lagoon through the strengthening of their own organisational expressions.</p>	<p>An initial component of this project was the construction and installation of a Storage Centre for fishery products. Another initial component was the research through the Halouver Centre for Fishery Research and Demonstration (CIDPH), for the purpose of providing the inhabitants of the zone with information and encouraging the rational use of fishery resources. In 1995, a regional university (URACCAN) joined the project through a training programme for artisanal fishermen in the Basin, and in 1996 NPA also incorporated as a partner the Centre for Human, Citizen, and Autonomous Rights (CEDEHCA) to give training to different actors from civil society and government in PL and in Human Rights issues.</p> <p>Internal annual reports show adequate project performance, although no impact analysis made. Given the complexity of the component to support artisanal fishery, a new feasibility study was conducted in 1997 for the phasing out stage of the NPA cooperation. The study confirms the possibility for self-sustainability of these investments despite the adverse context, if some thorough adjustments are made from the business and organisational point of view. NPA emphasises well functioning partner cooperation, and is willing to take necessary steps when relations do not function satisfactorily.</p>

Project description	Assessment of Performance and relevance to strategy
OTHER ALLOCATIONS/PROJECTS	
NIC 017 Local NGO's	Assessment made in separate matrix
NIC 013 Women's Grant	Through local NGOs. Assessment made in separate matrix
<p>NIC 003 Culture grant</p> <p>Music cooperation. Objective: to make popular/traditional Nicaraguan music more accessible and appreciated by the population at large, but particularly the young. Education, collection and preservation of existing music, dissemination through concerts, festivals and publications, promotion of new Nicaraguan song-writers, etc.</p>	<p>Working through 4 local NGOs.</p> <p>External evaluation 1997 concludes that the programme is clearly relevant and of considerable value, particularly to low-resource groups. Argues that sustainability should not be a criteria for this programme, providing it aims at reaching low resource groups, and for cultural activities to be self-sustainable, it requires a more commercial orientation.</p>
NIC 009 Environment Grant	Through local NGOs. Assessment made in separate matrix
<p>NIC 020 Technical Assistance Consultants to the Government of Nicaragua.</p> <p>To support the Government of Nicaragua in project planning, design and formulation as well as monitoring.</p>	<p>Based on external evaluation the contribution by Norway to fund technical assistance gave the beneficiary ministry needed additional capacity in project design and formulation. However, a major share of the assistance was provided to the Ministry of External Cooperation which is a co-ordinating rather than executing ministry.</p> <p>In terms of the strategy, the form of assistance was not fully explored during the initial years of the strategy (gradually reduced number of resources despite the assumed and experienced constraint by the Government in formulation projects in agreed sectors and areas. Since 1997 however, the utilisation of this form of assistance has increased.</p>

Table of selected projects supported by Norway through Nicaraguan NGOs 1994 - 97.

All figures in 1000 NOK.

Project Description	Disbursement Tot.			Assessment of Performance
	1994 - 97	Allocat.	Duration	
<p>NIC 0013</p> <p>WOMEN'S GRANT CDC (Centro de Derechos Constitucionales) Popular Defenders Program / Legal Training School for Women Improve the exercising of women's rights through legal training, initiate a internal strengthening of the School and evaluate the possibility of increasing its reach, implementation of operative strategies and modalities, training of instructors and legal advisors (all female), capacitating of 200 women, revision and implementation of study modules and expansion of geographical area.</p>	8,619	1%	-	<p>In general, the project developed according to plan. Its greatest weaknesses were in the area of School promotion and in the implementation of the financial strategy. These weaknesses are due to the complexity of the project in relation to the output capacity of its personnel.</p> <p>Important achievements in the training program, geographical expansion and in the transformation from a project in to an established entity.</p> <p>Among the most important impacts are: an increase in the level of denunciations in the "Casas de la Mujer". Popularization of the application of the law and legal proceedings and the transformation of the CANTERA team of the CDC (75 women) in terms of capabilities and personal development.</p> <p>SOURCES: Audits, progress reports, final report 96-98, external evaluation 96-98, interview with the school's director and technical staff.</p> <p>This project comes under the Human Rights and Democratic Development sector with specific emphasis on Gender.</p>
<p>NIC 0013</p> <p>PUNTOS DE ENCUENTRO Gender Education - Women's University Introduce the Gender perspective into studies, projects and development programmes. Promote the analysis of women's role in development. 18 courses for 18 people each. Research on violence.</p>	1,543.0	2,547	Phase I 94-96 Phase II 96-99	<p>The project's performance, according to the plan, is easy to follow due to project design that includes the use of clearly defined indicators. According to an internal evaluation report, the project has had positive effects on the self-appreciation and family relations of the participants and the improvement of the technical capacities for the formulation of development plans with gender perspectives, especially at the level of consultants. Another important effect is the incidence on public opinion and on government policies. The training activities are complemented by other activities such as: conferences, workshops, web pages and the backing of organized women's movements and of the "Comisaria de la Mujer".</p> <p>The main drawback is the centralization of the University in Managua.</p> <p>SOURCES: Audit reports, progress reports, institutional plan and internal evaluations.</p> <p>This project comes under the Human Rights and Democratic Development, and the Education sector. The Gender issue is the main focus of the project and the institution.</p>

NIC 0017	<p>LOCAL NGO'S ADDAC: (Asociación para la Diversificación y Desarrollo Agrícola Comunal) Popular Training on Panscasan an Humid Tropic Agrisystems Management. (Precursor of ADACC NIC 009)</p>	13,747 960.0	2%	- 1,139.0	Phase I 90-93 Phase II 94-96	<p>Established results indicators. Majority of goals were met. Female participation at 40%.</p> <p>The main weakness was the quality of technical visits.</p> <p>The most important effects of the project were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The establishing of Organizations Council. * Genetic improvement of animal and plant species (corn, pineapple, pigs, chickens). * Association of Organic Coffee Growers. * Grain Bank. * Cattle Raisers Association. <p>This project later became the Food Security Project (NIC 0017).</p> <p>SOURCES: 94-95 Annual Report, Audits, 1996 External Evaluation.</p> <p>The project comes under the Agriculture and Natural Resources sector.</p> <p>It is also relevant to the Gender, Poverty Alleviation and Geographical Concentration guidelines.</p>
NIC 0017	<p>UNAG RIVAS (Unión Nacional de Productores Agropecuarios) Conservationist Integral Agriculture and Reforestation Develop the agro-ecological production as a way to obtain sustainable solutions for farmers. Reforestation, workshops, information, research, promotion, women's participation.</p>	714	1,196.0	93-97 Annual basis	<p>The execution shows some weaknesses: management of funds (93-94), stability of target groups (2 coops), adverse climatic factors and technical level of project documents and reports, which hinder the project's evaluation.</p> <p>However, according to internal evaluation reports, the goals were surpassed. With the available information, the final outputs and impacts cannot be established.</p> <p>In 1997 an external evaluation was proposed but no records of it were to be found.</p> <p>Sources: financial audits, progress reports, internal evaluation and appropriation notes.</p> <p>The project is carried out in an area of low agricultural outputs and ecological degradation.</p> <p>Target groups are poor subsistence-level farmers.</p>	

NIC 009	<p>ENVIRONMENT GRANT ADDAC (Asociación para la Diversificación y Desarrollo Agrícola Comunal)</p> <p>Food Security and Production Development with small production. In humid tropical zones.</p> <p>Contribute to the improvement of production and food security of 550 families in extreme poverty (2,505 C\$/Year) on the agricultural frontier.</p> <p>The main goals are related to food security plan, credit and commercialization systems, communal development and administrative strengthening.</p>	1,220.0	1%	4,654.0	97-2000	<p>In its first year, the project shows a good level of administration and management of funds. The 1997 report is clear and well structured, with indicators that facilitate its valuation. Its most important achievement is the establishment of its Credit Portfolio and debt recuperation of 95%.</p> <p>The main weaknesses were related to the promotion of savings and to commercialization.</p> <p>At this stage its too early to evaluate impacts.</p> <p>SOURCE: Project Documents, Feb-Dec 97 Financial auditing, yearly report and May 98 NORAD internal appraisal.</p> <p>The project comes under the Agriculture and National Resources sector.</p> <p>It is also relevant to the Gender, Poverty Alleviation and Geographical Concentration guidelines.</p>
NIC 0017	<p>FIDEG (Fundación Internacional para El Desafío Económico Global)</p> <p>Analysis of consumer price behavior, statistical database and their publication.</p> <p>Publication of prices in the "Observador Económico" magazine. Providing a base for wage negotiation by the labor sector, measurement of inflation.</p>	1,168.0		1,733.0	<p>Phase I 94-95</p> <p>Phase II 95-98</p>	<p>According to the analyzed information, the project has been adequately executed, both in the technical and financial aspects. To this date, the gathering of statistical data and its publication has been carried out according to plan.</p> <p>The most important impacts have been: the increase in public awareness of the rise in prices of basic consumer goods, the utilization of data in negotiations of wages and municipal budget allocations, and the creation of a database for multipurpose public use.</p> <p>The project falls within the objective of support respect of Human Rights and strengthening Democratic Development. The dissemination of information is claimed to have influenced some Government policies.</p>

NIC 0017	FVC (Fundación Víctimas de Guerra) Technical and University Scholarships for War Disabled. Phase II Provides war victims with the opportunity of personal, technical and academic self-improvement. University and technical graduates, improvement in self-esteem, self-sustainability, social acceptance and integration in to the labor market.	1,360.0		4,450.0	Phase II 94-96	<p>The execution of the project, in terms of funds use, the progress of activities and the reaching of goals, is adequate.</p> <p>Some important elements of the project are: the elaboration of screening methods for scholarship nominees and their following up and monitoring, the establishment of a savings account with 10% of the scholarship and the repayment of the scholarship subject to the finding of a job.</p> <p>Up to August 96, out of 90 students, 51 had graduated, 26 were still studying and 13 had dropped out.</p> <p>The most important impacts are the recuperation of self-esteem and self-confidence and the reintegration of the graduate in to the labor pool, although this has not been fully achieved.</p> <p>A study carried out among 91-96 graduates shows that 78% of them are working.</p> <p>SOURCES: Project and progress reports, financial audits, internal participative evaluations. No external evaluations were found.</p> <p>The project comes under the Health and Social Welfare as well as support for Democratic Development.</p>
NIC 0017	FVC (Fundación Víctimas de Guerra) Formative Program. Vocational Training and Scholarships. Provides war victims with the opportunity of personal, vocational and academic self-improvement. University scholarships for continuation of studies (30) and new students and vocational training for war disabled, widows and orphans (90).	1,086.0		2,406.0	97-99	<p>Up to 1997, according to available reports, the project's overall behavior has been adequate. 90% of its goals have been met. Even though the project lacks a specific institutional strengthening component, internal progress reports show that cooperation has had influence on the improvement of the institution's capacity. An important strategy for the incorporation of the graduates in to the labor pool, is the coordination of the SVG with the public and private sector. The most important aspects appear to be the technical improvement of personnel, the integral training of the beneficiaries, the contribution to reconciliation between former adversaries and the organizational strengthening.</p> <p>SOURCES: Strategic development plan 97-2000 narrative and evaluative reports, financial audits, and NORAD summary reports.</p> <p>The project comes under the Health and Social Welfare as well as support for Democratic Development.</p>
NIC 0017	CVC (Centro de Derechos Constitucionales) Promotion and Defense of Children's and Teen's Human Rights Contribution to the compliance of the Children's and Teen's Convention and influencing public policies. Workshops, establishment of promotional and defense networks and written, radio and televised campaigns.	692.0		807.0	96-98	<p>Project goals have been satisfactorily met. Municipal networks have been established in the participating Departments and 1,400 promoters have been trained. The former, in addition to the promotional campaigns, has greatly contributed to the placing of the issue in the National Agenda and to the increase in knowledge and consciousness about children's and teen's rights.</p> <p>According to the available reports, the most important impacts are: lobbying in the National Assembly for the approval of the Children's and Teen's Convention, facilitate the knowledge and understanding and interpretation of the law in the country's northern municipalities.</p> <p>SOURCES: Progress reports, financial audits, and interviews with the institution's staff.</p> <p>This project comes under the Human Rights and Democratic Development sector.</p>

NIC 0017	<p>CENIDH (Centro Nicaraguense de Derechos Humanos)</p> <p>Human Rights Education</p> <p>Contribute to the raising of knowledge and defense of Human Rights through sustained training and promotional campaigns.</p> <p>Training of voluntary Human Rights promoters at a regional level (Pacific and Central). Establishment of local Interinstitutional Commissions on Human Rights and incidence in public policies. The program includes a strong element of Gender Perspective.</p>	1,276.0	4,403.0 NORAD has funded CENIDH since 1991.	91-2001 From 93, in a medium-term basis.	<p>The project's performance from 91 to this date has been satisfactory, however, in order to improve its project administration capacity, the organization has begun a institutional strengthening program which includes the elaboration of a strategic institutional plan.</p> <p>The most important outputs to date have been the training of a network of 800 human rights promoters, the establishment of 33 local human rights commissions and the incorporation in to its educational program the human rights of women, children and teens. An important weakness however, is the insufficient use of its promoters and other qualified resources. However, corrective measures have been applied. One of the main impacts of this program, but not exclusively attributable to it, is the greater awareness of human rights at a municipal level, facilitation of legal proceedings and the improvement in prevention work and defending human rights.</p> <p>SOURCES: Project documents, independent polls, consultant reports and interview with CENIDH director.</p> <p>This project comes under the Human Rights and Democratic Development sector. It also strongly addresses the Gender issue.</p>
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ANNEX III - DISBURSEMENTS BY PROJECTS/-NGOs FROM 1994 - 97

Project/NGO	in 1000 NOK	% of total
Debt relief	168 411	27,5
CIS Import support	49 323	8,1
Save the Childrens Fund	37 919	6,2
CSE Supreme Electoral Council	37 000	6,1
Norwegian Volunteer Service	31 628	5,2
Norwegian Church Aid	20 101	3,3
Norwegian Peoples Aid	18 194	3,0
CARE Norway	16 791	2,7
INTA Agriculture Extension Services	15 400	2,5
World Bank Health Rehabilitation Project	15 000	2,5
ENEL Substation	11 526	1,9
Credit Micro Enterprise (PAMIC)	10 116	1,7
Support local NGOs	10 025	1,6
The Development Fund	9 743	1,6
The Royal Socceity of Norwegian Farmers	9 613	1,6
Students and Academ. Int. Dev. Fund. (SAIH)	8 736	1,4
IDB Childehood Development	8 702	1,4
Womens Grant	8 619	1,4
UNFPA Health Family Planning	7 982	1,3
Agriculture Sector Program	7 235	1,2
Sustainable Agriculture (Pekin Guerrero)	7 195	1,2
Culture grant	6 641	1,1
AIDs grant	6 325	1,0
INIM Legal Rights for Women	6 020	1,0
Environment Grant	5 865	1,0
The Latin America Groups	5 719	0,9
Women in Development	4 766	0,8
Technical Assistance	4 546	0,7
Petroleum Sector Study	4 290	0,7
ENEL Transformers	4 060	0,7
Rural Financial Services (CARUNA)	3 994	0,7
Small Scale Fisheries	3 800	0,6
Water Master Plan Hydro Power Study	3 500	0,6
NBF	3 016	0,5
INETER Area Planning Matagalya & Jinotega	2 509	0,4

Project/NGO	in 1000 NOK	of total
Local Scholarships	2 488	0,4
Pinsevernene	2 468	0,4
Disarmement Ex- combatants	2 409	0,4
Support to Auditor General	2 362	0,4
FAO IPNP	2 287	0,4
Rehab. Industrial Fisheries	1 842	0,3
Folkehelse TUB	1 763	0,3
Public Campaign Women Land reform	1 730	0,3
Norwegian Labour Union	1 717	0,3
Misc. Consultancy Services	1 997	0,3
NLL	1 526	0,2
Elections atlantic coast	1 500	0,2
NUL	1 262	0,2
Resource Management Shell fish	1 211	0,2
NFPU	1 093	0,2
FAO Fertilizer	844	0,1
Emergency Relief assistance	780	0,1
National Commission Childrens Rights	723	0,1
AP	597	0,1
INIES	549	0,1
Human Rights - Ombudsmann	535	0,1
NKF	324	0,1
Funkjonhemmedes Landsforbund	307	0,1
KAD	210	0,0
DNF	177	0,0
YME	129	0,0
ARB	25	0,0
UCA	15	0,0
ABB National Transformer	2	0,0
Other disbursements	4 130	0,7

Annex IV - List of persons interviewed

- Gilberto Aguirre Director of CEPAD
- Carmelo Angulo Resident representative, UNDP
- Oswaldo Arteaga General Director, Institute for Rural Development
- Francisco Avendaña G. Director of FACS
- Carlos A. Benavente Director Planning, INTA
- David Bergan Programme Officer, NPA
- Trond Berget Former Programme Officer, SAIH
- Signe F. Blichfeldt Head of Division, International Section, NPA
- Marit Brantzæg Assistant Director, NORAD (former I. Secretary NORAD Managua)
- Marcia Calderon Resident representative, SFNV
- Edgar Castillo NGOs Sub-Director, MINGOB
- Vilma Castillo Director, Red de Mujeres Contra la Violencia
- Nelly Castro Wheelock The World Bank
- Jose Marquez Ceas Manager International, Central Bank of Nicaragua
- Uriel Cerna Legal Advisor, Banks' Super Intendency
- Benjamin Cortéz General Secretary of CIEETS
- Torger Dahl Programme Officer, SFNV
- Vidal Duarte Programme Officer, NORAD Managua
- Moyra Eknes Programme Officer, CARE Norge
- Einar Ellefsen Senior Adviser, NORAD, Oslo
- Michele Eresue Representative, FAO
- Mario Flores General Manager of the Central Bank of Nicaragua
- Hermud Fylde Programme Officer, CARE Norway
- Carlos García C. Director of FMM (Supported by NDF)
- Mauricio Gomez Lacayo Director, Secretariat of External Cooperation, Government of Nicaragua
- Guillermo Gómez L. Secretary, Ministry of External Cooperation
- Hector H. Gonzales Program Officer, UNFPA
- Falguni Guharay Coordinator, CATIE MIP Project
- Meylin Gutierrez Secretariat of External Cooperation, Government of Nicaragua
- Nils Haugstveit Assistant Director General, Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo (member of the strategy group)
- Alvaro Herdocia Programme Officer, UNDP
- Johan Hindal Programme Officer, NCA
- Eloy F. Isaba National Director, EU - Judiciary Administration Project
- Kjell Jaren Former Programme Officer, NCA
- Eddy Jerez Director, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- Tomas Jimenez -Arya Resident Representative, UNFPA
- Odd-Kjetil Johannessen Programme Officer, SAIH
- Ingunn Klepsvik Ambassador, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Managua
- Mette Kottmann Second Secretary, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Managua
- Sergio D. Kristensen Resident representative, Redd Barna
- Javier Lacayo Project Manager, CARE Nicaragua
- Ulrich Lachler Resident representative, World Bank

Arne Kristian Larsen Former 1st. Secretary, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Managua

Julie Lennox Programme Officer, NORAD Managua

Juan Prado Lira Director, ENIMPORT

Rosa Argentia Lopez Director, INIM

Alejandro Martínez General Director of FIDEG

Hans Peter Melby Second Secretary, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Managua

Alfredo Miranda President of ADDAC

Emma Monin Program Officer, IDB

Danilo Montelavan Ass. Director General, INTA

Waldo Montenegro Project Manager, FMM (Supported by NDF)

Luci Morren President of SOYNICA

Roberto Muñoz Project Manager, FACS (Supported by NDF)

Nestor Napal Resident representative, NPA

Svanhild Nedregård Executive Officer, FRIV, NORAD

Vilma Nuñez de Escorcía General Director of CENIDH

Elin Ranum Programme Officer, LAG

Mario Sandoval NGOs Director, MINGOB

José Santos M. Manager for Collect Portfolio, ENIMPORT

José Santos R. External Cooperation Director, ENEL

Marta Sarria Advisor, IDB

Ada E. Silva Director of CDC

Steinar Skjæveland Special Adviser, Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo (head of the "Strategy Group")

Arvid Solheim Programme Officer, NDF

Azalia Solis Area Coordinator, CDC

José Felix Solis Director of Economic Affairs, the Central Bank of Nicaragua

Martin Stabile Resident representative, IDB

Charles Staver Project Director. CATIE

Tove Stub First Secretary, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Managua

Kay Stubbs Programme Officer, UNDP

Artur Sydnes Assistant Director, NORAD (former Resident Representative NORAD in Nicaragua)

Kari Thomassen Regional Co-ordinator, Redd Barna

Tom Tyrhjell Assistant Director General, Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo (member of the strategy group and resident representative for NORAD in Nicaragua)

Róger J. Urbina A. General Director, INTA

Gustavo Vega Sub-Director, CDC

Rose Mary Vega Programme Officer, Norwegian Embassy, Managua

Erik Whist Scanteam (Consultant to the Strategy Group)

Rosa Marina Zelaya President of the Supreme Electoral Council

Ole Øverås 1. Secretary, Royal Norwegian Embassy Dhaka (former Senior Executive Officer Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs and member of the "Strategy Group")

Annex V – selected reference documents

The following is a list of some reference documents used for this evaluation. It does not include the numerous internal memos and background documents to project proposals which have been reviewed³².

- ADDAC, Food Security and Production Development. Humid Tropic Zones – Project Document and various progress and review reports, 1996
- ADDAC, Ph. I Training and Organising Networks of experimenting Farmers in Agriculture and Forestry, Ph.II Promotion of Ecological and Economic Sustainability of Production in 2 Rio San Juan zones. Project Document and various progress and review reports, 1993-1997
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