1 Introduction

This review of Danish Balance of Payments Support (BOP) covers the period 1988-94, and BOP is defined so as to include import support, debt relief as well as other forms of programme aid. Thus, the following forms of general programme assistance (DAC 1991) are covered in addition to debt relief: balance of payments support, general budget support and commodity aid not related to specific projects. Programme food aid and sector programme assistance are not included. Section 2 provides a descriptive historical summary, while Section 3 identifies the main policy and other guidelines governing Danish BOP. Subsequently, Section 4 makes an assessment of existing BOP studies, and Section 5 concludes.

2 Historical Evolution

Although policy-based aid has been the subject of intense debate during the 1980s and 1990s in Denmark, this kind of aid has not so far played any significant role in Danish international development assistance. Total Danish BOP given during 1988-94 amounted to only DKK 2.2 billion corresponding to \$US 0.4 billion (Table 1). This is equivalent to approximately 8 per cent of the bilateral, and 4 per cent of the total, Danish aid budget for the whole period, and the trend has been on a pronounced decline from 1991.

With regard to the main recipients of Danish BOP, eight countries account on average for 84 per cent of the total BOP (Table 2). This degree of concentration fell, however, significantly from a level of 99 per cent in 1988 to 68 per cent in 1994. Accordingly, the number of recipients increased. Bangladesh and Tanzania have by far been the most important receivers of Danish BOP. Nevertheless, by 1994 BOP to Bangladesh had come to an almost complete standstill, and BOP to Tanzania had diminished to only 16 per cent of the 1988 level in nominal terms. Also BOP to Nicaragua and Kenya had fallen to very low levels in 1994, whereas these

Danish Balance of Payments Support

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	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Total BOP Support	243.1	329.8	286.3	462.0	360.5	278.4	218.3	2178.0
As a share of bilateral aid	9.0	10.0	8.0	12.0	9.0	6.0	5.0	8.0
As a share of total aid	4.0	5.0	4.0	6.0	4.0	3.0	2.0	4.0

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total	Share
Bangladesh	106.9	156.7	141.3	143.3	55.0	-21.8	0.8	582.2	26.9
Kenya	2.4	30.4	17.5	30.8	17.4	4.2	0.5	103.2	4.8
Mozambique	9.9	13.5	9.4	7.5	27.8	40.7	35.1	143.9	6.6
Tanzania	104.2	76.9	91.8	139.6	50.8	3.1	16.7	483.1	22.3
Uganda	12.5	10.0	5.7	35.6	40.6	71.9	8.6	184.9	8.5
Zambia	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.1	60.5	23.8	22.5	124.9	5.8
Zimbabwe	3.6	15.4	0.0	0.0	25.0	35.	62.8	141.8	6.5
Nicaragua	0.0	12.0	15.3	38.4	0.6	-0.4	0.0	65.7	3.0
Total (millions DKK)	239.5	314.9	281.0	413.3	277.7	156.5	147.0	1829.7	84
Main recipients' share of total BOP support	99.0	95.0	98.0	89.0	76.0	57	68	84	

	ain cate 88-1994		of Danis	h balan	ce of pa	ayments	suppor	t,
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
CIS ¹	230.6	299.8	270.6	301.9	242.3	108.2	82.9	1,536.3
Share of total BOP (%)	94.9	90.9	94.5	65.3	67.2	38.9	38.0	70.5
Debt relief (million DKK)	0.0	0.0	1.7	134.2	20.2	52.2	21.5	229.8
Share of total BOP (%)	0.0	0.0	0.6	29.0	5.6	18.8	9.8	10.5
Support of credit lines and OGL ²	12.5	30.0	14.0	25.9	58.0	78.0	98.6	316.0
Share of total BOP (%)	5.1	9.1	4.9	5.7	16.1	28.0	45.2	14.5
Co-financing of World Bank SAP ³ credits	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	40.0	15.3	95.3
Share of total BOP (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.1	14.3	7.0	4.4
Total	243.1	329.8	286.3	462.0	360.5	278.4	218.3	2,178.0
				port; (²) C		en Genera	I Licence	System;
Source: Dan	ida StS.2							

In fact, it would appear that the CIS modality has been used more with a view to the need for high disbursement and procurement in Denmark than being due to a perceived superiority of this aid instrument with reference to the particular needs of receiving countries. This fact is underscored in a recent official report on programme assistance, which *inter alia* reports that prices for Danish CIS goods have in some cases been above world market prices (Danida 1994: 8-9).

It can also be noted that the demand in receiving countries for the kinds of Danish goods, which have been used so far, has almost fallen away. Importers have less incentive to buy tied CIS goods such as fertilizers or cement at market prices once their economies are opened up and previous implicit subsidies due to overvalued exchange rates and non-payment of counterpart funds are removed (Rekve and Torp 1995). Yet, this does not rule out a priori a potentially useful role for commodity support.

In line with the falling trend for CIS, other import assistance in the form of support to open general license (OGL) systems and credit lines grew from hardly anything in 1988 to 45 per cent in 1994. Credit lines consisting of foreign exchange transferred to Central Banks in the receiving countries have also been used as a way of facilitating tying to purchases in Denmark. Thus, seen from the receiving countries' point of view this modality suffered

Table 4 Danish balance of payments support by category and main recipients

Countries	CIS	Debt Relief	OGL and Credit lines	Co-financing of World Bank
Bangladesh	582.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kenya	43.2	0.0	60.0	0.0
Mozambique	48.9	0.0	40.0	55.3
Tanzania	382.8	90.5	9.8	0.0
Uganda	66.9	34.6	83.4	0.0
Zambia	84.9	0.0	0.0	40.0
Zimbabwe	19.0	0.0	122.8	0.0
Nicaragua	31.9	33.8	0.0	0.0
Others	276.5	70.9	0.0	0.0
Total	1536.3	229.8	316.0	95.3

from shortcomings similar to those of the CIS mechanism, and it has opened up considerable possibilities for corruption due to the sizeable economic rents involved. Limited knowledge in the receiving countries about Danish suppliers have, in addition, served as a constraint to making more effective use of the credit line modality.

Funds transferred in connection with OGL systems have so far mainly been disbursed as co- or parallel financing with the World Bank. Hence, foreign exchange has been supplied and sold to importers through different kinds of auctioning systems, increasing the import capacity of the country in question and financing in this way the import of goods contained in long positive lists or excluded by short negative lists. Danish OGL funds have normally been used to underpin the implementation of liberalization policies, and it follows that tying to purchases in donor countries is less feasible, since no implicit subsidy element is involved for the importer. Nevertheless, the OGL modality can in weak institutional systems suffer from exactly the same problems as the CIS system, when it comes to non-payment of counterpart funds and potentially arbitrary ways of getting access (i.e., license) to the foreign currency provided.

It can, finally, be highlighted that transferring resources to poor countries in the form of foreign

currency remains a relevant aid modality independent of the need for OGL mechanisms during a transition period where economic reforms are undertaken. Even if the currency of a given country is fully convertible and the foreign exchange market operates efficiently, domestic savings may still be insufficient to satisfy existing basic human needs and meet the investments required for future growth.

Debt relief was an important component of Danish BOP during the period 1979-87 when an amount of almost DKK 2.2 billion of Danish state loans owed by some 15 least developed countries and a few low-income countries were cancelled in accordance with the UNCTAD-declaration of 11 March 1978 (Danida, various years). Yet, during the subsequent period in focus here, debt relief amounted to only 10 per cent of total BOP, although it reached almost 30 per cent in some years. SAP cofinancing is the last component of Danish BOP. This modality has been used since 1991, and has on average accounted for 4.4 per cent of total BOP, and this share has been relatively stable, in contrast to other BOP.

The evolution of total BOP from Danida and its importance in the overall aid programme, the distribution by major recipients and the composition by category are issues already discussed above. Yet,

Table 5 Danish commodity import support by category and main recipients

Commodity Import Support	Fertilizers	Cement	Spare parts	Technical soap	Unspecified CIS ¹	Other CIS ²
Bangladesh	391.7	0.0	57.1	0.0	0.0	133.4
Kenya	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	43.2
Mozambique	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.1	12.5	11.3
Tanzania	79.7	103.8	0.0	14.1	89.3	95.9
Uganda	0.0	52.1	0.0	14.8	0.0	0.0
Zambia	38.1	0.0	46.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Zimbabwe	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.0
Nicaragua	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.0	29.5
Others	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	276.6
Total	509.5	155.9	106.3	54.0	101.8	608.8

Note: (1) Unspecified Commodity Import Support usually indicated that the CIS

consists of a wide group of different commodities and therefore these are not specified any further in the short programme description; and (2) Other

Commodity Import Support includes cables, medicine, road rollers, seeds etc.

Source: Danida StS.2

in relation to Danish BOP, a distinctive feature has also been the use of only one or two instruments in no less than five out of the eight main recipients. More specifically, the major recipient of Danish BOP, Bangladesh, received this aid exclusively as CIS (Table 4). In addition, two-thirds of the BOP assistance to Bangladesh can be classified as fertilizers as shown in Table 5. Fertilizer provided to Bangladesh was therefore equivalent to a remarkable 18 per cent of total Danish BOP during the period 1988-94. The total share of Danish fertilizer supplied amounted to an equally impressive share of 23 per cent.

A number of the main recipients of Danish BOP, which received a substantial share of the BOP as CIS in the first years of the 1988-94 period, experienced a structural shift in the composition of the BOP from the early years of the 1990s. Tanzania received substantial amounts of CIS in the form of cement during 1988-91, amounting to 21 per cent of total BOP to Tanzania during the period 1988-94. Yet, in 1991 Tanzania had DKK 90.5 billion of debt to the Danish Export Credit Council relieved in accordance with the so called Toronto terms and

parallel financing on a limited scale with the World Bank was used as a modality in 1994.

Co-financing with the World Bank on a considerable scale in relative terms has only been used in Mozambique and Zambia: but parallel financing with the World Bank was used in several cases. It would for analytical purposes have been desirable to be able to distinguish here between OGL support, which is untied in nature and generally implemented in collaboration with the World Bank, and the credit lines, which have typically been tied to purchases in Denmark or developing countries. However, this has not been possible based on the information available. Nevertheless, it has been common practice to approve OGL/credit line packages where 50 per cent would be used for untied OGL support and the remaining 50 per cent for tied credit lines. This can, in other words, be seen as a way of balancing the twin needs of Danida for rapid disbursement and tying against each other. One would be hard pressed to argue that this can be justified based on an analysis of the particular situation and developmental needs of the receiving country.

3 Policy and Other Guidelines

A review of existing Danida strategy and policy documents as well as annual reports and similar publications reveals that there is no clearly defined set of policies related specifically to Danish BOP. A study on programme aid contains a variety of general considerations as to when and where the various BOP modalities may be more or less appropriate (Danida 1994a: 31-33). Yet, these considerations do not make up a policy as such. It would, moreover, on the basis of the documents and interviews undertaken in relation to this article appear that there are, indeed, no examples of Danish BOP having been used as policy based aid in the sense that explicit conditionalities were attached.

The lack of policy guidelines is particularly pronounced in relation to the CIS, and whether such aid appears to further or delay the process of economic reforms does not seem to have been a matter of concern. In addition, macroeconomic gap-based considerations certainly did not form part of the decision making process. Rather, the CIS modality was, in addition to being a rapid disbursement mechanism, viewed as a useful way of increasing procurement in Denmark. This is put further into perspective by the fact that Danida has found it impossible to reach a level of disbursements through Danish suppliers equivalent to 50 per cent of the aid budget, even if this was established in 1988 as a declaration of intent.

The structural shift in the composition of Danish BOP, which took place after 1991, could possibly be a signal that a more policy based approach was taken. However, it can safely be hypothesized that the shift was mainly caused by the collapse in the demand for Danish CIS as discussed above. Furthermore, while debt reduction, OGL/credit lines and co-financing modalities can certainly be used in an active and policy oriented manner, this does not appear to have been the case in general. Thus, the change probably took place more by default than by design. This feature is underscored by the fact that debt relief has, according to Danida (1994a: 8), not so far been an integrated component of Danish programme aid in relation to the formulation of Danish views on conditionalities and policy issues. On the contrary, only rather vague references to the underlying set of assumptions and the general policy trend in

negotiations in the Paris Club and similar fora can be identified

Consequently, while the Danida approach taken in the area of debt relief amounts to backing the policies and conditionalities pursued by the World Bank and other multilateral agencies, this was done in an implicit way, rather than reflecting clear policy choices. At the same time, Danida has in line with the increasing criticisms of the 'orthodox' approach to stabilization and structural adjustment tried to influence the World Bank through its Board of Governors and other available formal and informal channels. Whether such initiatives have been successful is left as an open question here; but it is a fact that recent concerns expressed by the World Bank are much more in line with traditional Danish aid priorities (Danida 1994a).

A more direct Danish involvement in the policy formulation process and the identification of explicit aid-conditionalities might have been possible in relation to OGL/credit lines and co-financing with the World Bank. Nevertheless, it is difficult in this area to identify a clear-cut and active link between the use of Danish BOP support and declared aid priorities. Existing studies (Danida 1988; Danida 1994a; and T&B Consult 1994) consistently recommend that Denmark should enter more directly into policy dialogue and develop its capacity for independent assessments. Finally, during recent years credit lines have in large measure been tied to procurement in Denmark, which is in stark contrast to the liberalization policies pursued by structural adjustment.

In spite of the above, it can be highlighted, first, that it has been a well defined Danish policy that tying should not, in principle, exclude goods produced in developing countries at competitive prices. The extent to which this policy has had any impact, in practice, is not, however, entirely clear. Second, counterpart funds generated through the sale of inputs to domestic producers, goods for final consumption as well as foreign exchange should according to Danish guidelines end up with either the Ministry of Finance or the Central Bank without strings attached.

Denmark has in the above way tried at the policy level to counter the distorting effects, which are

Count	ries	Micro	Macro	Macro funds	Administration
Bangla	desh (1994)1	X			X
Nicaragua (1994)		X			Χ
SAP	with World Bank		X		
Tanzania (1994)		X			X
Uganda (1994)		X			X
SAP	with World Bank		X	•	
Mozambique (1994)		X			X
SAP	with World Bank		X		
Tanzania (1988)		X			X
Tanzar	nia (1987)	X			X
Mozan	nbique (1989)	X			X

inevitable if counterpart payments are not collected in a systematic and timely manner. Yet, the fact that this approach has not always been followed consistently in practice is well documented (T&B Consult 1994, and Danida 1994a). It has in this regard been speculated that Danish Embassies have focused too much on the need to disburse and consequently have not pursued the issue of payment of counter values to the extent desirable. It is hard to gauge the exact extent to which this may be a correct interpretation. Nevertheless, despite the macro nature of BOP support, it is widely reported that the overall monitoring of macroeconomic developments is inadequate. There are, moreover, examples such the case of Kenya where Danish BOP support was not suspended even if the adjustment programme clearly went off track, leaving the underlying rationale for the lending and release of funds open to varying interpretations.

On the other hand, by striving to have as few strings attached to local currency generated as possible and avoiding undue additional demand pressure caused by the incomes generated by the supply of foreign goods, Danida has certainly attempted to strengthen the capacity of local government institutions to achieve macroeconomic balance. This is so even if it must be squarely recognized that the Danish amounts involved have in general been of a relatively limited scale.

4 Evaluation Studies

The most comprehensive study of Danish BOP to date was completed in 1994 (T&B Consult 1994). It consists of a main report and five country case studies. The case studies of Bangladesh, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda contain a short description of the overall macroeconomic situation in the country concerned, including a listing of the most important ongoing economic and political changes, followed by a descriptive appraisal of the BOP. Finally, all studies discuss various dimensions of BOP as a policy related instrument. These evaluations touch upon a wide range of issues, and an attempt is made in what follows to make a brief overall assessment, before discussing the other available studies in this field. An summary of how the studies can be classified is provided in Table 6.

4.1 BOP to Bangladesh, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda

The case studies under this heading review the individual components of BOP separately, but except for co-financing with the World Bank, the analyses are focused on microeconomic and administrative issues. No quantified microeconomic cost-benefit analysis is conducted, although an attempt is made to clarify the kinds of commodities imported and to

assess in qualitative terms the relevance of the products supplied and their effect on capacity utilization in the respective firms and sectors involved. It is, in particular, noted that there have been problems with collecting counterpart funds, and that this and other distortions have been the major reason for local companies demanding Danish products. There is, however, no quantified information available to assess the microeconomic dimensions of the counterpart issue in more concrete terms.

When it comes to administrative issues, the evaluation studies are in addition to detailed accounts of what actually was delivered, where and when, focused on the problems connected with the collection of counterpart funds. Other administrative shortcomings, like administrative difficulties with disbursements, transportation obstacles, problems with local governments etc, are evaluated in brief terms only, and some of the case studies have relatively little to say in these regards. Yet, all five studies put great emphasis on making concrete recommendations as to the way in which future BOP should be designed and disbursed.

As regards the macroeconomic effects of increased funds made available through BOP and the impact of modified policies, there are differences in the way in which co-financing with the World Bank in support of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) is treated as compared to the other BOP instruments. The analysis of CIS funds is not carried out within a macroeconomic framework, and the possible effects on macroeconomic indicators are not pursued in detail, although some qualitative observations on possible macro effects of the goods supplied are made throughout the various reports. The question of tying and related problems are discussed at length. Nevertheless, while the fungibility issue is referred to in the main summary report, it is not taken up in the individual country studies and possible inflationary effects are left unaddressed. The CIS picture also manifests itself with regard to credit lines, debt relief and OGL, and the main argument put forward for not analysing the impact of these kinds of Danish BOP at the macroeconomic level is their relatively limited size in the overall picture.

On the other hand, in evaluating co-financing with the World Bank, descriptive macroeconomic reviews are included. The methodology adopted is before-versus-after, and the analyses are limited to listings of policy changes and variations in important macroeconomic variables based on various World Bank reports and similar sources of information. Thus, little can, in fact, be deduced about the actual impact of policy reforms and the macro funds made available. It follows that no attempt is made to carry out independent macroeconomic modelling or quantified analyses of the underlying behavioural relationships in the respective countries.

4.2 Other BOP studies

The above studies were, as noted, focused on microeconomic and administrative topics. same accounts for the studies by CASA (1989), Cooksey (1987), and Danida (1988) covering BOP activities in Tanzania and Mozambique such as the supply of industrial tallow for bar soap production. None of these studies address macro issues in detail although questions related to tying are touched upon in addition to general comments about the usefulness of commodity assistance as a tool in support of economic recovery policies. Instead these three evaluations emphasize a series of delivery and technical production problems, the quality of the supplies and the effect on capacity utilization in addition to addressing issues related to the payment of counterpart funds, etc.

The last group of studies to be commented on include a series of internal reviews carried out in some of the Danida programme countries under the leadership of Danida staff. These studies are not published, but they normally include a brief macroeconomic survey of the country in question based on a critical reading of available statistics and short visits to the country concerned. accounts of the economic reform process (including as well the functioning of foreign exchange auctioning systems) may also be included in addition to statements about existing savings- and foreign exchange gaps. Yet, no independent formal analyses or data collection took place at the macro level. The issue of fungibility is seldom addressed in a coherent manner, and linkages with economic and social indicators of development and the impact of BOP are discussed in qualitative terms only.

Hence, the internal Danida reviews also normally put considerable emphasis on microeconomic issues in addition to addressing administrative procedures and topics related to effective programme management. Consequently, existing procedures and their adequacy, disbursements rates, the access of importers to foreign currency and potential economic rents and distortions, the auditing of payments of counterpart funds and problems created by complex tying rules are normally discussed at great length. Moreover, while comments may be made on capacity utilization, explicit cost-benefit analysis hereof is not undertaken. Recommendations are often made on the composition of future BOP and the procedures to be followed, but these suggestions are usually kept in rather broad and generalized terms. However, this should come as no surprise. The internal Danida reviews have been carried out under great time pressure as quick desk studies combined with short country visits leaving very limited possibility for more in-depth and quantified analysis.

5 Conclusion

Danish BOP has been relatively small as compared to BOP from other like minded donors, and Commodity Import Support (CIS) has by far been the most important modality used. Danish CIS cannot in general be characterized as policy based aid, and gap-based considerations have not formed an identifiable part of decision making processes. CIS has, instead, been largely demand driven in the sense that commodities were made available to local importers, who derived substantial economic rents. At the same time, CIS has been useful to Danida as a means of quickly disbursing unspent project balances in a residual manner.

This study also reveals that a major structural change is underway in Danish BOP. Other BOP modalities such as OGL support, credit lines and cofinancing with the World Bank have been on the rise. Nevertheless, the extent to which this lending can be termed policy based is questionable. On the contrary, it would appear that active Danida involvement in the policy dialogue and in the establishment of policy conditionalities has been, at best, rather limited. Monitoring of macroeconomic issues and independent analyses is inadequate, and BOP disbursements have continued to reflect the need to spend funds in a residual manner, while at the same time increasing the share allocated to procurement in Denmark. Similarly, no initiatives have been taken together with other donors to ensure greater continuity in BOP disbursements, which have fluctuated widely from one year to the next with no reference to the needs of receiving countries.

Finally, existing evaluations and reviews are mainly focused on micro- and administrative topics with only very scarce analysis of the intricate issues linked to the macroeconomic effects of BOP funds and adjustment policies. Reflections about macro impact are limited to comparing before-and-after situations combined with cursory review of mainly World Bank data and studies. In sum, very little is known about the overall impact of Danish BOP. Therefore it can be safely concluded that this area of economic enquiry is ripe for further research both in relation to the need for well defined evaluation techniques and in the form of comparative country case analyses. This is so, in particular, given the commitment stated in a variety of Danida documents to develop independent assessments of the ongoing reforms in some of the major Danida programme countries.

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