

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANADIAN NGOS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The following recommendations from the Roundtable are not without relevance to governmental entities. However, they are aimed at Canadian NGOs and other civil society actors as they re-evaluate their relationship to Guatemala in the context of the peace process. Some of these recommendations contain specific programming proposals while others are more general comments on issues of the Canada-Guatemala civil society relationships.

1. Canadians could help Guatemalan civil society monitor the implementation of the peace process. This is important and must be done in such a way that people at the local community level are given a voice. However, since many Guatemalan organizations now find themselves already over-burdened at this stage of peace implementation, many groups would find it difficult to add yet another component to their work. Canadians can help to fill in these spaces. The work done through Volver (a third party monitoring mechanism from the Refugee Return process) could be a useful example in this regard.
2. Canadian NGOs, with government support, can facilitate capacity building. Many new actors who have made their way to the bargaining table need to strengthen their technical ability to work in these new spaces. Canadians could help facilitate training in: negotiating conflict, mediation skills, transition from vertical to horizontal perspectives, methods to include all voices in society, ways and means to assure civil society analysis and proposals, and access to communication systems especially to link people in isolated areas to major centers.
3. Technical and financial support for information and communication technologies (ICT) would greatly facilitate the coordination of civil society actors and increase social participation. In follow-up conversations Guatemalan participants at the Roundtable indicated that there is a need for training in the use of technologies such as the Internet. As a starting point, e-mail would enable actors across the country to communicate and coordinate, saving both time and money. In addition, Web Sites could help disseminate information, and be used for the peace monitoring process both in Guatemala and in the international community. While basic ICT resources are already in place in larger centres in Guatemala, resources are especially needed in smaller and rural centres.
4. International organizations can offer their "good offices" to facilitate the processes of dialogue and negotiation. Canadians should go beyond mere technical support issues and be willing to **accompany** Guatemalans through these difficult processes. As some groups within Guatemalan civil society have not as yet had the time nor the space to confront their internal contradictions regarding, for example the role of