

for the society (Uphoff 1994).<sup>11</sup> These concerns are especially significant when it comes to measuring civil society and democratisation, where *subjective* indicators are perceived to be necessary, since direct causal relationships are difficult to identify and the effects are often not objectively observable.

Moreover, while NGOs have generally been criticised for "failure to learn from failure," this problem is accentuated with the increased participation of government. According to Smillie (1994: 189), NGOs have traditionally not emphasised evaluation and research "because there are few reasons (and no money) to disseminate the positive lessons of development and many more powerful reasons to conceal the negative lessons than to institutionalise, remember, and disseminate them." Government agencies reinforce this problem because they have political incentives to conceal problems, both in terms of the NGO and with the aid agency itself. In other words, it is asserted that there are structural impediments to research and evaluation and thus to learning from past experiences.

## **Government and NGOs: The Canadian Case in Bosnia-Herzegovina**

### **2.1 CIDA**

Historically, CIDA's focus has been on poverty alleviation rather than on peacebuilding or humanitarian aid provision in complex emergencies.<sup>12</sup> Its six programming priorities are: basic human needs; the environment; the situation of women; infrastructure services; human rights; democratic development and good governance; and, private sector development. Through its NGO Division, CIDA has a working relationship with nearly 500 NGOs, to which it provides funds through a number of different methods (see below). The dependence of Canadian NGOs on CIDA is relatively high among OECD countries, estimated to be approximately 70 percent, although "domestic voluntary organisations in the health, education and welfare sectors have much higher dependency ratios..." (Smillie/Helmich 1993: 27).<sup>13</sup>

First, in 1993, CIDA adopted a new approach called "institutional funding" as a way of addressing some of the problems (especially in terms of blueprint planning and linear thinking) that official aid agencies have been accused of. Consistent with the New Policy Agenda's emphasis on a 'hands off' approach for government, "[i]nstitutional funding means that CIDA

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<sup>11</sup> According to Hulme and Edwards (1997: 8), "[t]he acceptance of increasing volumes of foreign aid involves entering into agreements about what is done, and how it is to be reported and accounted for. This fosters an emphasis on certain forms of activity at the expense of others...."

<sup>12</sup> CIDA defines peacebuilding as: "the effort to strengthen the prospects for internal peace and decrease the likelihood of violent conflict. The overarching goal of peacebuilding is to enhance the indigenous capacity of a society to manage conflict without violence. Ultimately, peacebuilding aims at building human security, a concept which includes democratic governance, human rights, rule of law, sustainable development, equitable access to resources, and environmental security" (CIDA 1999).

<sup>13</sup> For instance, Britain tends to provide less than 50 percent government support for its NGOs, whereas Sweden and Norway which have among the highest donor funding levels, will provide between 80 and 100 percent matching rates. Moreover, Canada is one of the few OECD countries which considers academic and research institutions to be non-governmental organizations eligible for funding. These institutions are not considered to be 'fund-raisers' in the same way that other NGOs are, which means that the matching and other funding formulae often do not apply (Smillie/Filewod 1993: 108).