

- ◇ Global Trade and Investment
- ◇ Corporate Social Responsibility
- ◇ Official Development Assistance
- ◇ Policy Democratization

Parallel to this transition, is the challenge of building public understanding and constituency support for a comprehensive policy agenda key goals.

NGOs in Canada, as in most developed countries, have had a difficult task in maintaining, let alone building, public support for international co-operation. In the wake of the Cold War, the national unity debate, and the overall fragmentation of public interests, global issues have declined from "top of the mind" importance to the general public.

A recent NGO task force, involving experts in social marketing and the media as well as development education, concluded that NGOs needed to shift from a "conversion" model of interacting with the public to an "engagement" model.⁹ This recommendation has great significance for how NGOs see themselves communicating with the public since it calls for a "two-way" dialogue on public concerns. Members of the public, feeling increasingly alienated by a public policy process dominated by "experts", "want to exchange ideas with each other, make their own connections and draw their own conclusions. They want to be involved in 'working through' the issues that affect their lives and help to make the trade-offs necessary to arrive at

⁹ See Global Citizenship: A New Way Forward, CCIC, August 1996. The task force report also suggested that the NGO community need work more effectively as a "sector" in building support for SHD, that "global citizenship" be used as an organizing concept on NGOs' relationships with the public, that NGOs become increasingly bridge-builders in integrating the relationships among the Canadian public, Southern Partners, and NGOs, that NGOs need move more quickly to a culture which values diversity.