

Ottawa Workshop

22 evaluation forms were received from the Ottawa workshop, representing the views of 24% of the 93 participants (although several participants came only to individual sessions).

Participants were pleased with the workshop: 84% rated it excellent, while the rest rated it between average and excellent. They especially appreciated the "full, wide discussion on civil society issues, (and that there was a lot) of experience related from the ground in both Canada and South Asia". Another participant felt that there was a "good exploration of and debate around civil society. I learned of new possibilities and opportunities for involvement in the community".

Also contributing to the success of the workshop, according to the participants, were the resource people (73% of respondents rated them "excellent", the remainder rated them between "average" and "excellent"). Several participants commented that the resource people "helped further thinking and give ideas that can be implemented". One participant noted the gender balance among resource people: 55% of the 25 resource people were women, as were exactly half of the eight South Asian resource people.

The most useful sessions, according to the participants, were the sessions on: Theory and Concepts of Civil Society presented by Dr. Neera Chandhoke (found useful by 95% of respondents); Reflections on Civil Society in Canada (79%); and Ideas for Canadian, South Asian and North/South Collaboration (74%).

Half of the respondents did not feel there was anything missing from the workshop, while others felt that more time should have been devoted to the "smokescreen" aspect of strengthening civil society, donors who fund NGOs, the influence of globalization on development, developing follow-up strategies, and elaboration on practical case studies. Also, some found that the discussions were a little too academic and in-depth, or simply presented too much information at one time. Some respondents indicated that they would have appreciated more time for group discussions.

Constituency

Based on the 19 responses to this question, the workshop participants primarily represented organizations involved in capacity development and training (58% of respondents), program/project development and management (53%), community development (42%), advocacy (31%) and research (31%).