

Exchange Programs for Economists

A Plan of Operations for Canadian co-operation with the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER) was signed by Yang Berbahagia Dato Yahya bin Abdul Wahab, Director-General of the Malaysian Economic Planning Unit, Datuk Dr. Kamal Salih, Executive Director of MIER and Manfred G. von Nostitz, High Commissioner for Canada in Malaysia.

Over a three-year period, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will provide a grant of C\$900,000 to finance a series of exchange programs between MIER personnel and Canadian macro-economic policy researchers, and practical attachments of MIER personnel to relevant Canadian institutions.

This co-operative project will focus on five areas: agricultural sector studies; industry studies; macro-economic policy and planning; labour and manpower studies and international trade and economic relations.

The Canadian side will:

- (a) provide technical support to assist MIER in the development and co-ordination of research programs;
- (b) provide support for the establishment of a library and documentation centre as well as data base development. A medium-sized computer will be purchased to meet MIER's computing needs;
- (c) provide assistance towards the dissemination of MIER research results through seminars and publications. A new publication, "The MIER

Economic Review", was launched in January, 1988; and

- (d) establish links between MIER and Canadian research institutes involved with similar research work.

The institutional linkages involved in this project are particularly innovative and noteworthy. The lead Canadian institution is Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, with the John Deutsch Institute for the Study of Economic Policy acting as executing agency.

The Conference Board of Canada will also be a key collaborator. This is the first time that the Conference Board has been involved in a development co-operation project outside of Canada.

In addition, other appropriate Canadian partners from both the private and public sector will be brought into the program as the individual project components are further elaborated.

The first component of Canada/MIER collaboration took place in Kuala Lumpur when MIER hosted a National Conference on Tax Reform in December. Two Canadians, Dr. Robin Boadway, a leading tax research expert in Canada, and Dr. Frank Flatters, the Queen's University co-ordinator for the MIER project, attended the conference and presented a paper on the tax reform experience in industrialized countries.

The next project activity will take place in Canada in early 1988. This involves an exchange on economic modelling and forecasting for the private sector in collaboration with the Conference Board of Canada.

The priorities for further collaboration are capital and labour market studies followed by studies on fiscal federalism, resource management policies, industrial and trade policies and industry studies.

Funding for Women

An agreement to establish a Women in Development (WID) Fund has been signed between Canada and the Malaysian National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO).

Under this initiative, Canada will provide up to C\$100,000 for financing small grassroots projects developed by and for the benefit of women. The fund will be administered by the NCWO over an initial 12 month period.

An additional \$20,000 will make available to the NCWO the services of Mrs. Beverly Rix, a Consultant from the World University Services of Canada.

These monies come from the High Commissioner's "Canada Fund for Local Initiatives" financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).



High Commissioner von Nostitz and NCWO President, Tan Sri Fatimah binti Haji Hashim, signing the "Women in Development Fund" agreement in Kuala Lumpur.

The NCWO with its unique position as the advisory and consultative umbrella body for women's non-governmental organizations is well suited to undertake this co-ordinating role. The NCWO and affiliates reflect Malaysia's unique multi-cultural heritage, ensuring that these community initiatives will complement the development activities of the Government of Malaysia.

These additional responsibilities will provide an opportunity for the NCWO to strengthen further its institutional structure since the NCWO will establish a formal project review committee to identify, approve and monitor projects submitted by their affiliates and other women's organizations in Malaysia.

This arrangement with the NCWO for the establishment and administration of the WID Fund is also in line with CIDA's priorities in the area of Women in Development and decentralization of its development assistance program.

Equal opportunities

Providing equal opportunities for women has been an important policy thrust of the Canadian Government for many years. In international development, Canada has pioneered the integration of women into development programs at both the policy and operational level.