

domestic credibility. The participants, therefore, emphasized the need for an ongoing evaluation of all initiatives involving national institutions. Whereas the possibility of disengagement should be acknowledged, the Canadian stakeholders should still view their engagement as a long term commitment to a relationship with the partner institution. The vision must extend beyond the typical 3-year project cycle.

It was also recognized that existing initiatives have developed in an ad hoc manner, responding to a number of stimuli, including formal requests from partner institutions, bilateral exchanges and visits between institutions and missions by Canadian officials abroad. Because, these requests appear to be on the increase, participants acknowledged the danger of overburdening the limited resources of the Canadian partners involved.

To permit a more effective engagement, it was suggested that a more strategic approach was needed. A strategic framework for engagement with national institutions could be developed by each organization/institution. Such a strategic framework would articulate, amongst other things: the organization/institution's objectives in engaging with national institutions; criteria for engagement and disengagement and an inventory of the relevant expertise and resources available in organizations/institutions. A broader national framework could bring together all the interested Canadian stakeholders. Such an exercise would not only help each organization/institutions develop a strategic focus for its work, but also help our partners better understand what Canada has to offer. In this light, some form of directory of Canadian experience and resources available to support national institutions could be very useful. This strategic thinking should also extend to the international arena where all the stakeholders could benefit from more coordination and less competition.

Finally, it was acknowledged that there needs to be a commitment of financial resources if national institutions are to become a priority and Canada's involvement is to be effective. Considerable success has been achieved with the very limited resources that have been made available. However, to consolidate these gains and to develop the strategic interventions which are necessary to have an impact, there is a need for more secure long term funding to support these initiatives.

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