

## DECENTRALIZATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Most employees will be aware of the government's initiative to decentralize to the field a substantial part of the bilateral development assistance program. This was an important initiative in the new development assistance strategy, as outlined in **Sharing Our Future**, published by CIDA last spring. It stated that decentralization will "significantly improve the quality and efficiency of Canada's assistance, as well as bringing our program closer to the people we are trying to reach – the poorest."

Under the new decentralized structure, each mission will be accountable to the president of CIDA for the planning and implementation of development programs and projects and to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs for the overall management of the mission, including the operating budgets.

One hundred and fifty-seven (157) person years will be added to the Department of External Affairs establishment, fifty seven (57) of which will be transferred from CIDA. The FS Aid stream will grow from its present complement of one hundred and six (106) to a total of over three hundred and forty (340). Additional Canada-based technical specialists and clerical support staff will be assigned abroad to assist in program delivery. In addition, the number of locally engaged personnel at posts abroad will also be increased. Both CIDA and DEA will continue to be responsible for the

co-management of the FS development assistance stream.

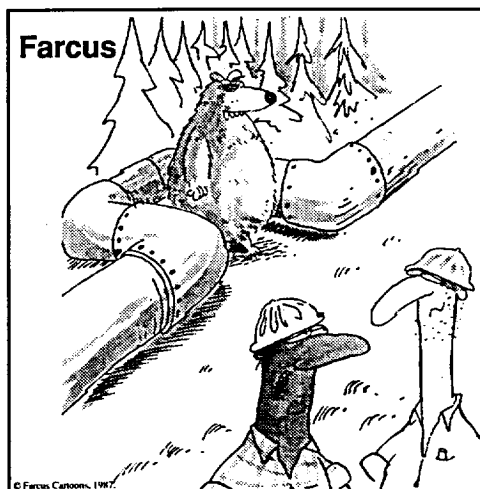
Decentralization of aid operations is premised on the need for delegation of significant authority to the field level. Project approval to \$5 million has been accorded to heads of missions abroad and local contracts valued up to \$100,000 can also be engaged.

Bilateral aid operations will be decentralized to nine full posts (Bridgetown, Dakar, Dar Es Salaam, Manila, Singapore, Abidjan, Jakarta, San Jose and Harare), and to a number of smaller aid missions and offices of embassies (Conakry, Bamako, Niamey, Ouagadougou, Tegucigalpa, Gaborone, Maeru, Lilongwe, Maputo, Mbabane).

Since the Treasury Board approval for decentralization last April, there has been much to accomplish in a short period of time. It is recognized that the consultation with missions has not always been as extensive as desired. Adjustments have also been made which may not seem logical to individual missions. However, with further experience in this pioneering effort, External and CIDA will be able to adjust the process to take full account of a variety of local circumstances. The insights and advice of overseas missions will be key as decision-making proceeds.

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I wasn't going to ask him to move!