

The Philippine case is a useful and instructive one for Canadian policymakers on a number of fronts. The empirical data provided in this paper point to possible changes in Canada's strategy in the Philippines. In the context of the crisis and the trend towards the decentralization of social services in the Philippines, the Canadian government should consider refocusing its strategy. While the promotion of good governance and nurturing the private sector (as prescribed in CDPF) are laudable goals, more attention should be put towards assisting local governments in confronting the more basic challenges they face as a result of decentralisation --- challenges that have been exacerbated by the fiscal austerity of the financial crisis.³⁶

At a more general level, the Philippine case also points to a conceptual gap in how the Canadian government understands the potential threats to human security. Those portions of *Canada in the World* that address explicitly the notion of human security do not adequately account for widespread trends and dynamics taking place in the developing world.³⁷ The movement towards devolution and decentralization, for example, is not unique to the Philippines; decentralization has been occurring (and will continue to take place) in several developing countries (a function of globalization and the growing importance of transnational linkages).³⁸ This points to the importance of capacity building and institutional strengthening, especially at the local level. While the Statement does address these specific concepts, it does not account for the more general phenomena that drive and create the need for capacity building/institutional strengthening initiatives. If Canadian policymakers are to have a comprehensive understanding of the potential threats to human security that are likely to emerge over the short- to medium-term in the developing world (and then devise strategies to meet these challenges), their framework must be altered to more explicitly account for these sorts of important shifts and changes in public administration and governance.

Vietnam

Canadian assistance to Vietnam is centred on four key objectives: economic and administrative reform; poverty alleviation; private sector development and the promotion of good governance and civil society. Canada's aid program in Vietnam, however, has met with little success. As pointed out by CIDA officials in Hanoi, the programme has failed in a number of respects, most specifically in the areas of poverty alleviation and promoting good governance and civil society.³⁹

³⁶ In this regard, Canada may have much to share with the Philippines. Canada's own efforts at navigating the potentially treacherous waters of the decentralisation and developing a federal structure with shared powers and responsibilities may be a useful model for Philippine officials to examine.

³⁷ The closest that *Canada in the World* comes to addressing these sorts of dynamics is on page 45 under the heading "Guidelines for Effective Programming". While there is no specific reference to devolution, the Statement does note that programming should be based on, among other things, "Knowledge of Local Context". While this may be adequate for a general policy statement, a more specific listing of key themes and dynamics that could alter the human security equation in developing countries would be useful in arriving at a clearer understanding of the potential threats.

³⁸ The existing literature on decentralization and its impact on health care is extensive. See: Anne Mills *et al.*, eds., *Health System Decentralization: Concepts, issues and country experience* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 1990); G. Arbona and A.B. Ramirez de Avellano, *Regionalization of health care services: The Puerto Rican experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978); P. Vaughan *et al.*, "The importance of decentralized management", *World Health Forum*, vol. 5 (1984).

³⁹ Peter Hoffman, Head of Aid, CIDA Section, Canadian Embassy, interview with author, Hanoi, February