

AN EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT
OF
PUBLIC AFFAIRS: ABROAD

1. INTRODUCTION

Following a decision to introduce the concepts of program evaluation to the Department of External Affairs, the Office of Evaluation and Audit completed a preliminary evaluation study of the Department. This analysis identified some 28 evaluation components within the Department's existing organization, programs, and activities. Some of these components are coincident with the existing organizational structure, while others may cross or combine existing boundaries. A plan has been prepared to enable each of the components to be evaluated during the next few years.

Prior to commencing any particular evaluation, the component in question is subjected to an evaluability assessment. Essentially, the purpose of this assessment is to determine the extent to which a program component (or its major parts) is evaluable, to prepare the outline of a recommended evaluation design, and to estimate the resources required.

Public Affairs: Abroad is one such program component of an initial set of three selected for evaluability assessment by the Evaluation and Audit Committee. This assessment report reflects the cooperation and assistance generously provided by the Directors General and staff of the Bureau of International Cultural Relations and the Bureau of Information.

Chapter 2 of this assessment provides a description of the Public Affairs: Abroad program component, in terms of the organizational units involved, objectives, major activities and outputs, resources, clients and perceived effects. An evaluability profile is then presented which shows, in tabular format, the extent to which the component is considered to be evaluable, and the relative ease with which an evaluation can be done.

Chapter 4 then goes on to identify and to discuss possible methodological approaches to the design of the evaluation. An outline of the recommended design is put forward in terms of important parameters such as scope, approach, issues and resource implications. A limited number of alternatives or options are then discussed.