

COMBATING POVERTY

SUMMARY

As with other chapters, CANZ prepared a joint intervention for changes to the poverty chapter. These proposals for amendments to the text drew heavily on the Canadian brief and most were integrated into the final poverty chapter. In some cases they were simplified, in particular with reference to the role of a possible poverty focal point, as negotiators were reluctant to adopt detailed mandates into the text. Nevertheless reference remains to a focal point for information exchange and the formulation and implementation of replicable pilot projects to combat poverty. The text also makes reference to the need to give priority to poverty eradication in the institutional arrangements for UNCED follow-up.

The text has been considerably strengthened with respect to the empowering of local communities, the role of women and the responsibility of national governments to put in place relevant policies to eradicate poverty. The link between macro-economic and social policy and micro-community level activities and institutions has been clearly established in the final text. Although the text is still poorly organized, all the essential concepts have been included. The international NGO working group on poverty and affluence had a strong influence on the final text. Their work was timely, reached all major delegation groupings and was presented in a form that was easily accessible to negotiators. Among the plenary group of issues, this was the area where the NGO/government working relationship was the most productive.

DOCUMENTATION

A/CONF.151/PC/L.68 Adopted Agenda 21 document: Combating Poverty, Changing Consumption Patterns, and Demographic Dynamics and Sustainability (replaces PC/100/Add.2).

CANADIAN OBJECTIVES

1. Seek to obtain national and international commitment for action on providing sustainable livelihoods for the poor through national policies which address issues of equity and access to and control over productive resources, goods and services.