

undertaken by Human Resources Development Canada, and approaches in other countries were examined. International aid agencies in Britain, Australia and several other countries provided significant support for the voluntary sectors to bid on international contracts and to play an important role within UN systems. A similar approach has never been identified as a clear policy option within Canada. *Given the demonstration that Canadians have been able to make a tremendous impact internationally in the disability field, and continue to do so, it is important for Canadians in government to find ways to support disability organizations more directly in the future.*

A third issue to examine is the philosophical framework and paradigm that has been promoted by Canadians internationally. Our review of the past half-century gives strong evidence that the approaches that have had the greatest impact have been those which pursued the inclusion of disabled people as full citizens within their countries, modeling change which promoted human rights and empowerment and the building of grassroots initiatives. This has involved partnerships between advocacy groups along with a variety of others including universities and government. Where Canada has promoted traditional medical and rehabilitation approaches the impact has been more limited. Indeed, there are examples where millions of dollars have been spent on traditional medical and rehabilitation approaches with little apparent effect. There has also been some real struggle and limitation in recognizing the value of this direction as it has often come from marginalized groups that have had limited funding and resources. Within the Mines Action Initiative the disability initiative took on more of a traditional service orientation rather than a human rights approach. *The implication is that government policy and financial aid would do best if it recognized the importance of supporting the philosophical direction of engaging grassroots groups that has been developed by Canadians.*

A final area to examine is the influence of Canadians on modeling change. New models have been developed through the independent living movement, the community living movement, the advocacy organizations, new transformative education models as reflected in disability studies approaches and person-centered approaches in planning and providing supportive interventions. These have had to struggle to establish their credibility in the international arena whether within the United Nations, within Canadian funding strategies or within Canadian foreign policy. Nevertheless, *its these new models and creative approaches that have had the greatest impact and any future initiatives should seriously consider how to include the new and emerging innovations within the international policy directions of Canada.*

In conclusion, Canadians seem to have had a substantial impact on international disability issues during the last half of the twentieth century. This has been the result of clearly driven social movement that has created change and involved partnerships with government, academics and to some degree the private sector. There is much that can be learned from what has happened during these fifty years. The opportunities that lie in the future and any future directions should be based on learning from the initiatives that have already been developed. One can only guess what could happen if the future directions were based on an open policy to welcome the changes that have taken place