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**CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL
CO-OPERATION NGOs
AND POLICY**





1

CONTENTS

3. Preface

PART ONE: An Overview of Trends and Challenges Facing NGO Policy Work

5. Introduction

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION NGOs AND POLICY

9. Dialogue

18. Dialogue

18. Conclusions

PART TWO: A First Generation Capacity Map

20. Table of Acronyms

21. Introduction

23. Policy Areas

23. Sustainable Development

25. Human Rights

27. Gender Equity

29. Rights of the Child

31. Peacebuilding

33. Food Security

36. Global Trade and Investment

39. Corporate Social Responsibility

41. Other Policy Areas

43. Policy Coordination

Appendix

45. COIC

45. Information

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Return to Departmental Library
Retourner à la bibliothèque du Ministère

CONTENTS

3. *Preface*

PART ONE: An Overview of Trends and Challenges Facing NGO Policy Work

- 5. Introduction
- 6. Trends
- 9. Emerging Challenges
- 16. Future Policy Dialogue
- 18. Conclusions

PART TWO: A First Generation Capacity Map

- 20. Table of Acronyms
- 21. Introduction
- 23. Policy Areas
 - 23. Sustainable Development
 - 25. Human Rights
 - 27. Gender Equity
 - 29. Rights of the Child
 - 31. Peacebuilding
 - 33. Food Security
 - 36. Global Trade and Investment
 - 39. Corporate Social Responsibility
 - 41. Official Development Assistance
 - 43. Policy Democratization

Appendix

- 46. CCIC Membership Contact Information

Canadian International Co-operation NGOs and Policy

Preface

This paper has two components:

- **PART ONE:** An overview of current trends and challenges facing NGOs in their policy work, including a review of the characteristics necessary for effective NGO-government policy dialogue
- **PART TWO:** A detailed "Capacity Map", which portrays the policy activities of individual NGOs and coalitions under the ten headings that CCIC is using to organize the community's policy agenda

An **appendix** is also included that contains the addresses and contact information for those NGOs which are members of CCIC.

Part One, the Overview, was prepared by Tim Draimin and Part Two, the Capacity Map, by Richard Marquardt. Editorial comments were generously provided by: Jennifer Proudfoot, Alain Roy, Gauri Sreenivasan, Rieky Stuart, and Brian Tomlinson.

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PART ONE

An Overview of Trends and Challenges Canadian International Co-operation NGOs and Policy

Introduction

For the last two decades, until recently, there has been a fairly constant increase in the capacity of Canadian international co-operation NGOs to involve themselves in policy development, policy dialogue and policy advocacy. Issues during that period included work on geographical regions (e.g. South Africa, Horn of Africa, Central America, etc) and diverse thematic policy issues (e.g. infant formula feeding, bio-diversity, large scale infrastructure). The Review where full participation was that of NGOs. Since then staff capacity has begun to decline. Policy continues to occupy more

PART ONE

AN OVERVIEW OF TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

FACING NGO POLICY WORK

NGOs have moved from the periphery of public policy to a prominent place in the mainstream of public dialogue on many issues. Today some of the most visible are debt, children's rights and child labour, landmines, gender, environment, and human rights. This evolution of NGO policy capacity has seen NGOs shift from a posture of critique of policies to one of actively proposing policy alternatives.

¹ Canada's Foreign Policy: Principles and Priorities for the Future. Report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons Reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy, November 1994, p.36. For an analysis of the role of NGOs in the policy democratization process, see Tim O'Riain and Betty Plewka, "Civil Society and the Democratization of Foreign Policy", in Maxwell Cameron and Mourean Appel-Moist, Canada Abroad: The 1990s, Democracy and Foreign Policy, Carleton University Press, Ottawa, 1995.

PART ONE

An Overview of Trends and Challenges Facing NGO Policy Work

Introduction

For the last two decades, until recently, there has been a fairly constant increase in the capacity of Canadian international co-operation NGOs to involve themselves in policy development, policy dialogue and policy advocacy. Significant milestones during that period included work on geographic regions (e.g. South Africa, Horn of Africa, Central America, etc) and diverse thematic policy issues (e.g. infant formula feeding, bio-diversity, large scale infrastructure). The high point of the growth trend was probably the 1994 Foreign Policy Review where fully half of the public's participation was that of NGOs.¹ Since then staff capacity has begun to decline though policy continues to occupy more time for NGO boards of directors.

NGOs have moved from the periphery of public policy to a prominent place in the mainstream of public dialogue on many issues. Today some of the most visible are debt, children's rights and child labour, landmines, gender, environment, and human rights. This evolution of NGO policy capacity has seen NGOs shift from a posture of critique of policies to one of actively proposing policy alternatives.

¹ Canada's Foreign Policy: Principles and Priorities for the Future, Report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons Reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy, November 1994, p.85. For an analysis of the role of NGOs in the policy democratization process, see Tim Draimin and Betty Plewes, "Civil Society and the Democratization of Foreign Policy", in Maxwell Cameron and Maureen Appel Molot, Canada Among Nations 1995: Democracy and Foreign Policy, Carleton University Press, Ottawa, 1995.

Trends

There are numerous domestic and international factors that have aided NGOs in their policy evolution:

NGO recognition of the importance of policy work has grown.

NGOs acknowledge that adverse macro economic trends (and their social impacts) have offset efforts to scale-up NGO program initiatives; "this has led to more attention being given by NGOs to macro-policy advocacy and stronger links between micro- and macro-level action."²

In-house policy capacity has expanded. Many NGOs (and NGO sub-sectors) have dedicated increasing staff resources to policy work. Most visible in this regard have been the ecumenical church coalitions which coalesced increasing interest in social justice issues into small staff-based institutions that manage research and policy dialogue activities.³ There were parallel secular (and secular-ecumenical) coalitions as well, including the 1978-79 People's Food Commission and the 1991-92 Citizen's Inquiry into Peace and Security. Buttressing these coalitions have been the policy interests of secular NGOs as diverse as Alternatives, Care Canada, CUSO, Partners for Rural Development, Physicians for Global Survival, and the labour humanity funds.

Ideological polarization has declined. The demise of the Cold War has removed ideological polarization (but not ideology) from much of the policy terrain. This has made it easier for NGOs of different backgrounds to work together on increasingly complex and inter-related policy areas.

The NGO policy role has been legitimized and enhanced by

² Horacio Morales and Isagani Serrano, "Common Ground in Asia-Pacific Development", in David Hulme and Michael Edwards, NGOs, States and Donors: Too Close for Comfort, Macmillan, Houndmills, 1997, p 100.

³ See Christopher Lind and Joe Mihevc, Coalitions for Justice, Novalis, Ottawa, 1994

certain international trends, especially the active cycles of United Nations conferences (on women, population, environment, trade, social development, human rights).⁴ In fact, Canada sought international recognition for its leadership in involving Canadian NGOs in its conference preparatory work and even on official delegations. UN reform debate now recognizes the importance of the global NGO movement and its policy roles.⁵ Indicatively, NGOs addressed the UN Security Council for the first time in fifty years in February 1997.

The public "space" for policy work has expanded:

- a) Political support has grown. Early ventures in public-government policy engagement met the seemingly implacable resistance of public officials and Ministers. But by the mid-1980s, there has been active political support for public participation in international policy as higher priority is placed on public participation, consensus building as well as the search for "outsider" ideas. Political support is a reflection of the response to the public's desire for greater involvement in the public policy process.
- b) Practical pressures promote expansion of policy roles. "As foreign ministries face more issues at greater depth with less money," notes analyst Evan Potter, "there is an increased need for closer collaboration between Canada's

⁴ "The overwhelming interest and participation of all kinds of organizations in the UN global conferences organized in the 1990s is not accidental. This is the 'tip of the iceberg' in a wide social process affecting all the continents: the emergence of organized civil society." See The Independent Commission on Population and Quality of Life 1996, Caring for the Future: Making the Next Decades Provide a Life Worth Living, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 262.

⁵ See for example The Commission on Global Governance, Our Global Neighbourhood, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995, especially pp. 253-262.

foreign policy practitioners and civil society actors..."⁶

Common policy ground between government and NGOs has grown as policy agendas have begun converging. For example, today at CIDA international development co-operation is seen as a politicized process thus legitimizing policy areas such as human rights and democratic development. At DFAIT, the rise of the concept of "common security" means that a more comprehensive approach embraces the human security agenda. (On the other hand, some policy areas such as trade remain largely separated from the policy debates on sustainable development and human rights.) In addition, discrete Southern and Northern policy concerns have become global in nature as the line between the domestic and the international has blurred. This has accelerated the recognition of the necessity of North-South policy reciprocity. And states have perceived the more frequent need to link governmental and non-governmental policy work in the pursuit of consensus building and the development of constituency support. (An example of the latter is the way in which the Department of Foreign Affairs worked with Canadian aboriginal organizations to help build an international climate of support for the creation of the Arctic Council.)

The emergence of international, especially Southern, NGO movements and policy coalitions has encouraged Northern policy capacity development. These Southern coalitions have prompted policy debate within the international NGO community. This in turn has provided for unique NGO perspectives on the practice of Canadian foreign policy.

Some international development issues have become more visible and more pressing, stressing the urgency of the global issues agenda. Certain global problems, such as environmental degradation (ozone depletion, global warming, marine ecosystem

⁶ Evan Potter, "Redesigning Canadian Diplomacy in an Age of Fiscal Austerity", in Fen Hampson and Maureen Appel Molot, Canada Among Nations 1996: Big Enough to Be Heard, Carleton University Press, Ottawa, 1996, p. 34.

crisis), child labour, forced migration, and civil conflict, have pointed to the need for taking a systemic problem solving approach (addressing root causes), necessarily on a multilateral basis.

Emerging Challenges

These mostly positive trends must be balanced by new challenges NGOs face in developing their policy agenda and their approaches to policy dialogue.

Strategic Framework

In most cases, international development NGOs have come to policy work from international development programming. This has meant NGOs have had to "grow" their policy capacities, including their strategic framework. In the course of building up their policy framework, NGOs have encountered some strategic weaknesses such as:

- the lack of a clear strategy for policy and advocacy
- the failure to establish strong alliances with other sectors
- the failure to build up a broad and active policy constituency
- the uneven development of North-South NGO partnerships
- excessive focus on issues and forces that are increasingly marginal to the building of sustainable human development⁷

As CCIC and the North South Institute recently noted in a letter to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, "foreign assistance is only a modest, albeit catalytic, factor in the struggle against poverty and environmental degradation. More important is the collective and cumulative impact of all other policies: political,

⁷ See Michael Edwards, "What will we influence in a future without aid? Redefining advocacy in a market-driven world." Mimeo, 1997.

financial, trade, defence, environmental, etc.”⁸

NGOs have been challenged to broaden their policy emphasis from development assistance to the larger basket of international co-operation issue areas as noted above. This transition has been necessary in response to the impact of globalization and its inordinate focus on market-driven economics.

- Although international NGOs and allied organizations have covered a fairly broad range of issues, the international development community only came together for the first time on a comprehensive agenda in its submission to the 1994 Foreign Policy Review. At that time, the community supported a framework built around sustainable human development (SHD) with the organization of issues around the following thematic headings:

- International development co-operation
- Human rights
- Canada's economic relations and economic justice
- Common security, and
- Democratization of policy.

This has now further evolved into a ten-point agenda (used as the basis for the attached NGO Capacity Map) focusing on the forces shaping global and human development. These ten points are:

- ◇ Sustainable Development
- ◇ Human Rights
- ◇ Gender Equity
- ◇ Rights of the Child
- ◇ Peacebuilding
- ◇ Food Security

⁸ See the April 17, 1997 letter to Ministers Lloyd Axworthy and Don Boudria from Roy Culpeper, President, NSI, and Betty Plewes, CEO, CCIC.

- ◇ Global Trade and Investment
- ◇ Corporate Social Responsibility
- ◇ Official Development Assistance
- ◇ Policy Democratization

Parallel to this transition, is the challenge of building public understanding and constituency support for a comprehensive policy agenda key goals.

NGOs in Canada, as in most developed countries, have had a difficult task in maintaining, let alone building, public support for international co-operation. In the wake of the Cold War, the national unity debate, and the overall fragmentation of public interests, global issues have declined from "top of the mind" importance to the general public.

A recent NGO task force, involving experts in social marketing and the media as well as development education, concluded that NGOs needed to shift from a "conversion" model of interacting with the public to an "engagement" model.⁹ This recommendation has great significance for how NGOs see themselves communicating with the public since it calls for a "two-way" dialogue on public concerns. Members of the public, feeling increasingly alienated by a public policy process dominated by "experts", "want to exchange ideas with each other, make their own connections and draw their own conclusions. They want to be involved in 'working through' the issues that affect their lives and help to make the trade-offs necessary to arrive at

⁹ See Global Citizenship: A New Way Forward, CCIC, August 1996. The task force report also suggested that the NGO community need work more effectively as a "sector" in building support for SHD, that "global citizenship" be used as an organizing concept on NGOs' relationships with the public, that NGOs become increasingly bridge-builders in integrating the relationships among the Canadian public, Southern Partners, and NGOs, that NGOs need move more quickly to a culture which values diversity.

decisions.”¹⁰

NGOs are struggling not only with how to apply “public engagement” approaches, but also to link them to the emerging NGO policy dialogue and advocacy agenda. Since recent research points out that the public wants to pursue its “instinct for making connections”¹¹, developing a comprehensive policy agenda is a good starting point.

Funding

Recent funding cutbacks (and growing fundraising competition) have meant resources for policy have begun to recede. Some NGOs which had dedicated policy staff resources have reduced those commitments.

The decline of CIDA funding for NGOs has exceeded that of the overall decline of ODA as the agency shifts resource spending to favour business and other non-governmental sectors such as universities.

There is a need to avoid a gap between public donors’ expectations of where their donor dollar goes (usually seen as being applied for overseas programs) and investment in Canada-based policy activities. In an era of growing “donor choice”, will policy work receive the donor dollar when the overwhelming public perception is that the purpose of aid lies in its humanitarian work?

Alternate institutional funding sources are few and far between as Canada’s philanthropic foundations (unlike their American

¹⁰ See “Public Engagement + Meaningful Chaos”, a resource of materials available on the Newsgroup “ccic.policy.issues” found on Web.Net.

¹¹ See The Harwood Group, Meaningful Chaos.

counterparts) place a low value on international work.¹²

Policy work can be seen as an asset for NGOs building relationships with bilateral or multilateral funding institutions which value policy input. On the other hand, policy activism can also alienate potential funders.

- Canadian charitable tax laws and regulations discourage
- organizations from seeing policy and advocacy as legitimate charitable pursuits. Policy active organizations, for example, find it increasingly hard to gain (or even keep) charitable tax status.

Policy Effectiveness

The broad range of international policy areas and the need for high levels of expertise in order to participate effectively in policy fora, place pressure on NGOs to manage an appropriate division of labour among themselves.

Policy effectiveness often depends on the ability to establish and maintain multi-organization (or multi-sector) coalitions. Establishing and maintaining coalitions are labour intensive (and thus costly). They also displace the individual profile of a participating NGO. Profile established through policy work is an important institutional incentive for policy work since it can contribute to enhanced public and institutional fundraising.

The plethora of NGOs (international and other) and the assumption that NGOs are mostly single-issue driven contributes to the perception that there is a fragmentation of public policy interests. It is assumed that this fragmentation undermines the capacity of states or

¹² See Evan Potter, "Niche Diplomacy and Canadian Foreign Policy", in International Journal, Vol. LII, No. 1, Winter 1996-97, p.33.

international organizations to manage policy agendas.¹³ While some policy coalitions (e.g. the Halifax Initiative and the Alternative Budget) are confronting the need for NGOs to anticipate and manage the reconciliation (and so-called trade-offs) of diverse policy areas and objectives, that is still the exception rather than the rule.

There is also a pressing need to provide the public with a comprehensive framework for international policy that overcomes the fragmented presentation of a myriad of different and seemingly unconnected policy issues. There is a natural tendency on the part of the public to make the connections between issues and to seek out the bigger picture.

Policy Legitimacy

Enduring legitimacy for NGOs engaged in international policy advocacy will depend on the vitality of their relationships with (and accountability to) Southern organizations. How else can Northern NGOs claim to speak representatively on behalf of their counterparts and people living in poverty?

North-South NGO partnerships, which underpin effective policy work, are being buffeted by major changes such as the de-operationalization of Northern NGOs in the South (with the exception of humanitarian emergency work), and the growth of direct funding of Southern NGOs by bilateral and multilateral agencies. The re-structuring of North-South partnerships is an illusive and challenging task.

Already there is some tension as Southern NGOs question the value-added of Northern funding partners that act as funding channels. The "value added" has often been thought to be Northern constituency development (which is under duress in most ODA-providing

¹³ Jessica T. Mathews, "Power Shift", in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 1, January/February 1997, p. 64.

countries), cross-sector alliance building and policy work on Northern-driven development challenges. The credibility of Northern NGOs were be further undermined in the eyes of their Southern partners if the pressures of fiscal restraint (and NGO downsizing) lead to an imbalance between institutional maintenance and their social change mission (as reflected in the priority of their policy and public engagement activities).

- As NGOs become increasingly competitive in pursuit of government or public funding, notes one analyst of NGOs, do they "risk becoming mere businesses, where value-driven pursuits are crowded out? For agencies concerned to remain non-governmental and thus able to pursue emancipatory agendas, the future looks troubled. *There is, in short, a mounting crisis of control and ownership.*"¹⁴ [Emphasis in original.]

An additional problem remains the fact that the geography of multilateral policy dialogue (taking place mostly in Northern sites such as New York, Washington and Geneva) has led to an over-participation of Northern NGOs and the under-participation of Southern NGOs.

In order to address some of these concerns, new attempts are being made to establish balanced fora for shared North and South NGO policy development, strategizing and action. Such international policy alliances are hard to establish and maintain since they require trust and open dialogue which depend on the investment of time and expensive face-to-face meetings. Limited norms or facilities exist to support these networks despite the fact that new technology (Internet-based communications primarily) has made contacts much more accessible and inexpensive.

¹⁴ David Sogge, "Settings and Choices", in David Sogge (ed.) with Kees Biekart and John Saxby, Compassion and Calculation: The Business of Private Foreign Aid, Pluto Press, London, 1996, p.15.

Future Policy Dialogue

A key challenge for future policy work is building effective mechanisms for policy dialogue with federal government departments, ministerial offices and Parliament. Recent policy dialogue experiences of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC) have generated some of the following characteristics of constructive policy engagement:

1. Policy discussions should take place over time instead of being one-off events.
2. Policy dialogue structures should be flexible and varied in order to allow for change as the discussions evolve.
3. The policy dialogue process should be co-managed by NGOs and government.
4. There should be a balance between broad theoretical issues (e.g. frameworks such as gender, peacebuilding, sustainability) and "real time" issues of on-the-ground implementation.
5. The policy dialogue activities should provide opportunities to bring non-traditional players into the process and help build a broader constituency for the policy area.
6. The process should recognize that dialogue involves two-way influence, and seeks to identify and build on potential areas for collaboration.
7. Over the long term, the process should aspire to build greater coherence between and amongst the various players.

8. The advantages should be considered of using the good offices of hybrid or parastatal institutions as convenors for policy fora (i.e. policy events hosted by the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, the International Development Research Centre, etc.)
9. Systems should be established to ensure timely and easily accessible sharing of information, conclusions and outcomes.
10. Government should be cognizant of, and responsive to, the resource implications for NGOs of sustained policy engagement.
11. Policy processes need to be cognizant of, and sensitive to, inter-departmental dynamics.

NGO Pre-Dialogue Checklist

Looking at the NGO side of the policy engagement in dialogue, NGOs need to:

- i) have a realistic assessment of what really is being placed on the table by government
- ii) decide how much to invest in the process at the outset (there are moments to decline to participate, which would avoid the mistake of doing it badly and communicate the seriousness of the investment when dialogue invitations were accepted)
- iii) hone policy proposal skills by being able to illustrate points clearly with micro examples of macro policy impact (e.g. demonstrating community level impacts)
- iv) understand the implementation context for policy proposals (to ensure that proposals concretely reflect doable and step-by-step suggestions for incremental progress)

v) recognize that policy dialogue is a labour intensive (i.e. costly) exercise for both sides which should not be initiated if there isn't strongly shared interest to go ahead. (If government didn't have an interest but NGOs did, NGOs would then have to consider other strategies to create a more propitious policy dialogue environment.)

Conclusions

The long term trend has been towards growing and improving NGO public policy participation in the context of an increasingly conducive public and governmental environment. Saying that does not discount the seriousness of current challenges but merely suggests that the potential exists to meet each in its turn.

The fact remains that building sustainable human development, at a time of increasing global inequity and conflict and a systemic degradation of the biosphere, will require the development and implementation of new policies based on social innovation and practical experience. NGOs diverse and often experimental micro experience can make an important contribution if systematized and communicated in ways that can influence the public policy process.

Acronyms

AKFC	Aga Khan Foundation of Canada
AGOCI	(Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale
CAWG	Canada Asia Working Group
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Co-operation
CCODP	Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace
CDRC	Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children
CQIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CEA	Canadian International Development Agency
CISG	Centre international de recherches Océaniques
CPCC	Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee
CWCPCD	Canadian Women's Committee on Population and Development
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
ECSEJ	Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice
EDC	Export Development Corporation
ETA	Export Trade Association
GNSS	Global Network for Food Security
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
ICA	Inter-Church
ICCAF	Inter-Church Commission on Human Rights in Latin America
ICCE	Inter-Church
ICCHLA	Inter-Church Commission on Human Rights in Latin America
IOPTU	International Organization of Professional Teachers' Unions
IOHR	International Organization of Human Rights
LO	Local Organizations
MF	Monetary Fund
WAC	Winnipeg Action Centre
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFU	National Farmers Union
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OE	Official Expenditure
POAP	Philippines Official Assistance Program
PRDF	Private's and Public's Development Fund (Anglican Church)
RAP	Rural Advancement Foundation International
SAP	South Asia Partnership
TOR	Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility
UNAO	The United Nations Association in Canada
WID	Women in development
WTO	World Trade Organization
WVO	World Vision Canada

Canadian International Co-operation NGOs and Policy

PART TWO

A FIRST GENERATION CAPACITY MAP

June 1997

Acronyms

AKFC	Aga Khan Foundation of Canada
AQOCI	l'Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale
CAWG	Canada Asia Working Group
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Co-operation
CCODP	Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace
CCRC	Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CISO	Centre International de Solidarité Ouvrière
CPC	Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee
CWCPD	Canadian Women's Committee on Population and Development
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
ECEJ	Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice
EDC	Export Development Corporation
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
GNFS	Global Network on Food Security
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
ICA	Inter Church Action
ICCAF	Inter-Church Coalition on Africa
ICCE	Inter-Church Committee on Ecology
ICCHRLA	Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights In Latin America
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICHRDD	International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MAC	Mines Action Canada
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFU	National Farmers Union
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OI	OXFAM International
PDAP	Philippines Development Assistance Program
PWRDF	Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (Anglican Church)
RAFI	Rural Advancement Foundation International
SAP	South Asia Partnership
TCCR	Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility
UNAC	The United Nations Association in Canada
WID	Women in development
WTO	World Trade Organization
WVC	World Vision Canada

PART TWO:

A First Generation Capacity Map

Introduction

This capacity map is a work in progress, more a sketch than a final cartographical work. It is a first effort to portray the range and capacity of Canadian international NGOs that engage in research and advocacy on public policy issues. Time and resources permitted a survey of fewer than one-quarter of the members of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC). Some related organizations in the broader community who are not members of the CCIC were included, but larger, publicly-funded institutions, such as the North-South Institute, the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, and the International Development Research Centre have not been surveyed here. The focus is on members of the CCIC as well as selected coalitions, committees, and task forces that have a significant level of support or participation from CCIC members.

The contents of this report reflect the activities of the organizations surveyed and may contain gaps in information about organizations we were not able to contact.

The study is organized into ten broad areas, representing the ten-point framework of CCIC's policy program:

1. Sustainable development
2. Human rights
3. Gender equity
4. Rights of the child
5. Peacebuilding
6. Food security
7. Global trade and investment
8. Corporate social responsibility
9. Official development assistance, and
10. Policy democratization

Most public policy research and advocacy by CCIC members is directed towards the Government of Canada and, through it, towards multilateral institutions like the United Nations and its agencies, the World Bank, the IMF, NATO, or the World Trade Organization. Some of it addresses multilateral institutions directly. Work that addresses the corporate sector is also included. Increasingly, companies in the private sector and international regulatory bodies have greater impact on people's lives than national governments, and this is reflected in the focus of policy research and advocacy by many of the members. The study does not survey the programs of CCIC members working with partners on policy research and advocacy in relation to governments in the South.

For each of the policy areas above there is a broader policy community, typically composed of government officials, elected representatives, corporations, the media, organizations in civil society, and individual activists, academics, and researchers, not to mention the public at large. This map looks only at one component of civil society -- the organizations, institutions, and churches that concern themselves with international co-operation.

The survey shows the international co-operation sector at a time of transition. Organizations that have traditionally worked on programs overseas are taking a greater interest in Canadian public policy. Organizations that have focused primarily on Canadian domestic issues are finding national boundaries less relevant. The labour movement, the environmental movement, the peace movement, the women's movement, and the human rights movement all overlap with the international co-operation sector. Each is an international movement and increasingly internationalist in outlook. It is far beyond the scope of this study to survey each of these larger movements, however. The result may be that the total capacity for work on the goals and objectives embraced by the CCIC's policy program is not accurately reflected in each policy area.

Despite a long-term increase in the level of interest and activity by Canada's international co-operation NGOs in policy research and advocacy, there has been a decline in capacity in recent years. This was evident with almost every interview. The most seriously affected were NGOs that have relied primarily on CIDA for their funding, but all organizations have been affected by declining revenue to some extent. Many have had to reduce the staff and resources devoted to policy work, to focus on a smaller range of issues, or to close down their policy work completely. It is unfortunate that this should be happening at the very time the Government of Canada and many multilateral organizations are making serious efforts to include organizations in civil society in their policy processes.

Each of the following sections begins with CCIC's stated policy goal. This is followed by an overview of the current and projected work of members to achieve this goal.

1. Sustainable Development

Policy goal: Promote and accelerate the implementation of Agenda 21 commitments for sustainable development made at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, including the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000 required by the Global Climate Change Convention.

Current capacity and activities

There is very little activity in the community to prepare for Earth Summit II in June 1997 or its follow-up. Several of the people interviewed felt that Agenda 21 was no longer a relevant focus for work. It is a commonly held view that we are further behind on that agenda than we were before the first Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. Even the Canadian Environmental Network, which is sending several delegates to participate in the NGO delegation, feels that Agenda 21 was too large and ambitious and should not be a focus for policy research and advocacy. Rather, it favours work that addresses the components of Agenda 21 separately. The concepts that frame Agenda 21, and many of its specific objectives, are widely held in mission statements and programs of the organizations surveyed.

Within the community, there are examples of such focused work. One example is the Halifax Initiative, a coalition of environment, development, social justice, and church groups concerned about the policies and practices of the international financial institutions. The Coordinating Committee includes the CCIC, Cultural Survival Canada, the Inter-Church Coalition on Africa (ICCAF), CUSO, OXFAM-Canada, RESULTS Canada, the Social Justice Committee of Montreal, the Sierra Club of Canada, and the Toronto Environmental Alliance.

The goal of the Halifax Initiative is to achieve fundamental reform of the Bretton Woods institutions to have them commit to democratic governance and sustainable development. Beginning with the G-7 Summit in Halifax in 1995, the Halifax Coalition has released a G-7 report card on the eve of each summit, commenting on progress in the areas of institutional reform, poverty alleviation, and environmental sustainability. The Coalition meets regularly with officials from the Department of Finance, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and CIDA, to exchange views on

these issues. It also monitors and tests the commitments of the World Bank, the IMF, regional development banks, and national governmental agencies, including CIDA, to promote public participation, transparency, information disclosure, project monitoring and evaluation, and accountability. The Coalition's Shrimp Consumer Action Campaign has sought to educate consumers about the impacts of their food choices including the ecological and social impacts of shrimp aquaculture projects funded by the World Bank. One member of the Halifax Initiative, the Sierra Club, has taken the lead in challenging the Canadian Government's decision to circumvent its own environmental assessment regulations in the sale of nuclear reactors to China.

The Halifax Initiative coalition has established credibility as an effective interlocutor on these issues. Members agree that the coalition gives them a profile and capacity they would not have otherwise. They have opened up political space on these issues with the Department of Finance for the first time. They are also connecting with NGOs around the world -- primarily through the Internet -- and bringing their experience and analysis to the table. The coalition depends for its existence, however, on a grant from a single American foundation to cover the costs of its coordinator, office, and related expenses. It does not have its own research capacity, and the members themselves are stretched thin by funding cuts. Given its vulnerability, the coalition is focusing on building capacity in the member organizations rather than in the coalition per se.

The Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility (TCCR) has a strong ecological dimension to its work. This is now done mainly through the Inter-Church Committee on Ecology (ICCE) which was launched in 1995 as a unit of the TCCR. Through the ICCE, the Taskforce participates in the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) which aims to promote environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests. The FSC accredits certifiers to conduct audits on forests and pass or fail them based on their adherence to the FSC's Principles and Criteria for Forest Management. It can give the FSC trade mark to products from that forest. The goal is to promote consumer consciousness of the ecological implications of their choices.

The TCCR also participates on the Canadian Environmental Performance Evaluation Committee with a particular focus on establishing standards for forest management globally. It participates in the recently founded Canadian Working Group of the FSC to work on establishing standards for forest management in Canada and to promote the FSC in Canada. It took part in the NGO Forum around the hearings of the World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development in

Winnipeg in September and October 1996.

The TCCR has developed a grassroots campaign around the World Council of Churches' petition to reduce greenhouse gas emissions leading to climate change, and has involved Canadian insurance companies in this campaign as allies. In the Fall of 1997, it is planning to convene a conference on Canada's weak compliance with climate change commitments. Meanwhile, the Sierra Club is about to launch a campaign on global climate change in partnership with the Body Shop and the Suzuki Foundation.

The TCCR also works on a number of concerns related to the practices of mining companies, involving Canadian mining companies operating in Canada and in other parts of the world. This includes co-operation with the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights In Latin America (ICCHRLA) and the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD). The TCCR has focused on the environmental impact of Placer Dome's mining operations in the Philippines, and of Cathedral Gold in Guyana. It has recently established a Mining Working Group to give more attention to this sector, particularly by setting up bench marks specific to the mining industry.

Another church-based research and advocacy group, the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice (ECEJ), plans to do a critical analysis of the concept of sustainable development during the year ahead. This work will include a contribution to the methodology for developing the Alternative Federal Budget in 1998 in a way that factors ecological costs and benefits into the national accounts.

Finally, the work of the Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI), described in greater detail in the section on Food Security, addresses the aspect of Agenda 21 dealing with sustainable agriculture and the preservation of biodiversity. RAFI is active at the international level in monitoring the practices of multilateral institutions, particularly the Food and Agriculture Organization. It monitors the performance of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the umbrella organization of agricultural research institutions, and led a successful appeal for an external review of the member institutions; it will be carried out this year by Maurice Strong.

2. Human Rights

Policy goal: Make human rights central to the practice of Canadian foreign

policy, and in particular to promote Canadian and multilateral trade and investment practices that protect internationally agreed labour rights.

Current capacity and activities

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) works on several fronts to promote human and trade union rights internationally. The major focus at present is work for the inclusion of a social clause guaranteeing human and labour rights in international trade agreements, including the World Trade Organization, the NAFTA, and in the current efforts to create a Free Trade Area of the Americas. The CLC cooperates with other organizations of Canadian civil society in this work.

The President and Vice Presidents of the CLC play leadership roles in several international bodies, including the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the Human and Trade Union Rights Committee of the OECD, and the ILO. Through this network of international affiliations the CLC is constantly involved in a host of ad hoc issues involving violations of human and trade union rights in other countries, for example in China, Burma, Indonesia, Nigeria, Eastern Europe, Mexico, and Colombia. This work normally involves advocacy of appropriate action by the Canadian government to protect human and labour rights.

The CLC's policy research and advocacy capacity is provided by the staff of its International Affairs Department, which includes a full-time NAFTA Desk, as well as by the staff of the Social and Economic Policy Department which does in-depth research and analysis, about 20% of which is devoted to international issues. The CLC publishes a wide variety of research documents, educational materials, and regular newsletters.

A number of church-based groups focus on human rights, including the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America (ICCHRLA), the Inter-Church Committee on Africa (ICCAF), the Canada Asia Working Group (CAWG), and the Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility. The TCCR has worked to hold Canadian corporations accountable for the effects of their presence in countries where human rights are violated. It communicates and meets directly with the corporations involved, in some cases using the *Bench Marks* standards as a basis for dialogue on company practices and responsibilities (see details on *Bench Marks* under Corporate Responsibility). Worthy of special note has been its work with Shell Canada and Shell International over their role in Nigeria. The international pressure on Shell International has led it to revise its statement of

principles to incorporate a human rights criterion. This provides a good basis for follow-up action with Shell regarding Nigeria, as well as for pressing other companies to adopt similar codes. The Taskforce has also focused on the operations of Canadian companies in the Sudan, Burma, and Guatemala.

The churches also work on the rights of refugees and immigrant workers. The Anglican Church's Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) has responded to the global refugee situation by: advocating for the rights of refugees in Canada and in other parts of the world; monitoring national and international refugee policies; educating the Canadian public on the issue; supporting refugee programs of partners in the south through grants for emergency relief, development, policy and advocacy work for and with refugees; and supporting the network of Anglican volunteers engaged in refugee sponsorship and advocacy. The PWRDF makes frequent representations to the Canadian government expressing concern over aspects of the Canadian Immigration Law and the refugee determination process, through briefs, meetings with the Minister of Immigration and other immigration officials, and appearances before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. It has also made submissions to the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and to the UN Commission of Human Rights.

In Quebec, l'Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI), the umbrella group of Québec non-governmental organizations working in international co-operation, coordinates the Comité Francophonie, which is a part of the Canadian Human Rights Network. This is a coalition of 15 Quebec organizations working on human rights and democratic development. Its goal is to transform the Francophonie into a political forum that promotes human rights and democratic development.

Next year will be the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The chairman of the United Nations Association in Canada's Human Rights Committee, the Hon. Walter Maclean, will be travelling across Canada on a speaking tour in the lead-up to the anniversary.

3. Gender Equity

Policy goal: Ensure NGOs and governments fulfill gender equity commitments made at recent global United Nations conferences, with particular emphasis on promoting women's human rights, addressing the feminization of poverty, improving women's participation in power

structures and decision making, ensuring women's health, and eradicating violence against women.

Current capacity and activities

CCIC has identified several policy goals in this area that address the practices and programs of the Government of Canada and NGOs. For example, it calls upon the Government of Canada to adopt reporting and accountability practices that ensure that WID and Gender Equity objectives are reviewed with the participation of NGOs and women's organizations; it proposes greater roles for women who are gender aware in national and multilateral decision-making bodies and on official Canadian delegations; and it advocates increased financial and policy resources to promote an end to family violence, particularly violence against women, and to support women-specific programming and gender equity.

This initial survey of the community has identified no organized work among CCIC members on these objectives. There has been a great deal of effort throughout the community over the past several years to integrate gender issues into all aspects of programming and policy work. This has been evident in the agendas Canadian NGOs have taken to international conferences such as the World Summit on Social Development and the World Food Summit. But this initial survey did not find evidence of distinct new initiatives by Canadian organizations on gender equity commitments made at UN global conferences. This may be a gap in the work of the community.

The Halifax Initiative supports a project called "Women's Eyes on the World Bank" which monitors the gender impact of the Bank's programs.

There is a small amount of work on population and health issues. The Canadian Women's Committee on Population and Development (CWCPD) is a small, ad hoc research and action group convened in 1993 with membership from Inter Pares, AQOCI's Quebec Committee on Women and Development, and women's health action groups. It advocates population programs that address the quality of women's health rather than coercive population control. It has developed a Bill of Rights for Contraceptive Research, Development, and Use, and calls on governments, research bodies, and NGOs working in the field of reproductive health to follow its principles and guidelines. This evoked a positive response from the IDRC which has said the Bill of Rights will be taken into account in future research projects. At the time of writing, the CWCPD was not active, but some members continue with research of their own. For example, Inter Pares supports research in

Bangladesh on the impact of World Bank population programs on women's health. This is part of an interesting experiment in policy research and dialogue described below in the section on Policy Democratization. The members of the CWCPD recognize that much more research on this and related issues is necessary, particularly on Canada's role in population control around the world.

The Aga Khan Foundation of Canada (AKFC) has produced *Speaking Out*, a book published by IT Publications on the findings of a set of case studies in South Asia on gender and empowerment. It examines different ways of promoting women's empowerment and lessons learned in the different approaches. The book has served as a resource for follow-up workshops AKFC has sponsored with practitioners.

ECEJ has a working group on Women and Economic Justice. Its work on gender equity includes a focus on international issues, such as the status of women in maquila zones and in unpaid agricultural and domestic work in the South. It has produced several publications.

4. Rights of the Child

Policy goal: Fulfill Canada's obligations to improve the lives of children, with measurable progress against malnutrition, preventable diseases, and illiteracy, as the targets set out in the 1990 U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child.

Current capacity and activities

The Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children (CCRC) brings together a large group of Canadian agencies that focus on the welfare and rights of children. Most work on Canadian domestic issues, but a number of them have an international focus, including the Canadian Public Health Association, CARE Canada, Pueblito Canada, Foster Parents Plan Canada, Save the Children Fund of BC, Save the Children Canada, UNICEF Canada, and World Vision Canada.

The CCRC has recently completed a project supported by Health Canada called "Bringing the Convention to Life." It was designed to raise awareness about Canada's obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Members examined their own performance in implementing the Convention and shared the lessons learned in the process. They also examined corporate compliance with the Convention in overseas settings, particularly on the question of child labour. They

did not find Canadian corporations implicated in the exploitation of child labour, although there are many examples of teenage girls working in sweatshops with links to Canada in Latin America and Asia. They continue to monitor this issue with the assistance of the Labour behind the Label Coalition, a monitoring group based in UNITE, a union of Canadian garment and textile unions.

The "Bringing the Convention to Life" project generated educational materials on the rights of children and Canada's commitments under the Convention. The CCRC called upon CIDA to develop and use an assessment process that integrates respect for international children's rights standards into its funding and project and program assessment practices. It did not make much progress with CIDA on this issue while the project was active, but Pueblito Canada and Save the Children Canada are both following up with CIDA on this issue.

The coalition is less active at the moment, now that this project has ended, but children's rights are the focus of much other work, particularly concerning the issue of child labour.

The Canadian labour movement began work to prohibit child labour in Canada over a century ago. Currently the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) works on this issue internationally. It supported the visit of Craig Kiehlburger to India in 1995, at the time of the Team Canada delegation of Canadian premiers and prime minister, to give prominence to the issue of child labour in South Asia. The CLC, Steelworkers, other unions, Pueblito Canada, and other organizations that work on the rights of children, promote the RugMark label that guarantees child labour has not been exploited in manufacturing a product. The CLC also advocates Canadian ratification of the International Labour Organization's Convention #138 that prohibits the use of child labour under the age of 14. It is currently developing a campaign to pressure the toy industry to adopt a code of conduct that respects workers' rights, trade union rights, and health and safety standards. Many of the workers in this industry are girls and young women, some as young as 13, who work in maquilas or free trade zones.

The South Asia Partnership has sponsored a policy forum involving policy planners and decision-makers on the issue of child labour in the subcontinent.

Project Ploughshares is working on the issue of child soldiers. It is currently working with Canadian policy makers on Canada's approach to this issue, urging Canada and other nations to adopt an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on involvement of children in armed conflict, raising the minimum age of

soldiers to 18.

World Vision Canada has contributed to a study sponsored by Graça Machel of Mozambique on the impact of war on children. It has published a brief on the situation of children in the Gulu region of northern Uganda, and appeared before Parliamentary committees on this issue. WVC is currently planning workshop with a particular focus on girls in extremely difficult circumstances.

5. Peacebuilding

Policy goal: Contribute to a safer world for all people by collaborating with all sectors of society to place common security and peacekeeping as core objectives for Canadian defence policy and to foster locally-rooted peacebuilding options for war-torn and war-threatened societies.

Current capacity and activities

There are several initiatives and a great deal of dynamism in this area. Currently at the centre of this is the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC). The CPCC was first organized in 1994 on an ad hoc basis by NGOs exploring work together in coalition on peacebuilding. Following a conference of over 150 NGOs in 1995, it was decided to make the CPCC a more structured coalition. The steering committee is currently composed of the CCIC, the Mennonite Central Committee, Project Ploughshares, the Peace Fund, CARE Canada, CUSO, Médecins sans Frontières, the Local Capacities for Peace Project, the Centre for Days of Peace, Global Affairs, IDRC, the North-South Institute, the Parliamentary Centre, and individual academics. Membership stands at about 200 organizations and individuals.

The CPCC engages in policy dialogue with DFAIT and CIDA on the Peacebuilding Fund, and Canadian policy coherence. The CPCC is working to set up task forces on specific conflict zones, such as Guatemala, the Great Lakes region of central Africa, and Cambodia. These task forces are to be composed of NGOs, government officials, and academics; their purpose will be to carry out research and analysis, and to consider options for action and how to generate public support. It is hoped that the task forces will generate pilot projects, such as civil society capacity building in Guatemala.

The CPCC also worked with DFAIT to organize the first annual consultation on peacebuilding. The agenda has included themes such as the social integration of war-affected communities (resettlement of refugees, demobilization, etc.), trust-building exercises, work on specific zones of conflict, and policy dialogue itself.

Another coalition that has experienced great success in recent times is Mines Action Canada (MAC). MAC is a coalition of 40 Canadian organizations working to ban the production, export, and use of land mines. It is the Canadian branch of the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines. In its work over the last three years it has persuaded the Canadian Government to stop the production and export of land mines from Canada and to destroy about two-thirds of its own stockpile. At a conference in October 1996, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade invited all countries in the world to come to Ottawa in December 1997 to sign a treaty to ban all anti-personnel land mines. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is now working to get as many countries as possible to participate in this treaty; the effort is called the "Ottawa Process". About 58 countries support the ban, but many remain to be convinced, including the United States.

MAC's aims at this point are to support the Ottawa Process by working with campaigns in other countries, especially in Africa and in eastern Europe, and by encouraging Canadians to write to the embassies of other countries in Canada advocating a ban on land mines. It continues to advocate a legislated ban on land mines by Canada, and the destruction of all stockpiles.

Project Ploughshares, a long-standing project of the Canadian churches, continues in its programs to carry out research and develop policy proposals in support of Canadian and international peace and security measures. Its programs are in four main areas: war prevention (or peacebuilding), nuclear arms control, conventional weapons control, and defence alternatives. Among its current initiatives is an effort to have the Canadian Government work within NATO to reconsider its nuclear role in light of the recent decision by the International Court of Justice that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is a violation of humanitarian law, and is therefore illegal in all but the most extreme circumstances. Project Ploughshares has drafted an alternative set of guidelines for conventional arms exports and is working in a round table setting with military, industry, and DFAIT staff to find areas where the industry is amenable to further tightening and transparency. It is also preparing for a major debate on the role of the Canadian armed forces, expected to arise in the fall of 1997. Project Ploughshares advocates a focus on peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Canadian foreign policy, and a reallocation of Defence funds in favour of ODA.

Many individual NGOs are involved in peacebuilding work through their involvement in the coalitions mentioned and through their programming on the ground. This is a growing area of activity, no doubt encouraged by CIDA's Peacebuilding Fund. Nevertheless, many of the specific objectives still require a lot of work, particularly in developing alternatives and options for consideration by policy-makers in such areas as defence policy and peacebuilding strategies overseas.

6. Food Security

Policy goal: Promote sustainable food security as a basic human right in Canadian agricultural and international development policy and work to achieve at a minimum the 1996 World Food Summit seven-point Plan of Action.

Current capacity and activities

The United Nations Association in Canada coordinates the Global Network on Food Security (GNFS). This was launched at the Global Assembly on Food Security in Quebec City in October 1995, organized by the UNA Canada. The GNFS is a virtual organization using e-mail, teleconferencing, and fax to prepare for the World Food Summit in October 1996 and to follow-up since then. Over 800 networks and civil society groups are linked through the GNFS world-wide. The GNFS helps any group or network link to others, who wish to work to implement the Principles of Food Security recognized by the Global Assembly. Key among these principles are the right to food security; empowerment of civil society, with growing emphasis on women and indigenous peoples; food not to be used as a weapon; and the installation of timely follow-up mechanisms to evaluate the status of world food security. Participants in the GNFS carry out their lobbying activities directly, on many specialized and basic issues concerning global food security. The GNFS assists by facilitating inter-disciplinary meetings, focus workshops, providing summary reports on joint undertakings, and generally, networking. Canadian members of the GNFS include PARTNERS in Rural Development; Rural Advancement Foundation International - Canada (RAFI); Canadian Foodgrains Bank; Indigenous People's Biodiversity Network, Canada; National Farmers Union (NFU); OXFAM-Canada/World Food Day Programme; OXFAM-Quebec; and the UNA-Canada itself.

As in so many other cases, however, reduced funding for UNA Canada's programs has diminished its capacity noticeably. UNA Canada is not in a position to support the GNFS in a leadership role, either among Canadian NGOs or internationally. It is

limited to a communications and facilitating role. At present, the only coordinated follow-up to the World Food Summit is the Canadian Government's Joint Follow-up Committee to the World Food Summit, chaired by Agriculture Canada. OXFAM Canada, CHF-Partners in Rural Development, the Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI), the Unitarian Service Committee (USC) and a representative of the GNFS from UNA Canada participate in this committee. The committee is focused primarily on follow-up in Canada, but its agenda includes Canada's international role and commitments. It is still too early to say how useful it will be; some feel that there may not be enough space there for views that are contrary to the government's outlook. One member feels that a useful area of work at the committee would be a review of the Agriculture and Food component of CIDA's basic needs strategy, an area that has been neglected in recent years.

Perhaps the strongest capacity for research and advocacy on food security issues within a single NGO is that of the Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI), an international policy NGO headquartered in Canada. RAFI focuses its research and advocacy primarily at the multilateral level. It is concerned about the loss of genetic diversity -- especially in agriculture -- and about the impact of intellectual property on agriculture and world food security. Its program involves action on food security, agricultural biodiversity, and the right of farmers to conserve and use the seed varieties they have developed. RAFI also works with indigenous peoples on their knowledge of biodiversity and their right to protect their resources and knowledge from appropriation and commercial exploitation by outsiders. Together, these two streams underpin most of RAFI's activities, whether in research, publication, or policy advocacy in the international arena.

RAFI is currently working on a strategy aimed at 1999, when the World Trade Organization (WTO) will reassess the agricultural and intellectual property provisions of its World Trade Agreement. Almost all of RAFI's current activities aim to change the terms of the WTO agreement when it comes under review. During 1997, RAFI is preparing for the FAO Regional Meetings during the first half of 1998. RAFI will assist its regional networks to intervene at these meetings to follow up the commitments made by governments at the World Food Summit in Rome last year, especially the commitments to carry out "hunger mapping" to identify who is most vulnerable to food insecurity, to develop national strategies on food security, to respect and fulfill the right to food, and to launch national Food for All Campaigns to mobilize all levels of society in support of the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. RAFI is able to provide information and analysis to NGOs about what may be achievable in these advocacy efforts. All RAFI publications are disseminated on the Internet at RAFI's web site -- www.rafi.ca.

RAFI has strong research capacity embodied in its staff, its board of trustees, and its network around the world. It responds to several ad hoc requests for information and analysis from its network every week. It also has a good set of media contacts and an up-to-date data base on who is covering the issues that concern them in the media internationally. They produce an on-line newsletter to get ad hoc information out to their network quickly. Partly because of its size, however, RAFI lacks the capacity to provide leadership to Canadian NGOs on these issues.

Another NGO with a strong emphasis on food security policy is PARTNERS in Rural Development (formerly the Canadian Hunger Foundation). Like RAFI, its policy work is done primarily at the international level. It is one of four members of the NGO Committee of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). It is currently involved in follow-up to the November 1995 Conference for the Eradication of Hunger and Poverty, for which PARTNERS was responsible for drafting the Plan of Action. PARTNERS has produced several policy papers on food security and rural development that are available on request. PARTNERS' acknowledges, however, that its capacity for research into food security policy issues is quite limited, as is its knowledge of the public policy process itself.

OXFAM-Canada has made food security one of its three major programming themes. At present it is developing a major campaign on Ten Basic Rights. The right to food security is the first of these rights and likely to be the lead issue of the campaign. The main point of this work is public education, however, not direct policy advocacy. To date, it has not developed an advocacy strategy around food security issues, although there are a number with which it is dealing, notably food aid. This will be a priority on OXFAM-Canada's agenda through the rest of 1997.

Several other NGOs work on food security issues in their programs and make modest contributions to research and advocacy based on their experience. For example, the Philippines Development Assistance Program (PDAP) is developing a data base of best practices in the fields of food security and sustainable agriculture in the Philippines, including appropriate policies at the local, national (Philippines), and international levels. A particular focus at present is on pesticides and fertilizers. PDAP aims to build capacities locally for this work, but it is also, for example, lobbying the Canadian Government to stop the export of potash to the Philippines for fertilizer. PDAP intends to promote alternative trading networks, supporting the work of Bridgehead and Fair TradeMark Canada in opening access for the production of Filipino agricultural cooperatives to Northern markets.

Inter Church Action has conducted research on the economic impacts of methods of

agricultural development with urban poor in Latin America, and published the findings on poverty reduction through improved food security in its publication *Journal of Learnings*. CUSO is producing a radio series on food security for a community radio station in Saskatoon, and is working to enhance it for production on CBC Ideas.

In general, there is a lot of work underway on food security in the community. The GNFS is a positive initiative, and the government's Joint Follow-up Committee to the World Food Summit is an interesting and worthwhile experiment in policy dialogue. Apart from RAFI, however, there is very limited research capacity in the community in this field, and no adequate leadership or coordination of policy work by international co-operation NGOs.

7. Global Trade and Investment

Policy goal: Work towards a more equitable global economic order by pursuing trade and investment agreements and regulation of financial flows that contribute to reduced social inequalities and protection of the environment, by cancelling unsustainable debt for the highly indebted countries, and by ensuring democratic reform of multilateral trade and financial institutions such as the WTO, the IMF and World Bank.

Current capacity and activities

The Halifax Initiative, described earlier in the section on Sustainable Development, is the NGO coalition working on these issues, particularly on IFI reform and debt relief for the highly-indebted least developed countries. The coalition aims to end the unsustainable policies and practices of the international financial institutions by calling on the appropriate institutions to stop all lending for environmentally and socially destructive projects, cancel or reduce multilateral debt, develop a mechanism to control international currency speculation, halt structural adjustment programs as currently constituted so as to prevent further social and ecological damage, and to reform structures and operations to incorporate democratic governance, transparency, decentralized decision-making, community involvement, full and open public participation, and full public accountability. The Coalition has worked on public education and mobilizing on the issue of debt relief through its "Drop the Debt" campaign in 1996-97. It has also pushed for a more comprehensive and transparent review of the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF). See the comments in the section on Sustainable Development for other details on the

Halifax Initiative's program.

OXFAM-Canada, which is a member of the Halifax Initiative, also works closely with OXFAM International (OI), a cooperative effort of the OXFAM family world-wide that includes a strong measure of policy advocacy. Currently, OXFAM International has a strong focus on IFI reform and debt relief. Its objectives are to increase civil society's participation in policy dialogue and decision-making, change World Bank policies to increase poor people's access to productive resources, and to make improved access to health services and education a specific objective of Bank policies. On debt reduction, its goal is full implementation of the "Highly Indebted Poor Countries" (HIPC) Initiative, adopted by the World Bank/IMF in October 1996, for the maximum number of countries in a shortened time frame. OXFAM-Canada has worked on this issue, again through the Halifax Initiative, on a letter-writing campaign to the Minister of Finance and through the media. Canada has played an important role in supporting the HIPC Initiative but recently some NGOs have raised questions about whether Canada could do more to accelerate the pace of relief.

As noted in the section on Human Rights, the Canadian Labour Congress gives a great deal of its resources for research and advocacy to issues of trade and investment. Its International Affairs Department has a full-time NAFTA desk and its Social and Economic Policy Department provides significant research capacity to work in this area. The focus is not only on NAFTA but on the social and economic impact of economic integration generally, whether it is in NAFTA, APEC, the WTO, or the new Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The CLC is careful to state that it is not opposed to increased trade but argues for a framework that makes social progress the principal goal. Its main proposal is for a social clause in trade agreements that would guarantee freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, a minimum working age, employment and pay equity, and abolition of forced labour. The CLC NAFTA Desk publishes a monthly newsletter, *The morning NAFTA / ActuALENA*. The CLC has also published fact sheets, educational material, and in-depth research studies in this area.

Among the church-based groups, the Ecumenical Coalition on Economic Justice takes the lead on these issues. ECEJ has published a book, *Turning the Tide*, on the finance sector globally and in Canada, on the theme of bringing finance under international control. It is currently preparing for a campaign to promote the Tobin tax as a method to check destabilizing financial flows in the international economy. This will begin in July 1997. ECEJ works on monitoring the impacts of the NAFTA and is also working on APEC as well as the Multilateral Agreement on Investment currently under negotiation within the OECD.

L'Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI) coordinates the Quebec Network on Hemispheric Integration. The constituency goes far beyond its membership of international co-operation NGOs to include the three main trade unions, the membership of Solidarité Populaire du Québec, and the Quebec network of environmental organizations. It has developed links with similar organizations in Latin America and the United States as well as with the Action Canada Network. The members work to make sustainable human development the goal of trade and investment policies in the hemisphere. NAFTA, APEC, and the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) are all important objects of study and advocacy.

ICCAF is a member of the Halifax Initiative and works within that coalition around issues of structural adjustment, debt, and IFI reform. John Mihevc, an ICCAF staff person, is a member of the NGO Steering Committee for the Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative, a review arising out of the "50 Years is Enough" Campaign. This joint NGO/World Bank initiative will review the impact of structural adjustment in four African countries (Mali, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Uganda), three Asian countries, and three Latin American countries. The committee will also arrange its own review of Mexico, where the government did not agree to participate. A forum of NGOs in each country will take part in the review.

ICCAF is also using its research to prepare short popular pieces on the impact of debt and structural adjustment in particular African countries, notably Mozambique and Zambia, and has prepared a book on economic justice issues, Toward a Moral Economy: Responses to Poverty in the North and South.

Much of the action in the community on these issues during 1997 is focused on preparations for the People's Summit, a parallel NGO forum to be held at the time of the APEC summit in Vancouver in November. A wide range of organizations in civil society will participate. The Canadian Organizing Network for the People's Summit groups key members of the environmental, labour, human rights, and women's movements. NGOs will organize events, seminars, and forums around issues of concern to them. The underlying theme is the need to ensure that agreements to increase the level of economic integration in the Asia Pacific region take into account the related social and political concerns of the citizens of APEC member countries. Members of the international cooperation community will organize sessions on sustainability issues, including aquaculture and fish stock depletion, sustainable agriculture and food security, mining, forestry, and energy alternatives. Among the agencies organizing these sessions are the BC Council for International Co-operation, CUSO, Inter Pares, the Philippines Development Assistance

Program, OXFAM-Canada, Canada World Youth, the Unitarian Service Committee, CCODP, and the Canada Asia Working Group. In addition, CoDevelopment Canada will organize a youth gathering. South Asia Partnership and other organizations are working on human rights and development profiles of APEC countries. Alternatives will organize the *Forum Populaire sur l'APEC* in Montreal prior to the Vancouver summit.

8. Corporate Social Responsibility

Policy goal: Promote corporate social responsibility and a more socially and ecologically balanced way of life among Canadians, with corporate accountability for the environmental and social consequences of their investments.

Current capacity and activities

In recent years there has been an increasing focus of advocacy work directly with corporations. Globalization of production, distribution, and financial flows has decreased the power of national governments and made corporations more important actors in the international system. Corporations play a key role in many of the issues addressed in CCIC's policy program, including sustainable development, human rights, food security, trade and investment, and peacebuilding.

The leading organization working on corporate social responsibility within the community is the Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility (TCCR), an ecumenical organization entirely funded by its members, a broad range of churches and religious societies. Its formal purpose is to allow its members to be ethical shareholders of Canadian corporations. It conducts research and advocacy both with corporations and governments on several issues, particularly corporate governance and accountability, ecology, human rights, and aboriginal land rights.

The TCCR, in conjunction with counterparts in the U.K. and the U.S., has prepared a document entitled *Principles for Global Responsibility: Bench Marks for Measuring Business Performance* (known commonly as the *Bench Marks* document). It is a tool for examining the way transnational corporations behave across the full range of corporate responsibility issues -- including labour standards, environmental standards, and governance issues. The first version was released in September 1995. Work on a Round Two document began in early 1997. There has been initial dialogue with Canadian corporations, and promotion of its contents with organizations interested in using its framework for measuring global business performance and in its relevance for company codes of conduct.

The TCCR has published several research documents on military exports, corporate accountability, trade and human rights, ecological justice, and responsible investment. The Annual Report is a useful reference document on corporate social responsibility issues. Other aspects of the TCCR program have been described above in the sections on Sustainable Development and Human Rights.

There are a number of new initiatives that promote consumer action to promote human rights and equitable international trade by favouring product labels. Some of these have been mentioned in earlier sections. The RugMark label guarantees that child labour has not been used in the manufacture of a product. The Forest Stewardship Council label, just being introduced in Canada, guarantees that forest products have been produced using sustainable forest management practices.

Another label is TransFair, promoted by Fair TradeMark Canada which licenses Canadian companies to use on their products a label that certifies the product has been traded fairly. It is currently focusing on coffee marketers. It is the Canadian member of TransFair International and has access to a large research base from European colleagues. This is mostly organized around trade issues of particular commodities, such as clothes, coffee, tea, cocoa, and sugar. Fair TradeMark Canada has begun work with Ten Days for Global Justice to prepare for their 1998 campaign, which will focus on fair trade. The theme will be "building alternatives", from the household level to the global. At the level of personal behaviour, the campaign will promote the adoption of TransFair brands, particularly for coffee.

The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) is conducting an education and action campaign during 1995-97 on the theme of Globalization and Work. In the past year CCODP has organized a campaign to pressure Nike and Levi Strauss to agree to independent monitoring of labour and environmental conditions at their factories and those of their subcontractors world-wide. Follow-up on this work will continue, including massive petitions to be gathered and sent to the companies.

These consumer action campaigns receive support from the labour movement, particularly the CLC's International Affairs Department and the labour-sponsored funds, and to a lesser extent from NGOs. Fair TradeMark Canada, however, has a major problem securing adequate resources for its work.

A key success factor for shareholder and consumer action to promote corporate social responsibility will be monitoring Canadian corporate activity in other countries. At present this is underdeveloped. A priority for future work will be

arranging for independent third-party monitoring of corporate activity, especially beyond the resource sector. The TCCR sees a need for coordination of links between socially-minded investors in Canada and groups in other parts of the world that could monitor corporate activity.

Another gap is the need for a broader network of organizations willing to lobby for more open corporate governance rules in Canada, to counterbalance the power of the corporate lobby to keep the rights of shareholders to a minimum. This has a direct bearing on the ability of Canadian shareholders to hold companies accountable for their impact in other countries. Another gap is the capacity to take resources produced by the TCCR and others and turn it into popular tools for increasing consumer consciousness.

There is a need emerging for coordination and co-operation among the various efforts to affect corporate behaviour through consumer awareness around the various labels, which now include the Forest Stewardship Council trade mark, RugMark, TransFair, and the Labour Behind the Label campaign; which focuses on the garment and textile industry. They could gain a lot from coordination and by learning from one another about methods of work.

There is also scope for promoting corporate social responsibility through public policy advocacy. The CCIC recommends that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry should undertake a review of issues relating to Corporate Codes of Conduct for international trade and investment practices with a view to amending the Canada Business Corporations Act. It also advocates that CIDA and the Export Development Corporation (EDC) develop a Code of Conduct for private sector development, trade, and investment in developing countries.

9. Official Development Assistance (ODA)

Policy goal: Reverse the decline in Canadian ODA by 1998/99, with a demonstrated improvement in poverty eradication through Canadian ODA over the next five years.

Current capacity and activities

Action to advocate a reversal in the decline of ODA has been community-wide, with coordination by the CCIC, which monitors ODA closely and contributes data and analysis to the annual international report, *The Reality of Aid*. Individual members of the community have organized campaigns within their constituencies to send

postcards and letters to the Finance Minister each year before the budget, opposing further cuts to ODA. Some have also presented briefs on the same theme to parliamentary committees. Organizations as diverse as OXFAM-Canada, World Vision Canada, the Inter Church Committee on Africa, and the Manitoba Council for International Co-operation all reported action of this kind.

There is a wide range of formal and informal advocacy for improvements to Canada's ODA program to make it more effective in eradicating poverty, promoting human rights, improving food security programs, and transferring resources from military expenditure to social development. Much of this has been reported in other sections. Here are a few other areas of work not mentioned elsewhere.

The CCIC itself has a policy unit that gives priority to research and analysis of Canada's aid program and to relations between NGOs and government in the field of international co-operation.

The Steelworkers Humanity Fund is conducting a research study on Labour Rights and Development Assistance. It studies aid flows as they affect labour rights, including both ODA and credit provided by the Export Development Corporation. This study has spun off work on child labour as a sub-set of this general interest.

CARE Canada participates in a joint research program on "NGOs in Complex Emergencies" on the role of NGOs in preventing complex emergencies and alleviating their effects. This receives support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Department of National Defence, and IDRC, among others.

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKFC) has established a Development Policy and Research Department to conduct research on public policy issues and to use this as a basis for promoting policy dialogue with government, particularly with CIDA on aid policies. The current program is focused on 3 areas: creating an enabling environment for NGOs, improving the institutional performance of NGOs, and cross-cutting themes related to the first two, particularly gender and the environment. In each case, the focus is primarily on southern NGOs, but there is some consideration of the capacity and enabling environment for NGOs in Canada as well. AKFC has completed work on two publications in these areas to date: Speaking Out, described above in the section on gender equity, and Strategies of Public Engagement: Shaping a Canadian Agenda for International Co-operation, a book forthcoming in September 1997, based on a Round Table on the roles and capacities of NGOs. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of independence in

South Asia, the AKFC is convening a round table later in 1997 that will bring together people from the government, corporate, and voluntary sectors in Canada and South Asia to discuss relations between Canada and South Asia in such areas as economic development, civil society, sustainable human development, and knowledge partnerships.

Research and policy dialogue are an integral part of some of AKFC's overseas programming. For example, it is using program funds to research best practices in environmental programming, with a focus on both technical feasibility and community organization. It will document the different approaches, draw out conclusions, then communicate this up the policy chain. A similar approach is being used in work on strengthening social sector institutions in Pakistan.

The AKFC's low-key approach to policy dialogue is at the opposite pole to more confrontative methods that have characterized some NGO strategies in the past. It is a good example of the changing views within the community on effective methods of policy advocacy. A few years ago, the Inter Church Fund for International Development (ICFID) published a sharp critique of CIDA's programs, particularly its support for structural adjustment in the least developed countries, in a study called Diminishing Our Future. ICFID has recently been merged with another church body to form Inter-Church Action (ICA) to serve as a forum for the churches on aid issues, particularly ODA and food security. Policy research will be a priority for ICA, but it intends to keep this grounded in its program experience and to develop a strong and credible research capacity in particular areas of development policy, especially sustainable agriculture, gender equity, and democratization. This will serve as its basis for dialogue with government on policy alternatives in the future.

10. Policy Democratization

Policy goal: Create new opportunities for citizen participation and engagement in national and multilateral policy-making, reflecting roles and responsibilities for civil societies and political representatives alike, promoting more equitable, transparent and accountable institutions.

Current capacity and activities

All policy advocacy work by Canadian NGOs, institutions, and churches carries the implicit demand for a greater role for civil society in the policy process. Several specific proposals are noted in earlier sections, for example for formal consultations on human rights issues prior to meetings of the Francophonie and the

Commonwealth, a joint Government-NGO mechanism to monitor Canada's action on commitments made at the World Food Summit, and so on. There is currently experimentation with a range of mechanisms for the participation of civil society organizations in public policy processes.

One of the main barriers to progress on this goal, however, is the limited capacity of the community to carry out effective policy research and to allocate the time and resources to policy dialogue, not to mention policy advocacy when necessary. As mentioned in the Introduction, there has recently been a decline in the capacity of individual organizations to do this work. This capacity issue increases the importance and value of coalitions; a number of coalitions are working to enhance their policy role at present.

Partnership Africa Canada, a coalition of 25 African and 60 Canadian members, is one. One of PAC's goals is capacity building of its member organizations in the area of policy work. PAC is planning its own "mapping" exercise for production of a manual on policy work for Africa and Canada. PAC may also develop a training program on policy research and advocacy, on the model of the Jesuit Centre's training program, "Naming the Moment" on social analysis in Canada.

The South Asia Partnership (SAP) is repositioning itself to be a meeting place for all groups in Canada interested in sustainable human development in South Asia, including social activists, immigrant communities, academics, and NGOs. It will work to gather information, learn, and carry out activities to increase public awareness and advocate appropriate Canadian policies in relation to South Asia. It is now building up its capacity to carry out this role. SAP anchors two or three forums each year on issues of relevance to South Asia. Sometimes these are country specific and at other times they are issue specific, such as a focus on human rights, gender equity, and rights of the child. The aim is to involve policy planners and decision-makers. This will increase in importance in the future.

The Halifax Initiative, described above in the sections on Sustainable Development and Trade and Investment, is working to achieve fundamental reform of the Bretton Woods institutions, particularly to promote democratic governance, transparency, decentralized decision-making, community involvement, full and open public participation, and full public accountability. It has been successful in establishing regular consultations with the Department of Finance, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and CIDA, to exchange views on these issues.

The APEC Coalition, mentioned in Section 8 above, is pressing for opening up

APEC's trade discussions to NGO actors.

The Bangladesh-Canada Policy Education Program, funded by CIDA's Asia Branch, is an interesting model of inter-agency co-operation in policy research and dialogue. The project groups two Canadian NGOs, Inter Pares and CUSO, and four Bangladeshi organizations in a program of policy research in a number of areas, including agrarian reform, health and population, and indigenous people's rights. The participating groups work together and assist one another to develop their analysis of the critical issues in these areas. The research provides a basis for policy dialogue with both national governments. In October, 1996, for example, the members of the group met with CIDA officials in a dialogue on their research findings and the implications for CIDA policies in these areas. The project is noteworthy for taking advantage of the strengths of both Northern and Southern NGOs -- their programs that ground them at the local level -- while compensating for their inadequate capacity for policy research.

The CCIC has lost capacity in recent years, but it is working to develop new ways to add value to the policy work of the community by providing leadership and coordination on the broad range of policy issues reviewed here.

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