

CIDA/CCIC Cooperation Agreement

Between The Government of Canada, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

and

The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC)

April, 2011

Preamble

Canadian civil society plays a crucial role in achieving poverty reduction and global justice. CIDA has a long-standing commitment to work closely with the Canadian non-profit development and humanitarian sector in achieving these goals. The aim of this Cooperation Agreement is to work together to enable a policy framework for renewed collaboration between CIDA and Canadian civil society organizations (CSOs), promoting sustainable development whereby people are able to enjoy the full range of human rights free from poverty. This Agreement also seeks to facilitate and strengthen cooperation on CSO engagement with other Canadian departments engaged in development cooperation-related activities.

CIDA and Canadian CSOs objectives are to foster effective and innovative approaches in development, which are consistent with the 2008 *Official Development Assistance (ODA) Accountability Act*. The Act states that the Minister responsible for CIDA must be of the opinion that all ODA disbursements to Canadian CSOs must meet three standards: 1) reduce poverty; 2) take account the perspectives of the poor; and 3) be consistent with international human rights standards. Canadian CSOs and CIDA must work together to be fully accountable and transparent with regard to these three standards in the Act.

Notwithstanding its interest in a broad range of partnerships with Canadians, CIDA has demonstrated a commitment to strengthening the roles and capacities of Canadian CSOs in development through its support over four decades for CCIC, which has been created and sustained by its members for these purposes. CIDA and CCIC recently demonstrated this shared objective in its collaboration on the Advisory Group on CSOs and Aid Effectiveness, chaired by CIDA, and in the outcomes of the Accra High Level Forum on CSOs as development actors.

Globally CSOs from more than 80 countries, including CCIC, have adopted the *Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness* (Annex One), which are also consistent with CCIC's *Code of Ethics*. The *Istanbul Principles* are premised on the 2008 *Accra Agenda for Action* in which Canada, along with all donors and developing country governments, agreed that CSOs are development actors in their own right, whose independent efforts in development complement, but are distinct from those of CIDA, other governments and the private sector.

Through CCIC, Canadian CSOs have committed to consider and take practical measures to strengthen their own practices and their accountability to the *Istanbul Principles*. In acknowledging these efforts, CIDA also commits to accept the *Istanbul Principles* as the measure of the effectiveness of Canadian CSOs and as the basis for conditions necessary to realize CSOs' full potential as development actors.

This Cooperation Agreement does not replace existing agreements between the parties.

Shared development principles

This Agreement highlights the following shared principles, consistent with the ODA Accountability Act, the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness and CCIC's Code of Ethics. They are intended to guide future cooperation between CIDA and CCIC between 2012 and 2016 with respect to agreed efforts to strengthening the effectiveness of Canadian CSOs in development.

1. Independence and Autonomy

CIDA acknowledges that CSOs are diverse development actors in their own right, with mandates distinct from both CIDA and developing country governments. CIDA commits to policies and practices in its partnerships with Canadian CSOs that promote their institutional independence, autonomy and development effectiveness. CCIC commits to work with its members to explore with CIDA avenues for improving coordination and complementarity of development efforts among CSOs, consistent with the mandates and partnerships of Canadian CSOs.

2. Respectful Partnerships for Local Ownership

Both parties will establish and provide operational support to partnerships premised on the right of counterpart CSOs to establish their own program priorities, strategies and relationships, appropriate to their operational context.

3. International Best Practice

Both parties commit to work towards achieving best practice in international development programs, policy formulation, evaluation, learning and impact assessment. CCIC will provide leadership with its members in learning from best practice, informed by the CCIC Code of Ethics and its *Partnership Principles*, and by guidance in implementing the *Istanbul Principles on CSO Development Effectiveness*. Both parties will work together to enable CSOs to demonstrate development integrity and ethical practice, taking account of the diverse roles and particular environments in which Canadian CSOs operate.

4. Human Rights and Development effectiveness

Central to this Cooperation Agreement is a strong focus on assessment of program effectiveness, particularly from the perspective of Canadian CSO partners and beneficiaries as rights holders. The primary measure of development effectiveness is the long-term positive impact of development cooperation on the capacities of the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society, especially women, children and people with disability to claim their fundamental human rights.

Both parties will work together to deepen the interpretation and implementation of the Paris Aid Effectiveness Principles to achieve development effectiveness. This implies an enabling environment for support, coordination and dissemination of civil society efforts consistent with the *Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness*, and a strong commitment to accountability for development outcomes.

5. Reducing poverty and Ensuring a Human Rights Approach

In support of Canadian and international efforts to achieve UN Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the MDGs, both parties agree that both the causes and effects of poverty must be addressed. They acknowledge the importance of a human rights framework for achieving these goals, stressing the promotion of self-reliance, sustainable livelihoods and the facilitation of access to basic services including education, water supply and sanitation, health and other resources, especially for marginalized communities.

6. Building capacity

Both parties agree that a strong focus on enhancing the capacity of partner countries and community counterparts will be based on the priorities and approaches identified by those counterparts, taking account of the standards and practices of a human rights approach.

Both parties will also support the capacity and professional development of the Canadian CSO sector involved in development by committing resources to enable Canadian CSOs to learn from, transfer skills to, as well as strengthen the capacity of, their local partners and other counterparts.

7. Sustainability

This Cooperation Agreement recognizes the imperative for programs to be designed to benefit future generations as well as the present generation, taking account of issues of environmental sustainability and long term economic and financial viability.

8. Gender Equality and Women's Rights

Gender equality and advancing the rights of women and girls is recognized by both parties as essential to reducing poverty, promoting social justice and increasing the effectiveness and sustainability of development cooperation efforts. Gender equality is also a critical development goal in its own right, flowing from the human rights framework.

9. Disability Inclusive

People with disability are often among the poorest, most vulnerable and excluded members of developing countries. Both parties agree to support and promote practical approaches to promote the dignity and well-being of people with disability.

10. Participation and good governance

The important role of civil society in contributing to and building demand for better governance, transparency and accountability is recognized. The inclusion of CSOs in partner government-led development programs will be encouraged, while acknowledging the full right of initiative of CSOs. Efforts will be strongly focused on increasing the participation of disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including women and people with disability, in economic, social and political life.

11. Involving the Canadian community

Both parties stress that informed and sustained public engagement is indispensable for effective development efforts. Both parties therefore aim to maximize Canadians' understanding of, support for, and participation in international development through joint efforts to expand the reach of public awareness and citizen engagement programs and activities. Such programs should address the full diversity of Canadian citizens.

12. Inclusive Policy Dialogue

Both parties acknowledge that policy dialogue is essential for achieving shared goals and sustained development impact. CIDA will support inclusive, transparent and participatory policy dialogue between CSOs and relevant public policy officials in government and multilateral organizations, including the capacity to conduct advocacy work to influence policy, and to participate in the full scope of policy making and debates. Effective policy dialogue is based on mutual respect and trust and implements best practice principles for consultation (see Annex 2).

CCIC commitment

1. Accountability and Innovation

CCIC will

- ❑ Provide leadership to the Canadian CSO sector involved in development to maintain a high standard of transparency and accountability to Canadian constituencies about the work of Canadian development and humanitarian CSOs.
- ❑ Provide leadership to strengthen a culture of CSO innovation and good practice through knowledge-based learning processes, rooted in evaluation and evidence of CSO practice, North/South CSO dialogue, and principles guiding CSO development effectiveness.

2. Policy development and consultation

CCIC will

- ❑ Provide leadership with its members, working closely with CIDA, to develop a mutually agreed policy framework for CIDA's collaboration with civil society that is consistent with the purposes set out in the *ODA Accountability Act*, CIDA's commitment to strengthen its partnerships with Canadians, and the implications of the *Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness*.
- ❑ Ensure that the Canadian development and humanitarian sector is well-informed about government policy issues and will facilitate effective consultation processes with the sector to assist policy development processes.

- ❑ Seek and facilitate effective consultation with government on policy and program opportunities or concerns arising from CCIC members and its various coalitions and networks.
- ❑ Provide timely responses to requests for input on relevant policy matters where possible within the resource and knowledge circumstances of CCIC and its membership.
- ❑ Respect the role of government in implementing Canadian government policy and the confidentiality of government information when given access to it on that basis.
- ❑ Provide leadership and engage the Canadian development and humanitarian sector in international CSO and multi-stakeholder processes to strengthen aid and development effectiveness, within the constraints of the resources available to CCIC.
- ❑ Support a strong, professional and accountable Canadian CSO sector to implement 'best practice' in policy work by providing leadership on international development policy and promoting accountability to the CCIC Code of Ethics.

CIDA commitment

1. Accountability

CIDA will

- ❑ Maintain a high standard of public transparency, access to information and accountability to Canadian constituencies about CIDA's policies and programs, including government-funded CSO, community and civil society international development programs through transparent and appropriate monitoring, review and reporting mechanisms.

2. Respect the independence of the Canadian international CSO sector

CIDA will

- ❑ Work with the Canadian development and humanitarian sector to develop a mutually agreed policy framework for CIDA's collaboration with civil society that is consistent with the purposes set out in the *ODA Accountability Act*, CIDA's commitment to strengthen its partnerships with Canadians, and the implications of the *Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness*.
- ❑ Encourage the views, and respect the independence, of CCIC and its member agencies, including their right to comment on government policy and advocate for policy change and the right to maintain the confidentiality of information provided to CCIC or its members.
- ❑ Launch a process with Canadian CSOs in collaboration with CCIC to ensure that CIDA financing modalities for CSO partnership programs are consistent with principles for CSO

development effectiveness, CSOs' right-to-initiative, long-term CSO partnerships, and an appropriate sustainable results framework that promotes learning and innovation.

- ❑ Consider an appropriate funding modality for CCIC that recognizes its unique role as the pre-eminent coalition for the Canadian international development and humanitarian community and its commitments under this Cooperation Agreement.

3. Policy engagement and participation

CIDA will

- ❑ Seek CSO perspectives, consult CCIC and its members as early as possible, and communicate Agency perspectives on emerging policy and program developments that may impact directly on Canadian CSO operations.
- ❑ Enable and facilitate an annual opportunity for consultation between Canadian CSOs and senior cross-branch representatives on Canadian aid and development effectiveness issues.
- ❑ Provide opportunities for dialogue through regular senior-level meetings with CCIC on issues as required.
- ❑ Facilitate and encourage opportunities for dialogue with other government departments on policy issues relevant to international development as advanced by CSOs and CIDA.
- ❑ Provide CCIC and its members, as well as country-level CSO counterparts, with sufficient prior notice and background information for systematic input to CIDA's regular country and thematic program planning to ensure that the full benefit of considered CSO perspectives can be brought to bear.
- ❑ Consult with CCIC and its members, where appropriate, in finalizing Canadian government positions on international policy issues in multilateral and regional forums and include relevant Canadian CSO representatives in delegations, as appropriate.

Implementation Plan

Within six (6) months of this Agreement taking effect, both parties will agree on an implementation plan to realize its goals and the commitments of each party.

Joint Review

Both parties agree to review the Agreement and its implementation plan on an annual basis and at other times as mutually agreed.

Cooperation Agreement

CIDA and CCIC agree that this Cooperation Agreement, while expressing the goodwill and intent of the parties to cooperate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, does not create any legal relations and does not create a partnership in law between the parties in any jurisdiction. The Cooperation Agreement does not represent any commitment with regard to funding on the part of the parties. Funding arrangements will be set out in a separate contractual agreement.

Settlement of Differences

The two parties will consult together at any time upon the request of either partner regarding any matter relating to the terms of this Cooperation Agreement and will endeavour in a spirit of cooperation, good faith and mutual trust to resolve any difficulties or misunderstandings.

Amendments

The Cooperation Agreement may be amended and supplemented at any time by an Arrangement in writing in the form of an Exchange of Letters between the two parties.

Duration

This Cooperation Agreement will take effect from the date of its signature and will remain in effect for a period of five (5) years from that date.

Termination

This Cooperation Agreement may be terminated by either party for any reason at any time on six months' notice in writing to the other party.

**SIGNED in _____ on _____
on behalf of The Canadian International Development Agency**

Minister for International Development Cooperation or President of CIDA

**SIGNED in _____ on _____
on behalf of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation**

President of CCIC

Annex One: Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness¹

Civil society organizations are a vibrant and essential feature in the democratic life of countries across the globe. CSOs collaborate with the full diversity of people and promote their rights. The essential characteristics of CSOs as distinct development actors – that they are voluntary, diverse, non-partisan, autonomous, non-violent, working and collaborating for change – are the foundation for the Istanbul principles for CSO development effectiveness. These principles guide the work and practices of civil society organizations in both peaceful and conflict situations, in different areas of work from grassroots to policy advocacy, and in a continuum from humanitarian emergencies to long-term development.

1. Respect and promote human rights and social justice

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... develop and implement strategies, activities and practices that promote individual and collective human rights, including the right to development, with dignity, decent work, social justice and equity for all people.

2. Embody gender equality and equity while promoting women and girl's rights

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... promote and practice development cooperation embodying gender equity, reflecting women's concerns and experience, while supporting women's efforts to realize their individual and collective rights, participating as fully empowered actors in the development process.

3. Focus on people's empowerment, democratic ownership and participation

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... support the empowerment and inclusive participation of people to expand their democratic ownership over policies and development initiatives that affect their lives, with an emphasis on the poor and marginalized.

4. Promote Environmental Sustainability

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... develop and implement priorities and approaches that promote environmental sustainability for present and future generations, including urgent responses to climate crises, with specific attention to the socio-economic, cultural and indigenous conditions for ecological integrity and justice.

5. Practice transparency and accountability

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... demonstrate a sustained organizational commitment to transparency, multiple accountability, and integrity in their internal operations.

¹ The Istanbul Principles, as agreed at the Open Forum's Global Assembly in Istanbul, September 28 -30, 2010, are the foundation of the Open Forum's Draft *International Framework on CSO Development Effectiveness*. These principles are further elaborated in Version 2 of this *Framework*, which is being updated and will be found on the Open Forum's web site, www.cso-effectiveness.org.

6. Pursue equitable partnerships and solidarity

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... commit to transparent relationships with CSOs and other development actors, freely and as equals, based on shared development goals and values, mutual respect, trust, organizational autonomy, long-term accompaniment, solidarity and global citizenship.

7. Create and share knowledge and commit to mutual learning

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... enhance the ways they learn from their experience, from other CSOs and development actors, integrating evidence from development practice and results, including the knowledge and wisdom of local and indigenous communities, strengthening innovation and their vision for the future they would like to see.

8. Commit to realizing positive sustainable change

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... collaborate to realize sustainable outcomes and impacts of their development actions, focusing on results and conditions for lasting change for people, with special emphasis on poor and marginalized populations, ensuring an enduring legacy for present and future generations.

Guided by these Istanbul principles, CSOs are committed to take pro-active actions to improve and be fully accountable for their development practices. Equally important will be enabling policies and practices by all actors. Through actions consistent with these principles, donor and partner country governments demonstrate their Accra Agenda for Action pledge that they “share an interest in ensuring that CSO contributions to development reach their full potential”. All governments have an obligation to uphold basic human rights – among others, the right to association, the right to assembly, and the freedom of expression. Together these are pre-conditions for effective development.

**Istanbul, Turkey
September 29, 2010**

Annex 2 Best Practice Principles for Consultation

The *ODA Accountability Act* requires consultations with Canadian civil society organizations, minimally once every two years, on the implementation of the Act by CIDA. Consultations improve the effectiveness of Canadian ODA when they are informed by best practice principles for consultations:

- 1. Timeliness:** Sufficient notice, conducted within relevant timeframes, for key decisions by the Agency.
- 2. Openness:** Equal opportunity for access and receptivity to a diversity of views, in a format that includes exchange of views.
- 3. Transparency:** Clarity of purpose and process of consultation, with dialogue and feedback to those who are consulted.
- 4. Informed:** Preparation and follow-up documentation in relevant languages for those being consulted.
- 5. Iterative:** Consultations are ongoing processes, not one-off events.