REPORT ON THE CANADIAN CONSULTATION
OPEN FORUM ON CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS[1]

PART ONE: SUMMARY

Date and venue of the Consultation:

❑ March 16 – 18, 2010
   Gatineau, Quebec

Number of Participants: 118

Name and email of report writers:

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Participant list with the following information:

❑ Name of participant

❑ Name of organisation represented

❑ Position within the organisation

Agenda for the Consultation

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[1] This Report follows the format required by the Open Forum process to enable a global report from more than 70 consultations. For more information on the Open Forum and these consultations visit www.cso-effectiveness.org. For more information on the Canadian consultations, visit http://ccic.ca/what_we_do/osc_e.php.

2.1   Introduction and Political Context

A three-day consultation for the *Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness* was organised by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC). It was among the first country-level consultations for the global CSO-directed *Open Forum*, and one of some 70 to 80 CSO-led consultations that will take place in countries across the globe in the first half of 2010. The outcomes of these national and regional consultations will inform a *Global Assembly* of the *Open Forum*, with 200 CSOs in the latter part of 2010.

The participants in the Canadian consultation were leaders from Canadian international CSOs bringing a wealth of civil society experience. Participation was not limited to CCIC members and several other organisations, such as the Canadian Federation of Municipalities and SOCODEVI, attended. The consultation was seen as an important opportunity to contribute to a global process on the principles and guidelines for civil society development effectiveness. It was also acknowledged as timely for the international development CSO movement in Canada. The current volatile Canadian political environment has reinforced for Canadian CSOs the importance of the *Open Forum* process to address the challenges and issues facing CSOs globally.

At the 2008 Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, a global CSO collaboration was successful in opening the process to direct CSO engagement and in achieving recognition that CSOs are "development actors in their own right". The *Open Forum* process, of which this Canadian consultation was part, is an attempt to define what this recognition will mean, and especially how CSOs can work together to define and achieve CSO development effectiveness as we go forward.

BOX ONE

The global CSO-led Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness seeks to:

An *International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness* will include a set of principles, indicators, context-specific implementation guidelines, good practices for accountability mechanisms, and minimum standards for external enabling conditions. To facilitate significant CSO buy-in and utilisation for the *Framework*, the process for developing the *Framework* will be open and participatory, reflecting the overall institutional and contextual realities of CSOs.

The Canadian consultation was organised to contribute to the development of the International Framework and to initiate a political dialogue with Canadian government departments involved in international cooperation.

- Develop and promote an *International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness*.

- Document good practices for ensuring CSOs are accountable to the Principles and Guidelines in the *Framework*.

- Facilitate a learning environment on CSO development effectiveness so that CSOs can discuss issues and challenges relevant to their work as development actors. As much as possible, existing research, materials and accountability charters (such as CCIC's *Code of Ethics*) will be used.

- Engage in a sustained political dialogue with donors, governments and other stakeholders, at both country and global levels, to build understanding and support for an enabling environment for CSOs.

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In recent years, CSOs have been confronted by donors, by developing country government officials, and sometimes by media and politicians, to address the limits of their own effectiveness. Donors and governments have also called upon CSOs to support the 2005 *Paris Declaration* principles for aid effectiveness, and have used perceptions of CSO weakness and ineffectiveness as a basis to argue for harmonising and aligning CSOs to government and donor development strategies. In turn, in the process of forming the *Open Forum,* CSOs have asserted their own right to lead a process to determine the principles, guidelines and approaches for assessing and measuring CSO effectiveness as development actors in contributing to development processes that empower poor and marginalised populations.

Box Two

CSO Development Effectiveness

As development actors, distinct from official donors and governments, CSOs represent the engagement of people who have organised to promote human dignity and accompany people around the world in efforts to realise human rights and fundamental freedoms. In their development efforts, CSOs seek to be effective.

Effective development initiatives successfully address the causes as well as the symptoms of poverty, inequality and injustice, resulting in sustainable positive changes in the lives of the poorest and most marginalised populations. Effective development involves a diversity of instruments, policies and actors, acting in complementarity, within a democratic framework.

The primary task for participants in the Canadian Consultation, therefore, was an internal reflection among CSOs, which derives from the global goals of the Open Forum (see Box One). Canadian CSO leaders focused most of the three day Consultation to examine themselves, their movement, and their collective role in achieving development effectiveness. But the mandate of the Open Forum also highlights the important role that official donors and governments play in setting the policies and laws that affect the environment and capacities for realising the full potential for CSO effectiveness. The Canadian consultations therefore integrated a dialogue between CSOs and senior officials from the Canadian government (CIDA and DFAIT) on enabling conditions for strengthening CSOs to be effective actors in development. As a measure of the commitment to this process, the President of CIDA, who represented Canada at the Accra High Level Forum, shared her own reflections in a keynote address as part of the CSO / Government Dialogue.

That Canadian CSOs take this task seriously was manifest in the numbers that arrived from across the country, and the time that they devoted to this process (see the attached participants list). In the many meetings and discussions leading up to this national consultation it was agreed that it is essential for CSOs to stand back and critically examine their own role and norms, and to situate themselves critically within the context experienced by their CSO counterparts around the world, North and South. CSOs in the consultation recognise that they are not alone in facing a challenging environment in which to undertake the CSO development mandate. Through their

relationships with counterparts they are well aware that the legal and political space for CSOs is narrowing in many countries in the South. During the consultation this was brought home with passion and insight by the international guests, Moema de Miranda from IBASE, Brazil, Emele Duituturaga, from PIANGA, the CSO platform for the South Pacific, Lee Sentes from the Council for International Development (CID) in New Zealand, and Carolyn Long from Interaction in the United States[2].

CSO colleagues in other donor countries are also confronting changing policies and directions that significantly impact on their capacities to be effective in their development work. These various donor policies, while they may differ in tone and emphasis, are driven by an international agenda for reforming aid that began with the 2005 *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*. It is an international process that also involves developing country governments, but it has been largely directed by the major official donors. While in Canada, for example, the government is stressing the importance of focus and efficiency for aid effectiveness, in Europe donors are debating "division of labour", potentially dividing up countries of focus. For national CSOs, the outcome is the same: policy uncertainty, an emphasis on CSOs as instruments of changing government priorities and directions, and the removal of funding from long-standing CSO partners. Colleagues from New Zealand and the United States who attended this meeting in preparation for their own corresponding *Open Forum* consultations were able to share the impact of policy changes on CSOs in their own countries and regions.

Along the way, a number of donors, particularly from the Nordic countries along with Canada and the UK, are increasingly exploring direct funding of Southern CSOs in countries-of-focus in support of donor priorities, in some cases also challenging the role of northern CSOs who some officials characterise as "unnecessary intermediaries". Most Northern CSOs have long been champions of the independence of their Southern colleagues and counterparts, including their right to direct funding from donors to sustain their organisations and autonomous programming. However, to the CSOs gathered in this consultation, the instrumental approach, and sometimes dismissive attitude of donors, has highlighted the extent that they have come to consider and treat CSOs – north and south – as mere implementing agencies of the donor's policies. This approach is inconsistent with the recognition that donors gave in the 2008 *Accra Agenda for Action* that civil society organisations are development actors "in their own right", with mandates and roles that are distinct from donors and governments.

The participants in the consultation affirmed in their opening plenary that these debates and the directions and modalities that are emerging around the world, including the direction of international processes for aid reform, are significant determinants of Canadian policy. Although Canadian policies and directions often appear to be influenced solely by the agenda of the current government, these policies are also responding to an underlying policy framework that prevails among the lead OECD governments, and are rationalised by notions of "aid effectiveness." The donors are also driven by the commitments they made in the *Paris Declaration*, to which they will be held accountable through donor peer reviews and participation in the next High Level Forum in Seoul in November 2011.

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[2]   Patrick Kryticous from Civil Society for Poverty Reduction, Zambian, was unable to attend because he could not receive a Canadian visa in a timely way from the Canadian Embassy in South Africa.

These international agreements and donor policies clearly affect the enabling environment in which CSOs are developing their own effectiveness as development actors. Recent policy and funding decisions in the current Canadian enabling environment has been undermining the confidence of Canadian CSOs, and their public, that due process, sound judgment, and transparency continue to inform governmental decisions concerning Canadian civil society organisations. A sub-text to the discussion over the three days was the de-funding by CIDA of the Christian ecumenical coalition, KAIROS, with no substantial explanation, long delays and questioning policy roles in funding other CSOs, and the intervention by the same government to sanction and control the program and staff of the para-statal human rights institution, Rights & Democracy, whose accountability traditionally has been to all Members of the Canadian Parliament.

Beyond some targeted interventions, many CSOs in their own relationships with CIDA have experienced similar, but perhaps less public manifestations of a rapidly changing, and increasingly opaque, policy environment. Canadian CSOs are concerned about the implications for the fundamental principles that underlie the work of the sector and the role of CSOs as effective development actors. A question that ran through many of the discussions during the consultation was how CSOs can fulfil their role as development actors "in their own right – pro promoting human rights and authentic democracy around the world, for example – if they are defunded and restricted by their own government for such actions, and for speaking critically about aid and development policy in Canada?

Only two years ago, development cooperation minister, Bev Oda, speaking before an international Forum of CSOs, donors and governments – a Forum which CIDA co-chaired with the CCIC – acknowledged the contribution of civil society groups as one which, "provides Canada with a vital partner in our efforts to promote human rights, freedom, democracy, the rule of law and accountable public institutions". Since then CSOs have received little encouragement from the government in developing these contributions. To the contrary, many Canadian CSOs have experienced increasingly directive interventions in their institutions and their program plans. As examples, some have been asked to remove human rights and advocacy language from their program submissions, and their public actions; others have been told to frame gender equality work with language that focuses on children and youth.

Over the last year, without reference to CSO "partners", the Canadian government has announced priorities and policies emphasising what it refers to as "focus", "efficiency" and "effectiveness". A narrow list of 20 priority countries, reducing the number of African countries by half and adding some middle income countries, has been unveiled at the beginning of 2009, along with an intention to focus aid in three "thematic" areas, announced in May 2009. There has been no substantive consultation between the government and CSOs about these policy shifts, nor had CSOs seen the policies or implementation strategies related to the change in directions (as of the end of March 2010). Over these months, the implications of these policies for long-term directions in Canadian aid programs and support of the development action of Canadian CSOs remain unclear, and unaddressed.

Consultation on policy directions and shifts in ODA would have been the norm only a few years ago. Today the sector has become increasingly sidelined and silenced. But Canadian CSOs are coming together to respond and act together. They have coordinated a concerted public defence

of KAIROS and Right & Democracy. And in the past weeks many of the participants in the consultation were among 83 signatories to a letter to the Minister, coordinated by CCIC, asking for clarity and transparency in relation to CIDA's responsive programming for CSOs.

This is the increasingly challenging political context in which this Consultation was undertaken. The CSO response, clearly manifested in this consultation, has been to engage constructively and without cynicism in efforts to improve the breadth and effectiveness their own actions and to improve the policy environment in which they find themselves.

Civil society organisations working for development have evolved quite considerably over the past 30, 40 and 50 years. Most dramatic and significant is the increased recognition and remarkable growth of southern civil society as development actors. It is in this context that the northern CSOs that collaborate within this global movement contribute up to $25 billion a year to development efforts.

The focus in this consultation was very much: to what effect? Canadian CSO leaders were asked to take part in some tough and candid self-examination. Are Canadian CSOs continuing to meet their mandates as transformative agents of change? Are we living the values of social solidarity, participation, transparency and respect? Are we taking direction from local actors and priorities? Are we accountable? What would our partner and counterparts say in response to these questions? Have we asked? Have we continued to examine our roles and adapt our practices in our relationships with counterparts and importantly in our engagement with our Canadian constituencies?

2.2   The Consultation Process

An agenda for the three day consultation is attached. Participants engaged in a series of candid guided discussions with the aim to identify principles to assist Canadian CSO to improve their effectiveness as development actors and, perhaps more importantly, to identify guidelines on how to apply these principles to CSO practices in our changing roles as development actors. The consultation was designed to ensure that the participants spent as much time as possible on this last issue – applying principles to practice. The focus was on understanding and debating what is working well, what needs to be changed, and how we can improve our organisational and collective accountability as civil society actors.

To facilitate this discussion, some draft ideas for principles for CSO development effectiveness – derived from years of discussion amongst members at CCIC on partnership principles for its Code of Ethics, principles from other CSO coalition and CSOs, and from various international discussions – were circulated in advance. Participants arrived having had some weeks to read and reflect on them within their own organisations. The participants then worked together to revise, refine and reach consensus on the substance of the principles, and to develop guidelines and some standards for CSO practices based on these principles. Then together they looked more deeply at the question of accountability as diverse civil society actors involved in complex relationships for development.

Included in the web of relationships are government donors. Given the role these funding relationships play in contributing to "enabling conditions" for CSO development effectiveness, the Consultation also included a CSO / Government Dialogue. The CSO leaders were joined over two half days by senior officials from CIDA and DFAIT. An introductory panel set the stage, and then CSO leaders and government officials broke out into a series of pre-planned, jointly-moderated parallel workshops to bring forward ideas to improve the conditions within which we work together. The understanding within these sessions was that participants spoke off-the-record and that any observations would not be attributed to individuals or organisations. The idea was not to secure commitments for immediate and significant changes, but to set some markers for future changes in government / civil society collaboration for development.

During the last half-day of the consultation, CSO representatives again gathered alone – in their own right" – to reflect upon what they had achieved together, and on the way forward. The gathering heard reflections from their international colleagues who had graciously accepted to participate in this Canadian consultation: Moema de Miranda, from *IBASE* in Brazil; Emele Duituturaga, from the *Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Associations-PIANGA*, Fiji; Lee Sentes, from the *Council for International Development*, Aotearoa / New Zealand; and Carolyn Long from *InterAction* in the USA. Tomas Brundin from the Swedish Foreign Ministry generously shared his insights on the process ahead in the CSO / Government Dialogue via a live feed from Stockholm.

Recognising that the results of this consultation would not only guide Canadian CSOs in our own internal processes, but also would be input to the international *Open Forum* process and the upcoming Open Forum Global Assembly, CCIC was mandated to prepare and distribute a report on the consultation, which the present document represents.

2.3   Evaluation Comments

Over half of the participants completed formal written evaluations; many more offered observations informally in conversations with the CCIC organisers. The overwhelming feedback was very positive, averaging in the range of 4 on a scale of 5 for most questions asked. The meeting was considered to have been well-planned and conducted, the discussion well-prepared, and the resources available to conduct good discussions. There was, perhaps inevitably, an almost universal feeling that there had been inadequate time to do justice to the task we had set, and that it was difficult to bring to the plenary the rich discussion that occurred in the many smaller working groups. This report on the consultation, which relies on the notes and charts from these working groups, as well as from the synthesis group and plenary reports presentations and discussions, is an attempt to redress this weakness.

Within this generally positive response, there were some common critical observations that need to be recorded and addressed as the process goes further:

❑ The principles originally offered were seen by some to be more in the way of value-statements than concrete operational principles; although the process has significantly elaborated them, it will be a challenge to ensure that the principles can be practically applied with clear and visible accountability.

❑ There was insufficient time to do justice to the task of developing practical guidelines and standards to bring the guidelines to life. This task remains incomplete and follow-up is needed if we are really to create a useful Framework to help us move from "principle to practice".

❑ The meaning of many of the terms we were using was too vague and requires more explicit common definition. Terms such as "development", "effectiveness", "partnership", and "solidarity", among others, are absolutely critical to the discussion and need to be increasingly less vague and subjective as we go forward (See Box Two for a definition of CSO "development effectiveness" which was provided to participants as a preamble to the set of principles circulated in advance of the consultation.)

❑ The process was better in building common understanding and agreement on principles and guidelines than it was in how to bring these forward in concrete measures to actually improve CSO actions and accountability "for development effectiveness."

❑ The process was better at identifying factors and conditions inherent to the CSO-donor relationship that **impeded** CSO effectiveness, than elaborating concrete measures to create and nurture an "enabling" environment.

PART THREE: ISSUES

3.1   Framework of the Discussion

Two important frameworks influenced the consultation discussion among Canadian CSO leaders. The first is the Canadian Development Assistance Accountability Act, passed into law in May 2008; the second was the Accra Agenda for Action that was adopted at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in September 2008. The latter took place following significant leadership at the time by the government of Canada and Canadian CSOs on the inclusion of CSO perspectives on aid effectiveness and recognition of CSOs as distinct development actors. Canadian CSOs consider these combined events as break-through achievements.

The *ODA Accountability Act*, which was won with wide support from CSOs and their constituencies within the Canadian public, sets a legal framework for the purposes of Canada's ODA programs, and for ongoing dialogue among CSOs, the Canadian public and the government of Canada concerning the role of Canada in the promotion of global development, human rights, and economic justice. The *Act* directs any Minister responsible for the disbursement of Canadian ODA to be "of the opinion" that this disbursement will (1) reduce poverty,(2) take into account the perspective of the poor, and (3) be consistent with international human rights standards.[3]

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[3]   CCIC has produced a comprehensive report on the implementation of the *ODA Accountability Act* and its implications for a human rights approach to Canadian development cooperation. See CCIC, *A Time to Act*, available on CCIC's web site, May 2010.

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), approved in September 2008, is seen by Canadian CSOs and their counterparts around the world, as a watershed in global CSO influence and in donor acknowledgment of the role of CSOs in development, "as actors in their own right." The High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness at Accra also established the need for donors to work with CSOs to create an enabling environment for CSO development effectiveness. The AAA reflects a commitment to address the complexities identified in CSO action and their relationship with donors, and the CSO challenge to the limited construct of "democracy" as originally framed in the *Paris Declaration*, including the paradoxes implicit in the conditionalities that remain inherent to donor contributions.

Canadian CSOs participating in this March 2010 consultation made clear at the outset that they are working to ensure the full implementation of the Accra Agenda for Action, while working also in the (human rights) framework established in the Canadian *Official Development Assistance Accountability Act*. For Canadian CSOs the *ODA Accountability Act* firmly legitimises a rights-based approach within ODA; legitimises CSO activism and advocacy on human rights issues; and legitimises the rights of citizens, and of citizen action to promote, defend, and protect their rights.

CSOs also gathered with the understanding coming out of Accra that development effectiveness is not the same as "aid effectiveness", and that the global process of reflection in which CSOs are involved is about development effectiveness – that is, about what aid is for, rather than about aid itself. In this context the present consultation was an attempt to articulate together a common vision of what development means, and entails, and to work together to explore ways to enhance CSO effectiveness in bringing this vision to reality. It was acknowledged as well that this implied exploring candidly and forthrightly the very complex set of interactions and relationship integral to development action – interactions and relationships that are replete with tensions and fault-lines.

3.2   Critical Issues

In the discussions leading to the intensive exercise of generating principles and guidelines for CSO development effectiveness, a series of critical issues were raised, both by Canadian CSO leaders and by their international guests.

3.2.1   A Challenge to the Goal and Nature of "Development"

It was generally agreed that "development" is a word that needs to be used very carefully, and critically. We can't talk about "development" any more in the way that has been done for over 60 years. Development is not a technical "fix", and the technical approach inspired by the colonial system of "aid" often interferes with and distorts local development. It is no longer feasible or helpful for donors, nor governments, nor CSOs to continue on as they have, doing business as usual. It is not working. As Moema from IBASE reminded us, a long-term organic and historical approach is needed. What development? For whom? How defined, and how measured, against what values? It was proposed by Moema that our common goal should be not "to develop the South", but to develop the social solidarity required to change the world through a political commitment to global justice and social transformation, together carrying out a common agenda for building for a new world.

3.2.2   A Challenge to the Development Assistance Relationship

A critical issue in the relationships among development actors is how to build the attitudes, will and capacity to go beyond assistance, accompaniment and solidarity, to engage in profound "common cause" among equals. As expressed by Emele from PIANGA, "To build a community you need to join the community…as though your destiny was bound up in mine…" CSOs are engaged in questioning the "community of interest" they represent, and how best to represent these interests.

3.2.3   The Challenge to Power

 Integral to development relationships is power, and differentials in power. If a commitment to development is a commitment to empower the poor, the weak and the marginalised, it is also then a challenge to the established power, and those who use power to dominate and disenfranchise others. Development action involves making choices, and often, taking sides. It involves perceiving and relating to the poor and marginalised not as abject victims, but as development actors and political subjects in **their** own right.

3.2.4   A Challenge to Rights

It was asserted by many that a rights-based approach to development promotes and respects the common rights of individuals, the social, economic and cultural rights of communities and collectivities, and the ecological integrity of the planet itself, which hosts and sustains all life. A rights-based approach may need to re-think its exclusive centrality on humans and human society, situating humans and human activity as one with the planet, and part of the ecological whole.

3.2.5   A Challenge to "the North"

It was shared by Emele that rarely among themselves do people in "Southern" CSOs identify themselves as from the South, or others as from the north, designations that in any case are severely directionally challenged, as the guests from Fiji and New Zealand attested. These are constructs that reflect colonial history and ongoing neo-colonial ties.   It is even now commonplace to observe that big NGOs – called BINGOS throughout the global South – and international NGO families are often part of the problem rather than the solution. The idea was expressed by both Emele and Moema that northern CSOs perhaps need to decolonise themselves – to "liberate yourselves, and then share your liberation with us." The challenge is to deepen our reflection on current NGO practices to move towards authentic relationships of social solidarity between peoples across and between countries irrespective of geography.

3.2.6   A Challenge to Objectivity

The world that CSO development actors want to change is not an object, it is not "out there". It is where we all live. It is not a problem in **their** world that needs to be fixed. It is our common world, the only world that exists, which needs to be changed. The participants were told by Moema that CSO movements around the world are saying, "don't just support us; join us – to invent, build and share in a common destiny."

3.2.7　A Challenge to Aid

Even when used well, aid is only a minor contribution to the process of development. Favorable trade and geo-economic structural reform are more critical. Even with such conditions, authentic and sustainable human development requires a viable state based in robust institutions and a just and strong legal regime capable of protecting rights. Development effectiveness will depend on the achievement of these elements, and on the empowerment of people to promote and participate within them. This implies that the quality of development assistance is of more significant than the absolute quantity of aid flows.

Critical issues also emerged in the CSO / Government Dialogue on Enabling Conditions for CSO Development Effectiveness that comprised part of the Open Forum consultation. While open to the questions and issues raised by CSOs, government officials were not shy to bring their own issues and challenges to CSO participants. Some of the issues that emerged most pointedly in the Dialogue included the following.

3.2.8　Country Ownership and CSO Complementarity

Donors are preoccupied with the issue of how to ensure that CSO development actions are in harmony with and complement the development plans and programs of national and local governments. A related issue is whether and how the social and economic programs implemented by the CSO sector run the risk of undermining the long-term goal of developing an institutionalised public sector capable of taking on the functions, now carried out by CSOs, which may be more appropriate to the state.

3.2.9　Responsive Program Funding

Donors tend to perceive "responsiveness" as one modality among many situated within, and predicated on, coherence with donors' strategic frameworks. CSOs in turn emphasise the principle that donors should be responding in their support to CSOs to the initiatives and priorities of civil society as development actors in their own right, rather than imposing their own priorities. This issue is as critical in the direct funding of local southern CSOs, as in the relationship of donors to their own national CSOs.

3.2.10　Fragmentation and Diffusion of ODA

In their expressed concern about aid effectiveness, donors are focusing their concerted attempts at ODA reform on aligning and harmonising all development actors and stakeholders within common country programs. They perceive this issue of fragmentation and diffusion of efforts as applying also to CSOs, and seek the harmonisation of goals and efforts within the CSO sector as an essential condition of donor support.

3.2.11 Focus on Results

Donors are emphatic that aid effectiveness as they perceive it requires an increased focus on demonstrated, aggregated results. CSO leaders expressed general agreement that an emphasis on results was appropriate and necessary – although, in itself, not sufficient – to ensure development effectiveness. At the same time, CSOs also asserted that much needs to be done to create effective means to derive and express results – in form and in substance – and to define the appropriate time-frames within which results were expected to be meaningful and indicative.

3.2.12 Accountability

The underlying issue, acknowledged by government officials as well as CSO leaders, is a political climate that demands concrete and accessible evidence of the impact of ODA to justify public expenditures. Accountability, not only for inputs but also for outcomes, is at the centre of the donors' aid effectiveness agenda, and there is an expectation that CSOs will fall into line in harmonising within the accountability framework of the donors. CSOs, for their part, are determined to address and adapt to these political realities and imperatives, even as they express their doubts about the efficacy of the tools at hand to gather and aggregate this evidence in meaningful ways. At the same time CSOs raised issues of **multi-directional** accountabilities, including the accountabilities of the donors and CSOs to those with whom they work and engage. This notion of accountability goes beyond the issue as defined by the donors and relates to a broader accountability for development effectiveness, as expressed above, and not merely of aid effectiveness accountability for the investment of public funds.

3.2.13 Partnership

The core issue that emerges in all relationships, both between donors and CSOs, and among CSOs north and south, is the issue of partnership, what it means, what it entails, and what reciprocal responsibilities and obligations it brings. Senior government officials were clear that they seek an effective partnership with CSOs, and that the terms and conditions of partnership frame the core issue between the donors and CSOs leading to the Seoul HLF. At the same time, there are many among CSOs who are hesitant to use the term partnership at all, focusing instead on relationships and qualities of reciprocal action and interaction. While the definition and meaning of partnership is rarely debated explicitly, it is clear that there are widely divergent conceptions of what partnership in this context means.

3.2.14 Aid Effectiveness versus Development Effectiveness

As indicated above, the term "partnership" was perhaps the most commonly-used word throughout the CSO consultation and the CSO / Government Dialogue. Only the term "development" was used as often. Underlying the incipient divergence about the meaning of partnership is a divergence in emphasis on aid effectiveness on the part of the donors, and on development effectiveness on the part of CSOs.

There is an honourable attempt in the processes leading to the Seoul HLF in 2011 to build a conversation that incorporates the two conceptions, and not to strenuously enforce the distinction between them. It is when the negotiation ensues about the meaning of multi-stakeholder partnership that the distinction becomes more pertinent. Is this a partnership for aid effectiveness, or a partnership for development effectiveness? Are these mutually exclusive? Both the CSOs and the donors are staking their commitment to this process on the bet that they are not exclusive, and that they can be reconciled. The discussions that took place over three days provide clues to whether reconciliation of the two concepts is possible, and to how this might be accomplished.

PART FOUR: ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION ONE: PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

The Open Forum as a global process aims to set out a CSO consensus on key Principles that should guide CSO development effectiveness as the basis for an *International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness*. Each country consultation is intended to contribute proposals for the most important principles to include in this global *Framework*. The Open Forum recognises that the application of these principles to the highly varied CSO roles as development actors at country, local and global levels must be context specific. The *Framework* therefore will highlight important guidelines in applying CSO development effectiveness principles and potential indicators for accountability. But, the application of this *Framework* by CSOs will be dependent on the country context.

In the Canadian Consultation, an intensive process of reflection, discussion and debate generated the following proposals as Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness, with suggested Guidelines and Indicators for their possible application to Canadian CSO development practices. Participants worked with a draft set of Principles that were developed prior to the consultation, which were based on an analysis of the most common already-known principles among Canadian CSOs. [4]

The principles, guidelines and indicators below build on this draft document. They represent a synthesis of discussions during the first day of consultations, but not necessarily a consensus by all participants. Several proposals were also made to combine principles into a shorter list, reflecting some overlap between principles. Because there was not intent to reach a Canadian CSO consensus in the consultation process, this Report sets out the wider range of nine principles discussed rather than attempt a shorter list as a Canadian contribution to a wider

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[4] See the draft "CSO Development Effectiveness Principles for Discussion" at http://ccic.ca/_files/en/what_we_do/osc_2010-03_open_forum_consult_cso_dev_principles_e.pdf. This document was developed from principles shared with CCIC member organisations prior to the consultation, the principles in the CCIC *Code of Ethics*, and discussion of CSO development effectiveness principles in international workshops supported by the Advisory Group on CSOs and Aid Effectiveness in 2007 and 2008. It is important to note that, while there is obvious overlap and synergy, the focus is on principles for CSO development effectiveness, not the broader purview of CSO effectiveness as CSO organisations.

discussion among CSOs globally in the Open Forum. The order of presentation below represents the relative importance of the nine principles that resulted from a process where participants were given six votes to choose among the proposed principles. The proposals for guidelines and indicators were developed in "brain-storming" sessions for each principle and are compiled in this Report but are not reconciled for inconsistencies. Many would have been refined if there were time for further discussion and investigation. This Report will be sent back to participants and to other Canadian CSOs for further reflection on these proposals.

Canadian CSOs are effective as development actors when they …

1. **Embody gender equality and women's rights:** *reflecting women's concerns, perspectives and experience while supporting all women's efforts to realise their individual and collective rights and participate as full and empowered actors in the development process.*

This principle underscores that the realisation of women's rights and gender equality are preconditions for development effectiveness, explicitly including the rights and opportunities of girl children, and the redressing of inequities in power and opportunity in the relationships among women and men.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

❑ Develop and implement explicit and concrete institutional policies;

❑ Ensure internal coherence and integrity within institutions as well as among programs;

❑ Ensure that gender programming includes emphasis on girls and young women;

❑ Establish long-term perspective and goals for women's rights and gender equality;

❑ Devote significant human and financial resources to gender equality program development;

❑ Invest in organisational capacity and support for women's movement;

❑ Emphasise mutual accountability in CSO programmatic relationships;

❑ Collaborate with women's organisations, respecting local dynamics;

❑ Seek collaboration between women's and mixed organisations and traditional leadership;

❑ Ensure ongoing monitoring and follow-up based on gender equality and women's rights indicators;

❑ Invest time and resources to extending and deepening gender analysis and learning based on challenges encountered in applying this principle;

❑ Build dialogues to surface, analyse and incorporate issues of race and gender identity;

❑ Profile successes in gender equality and women's rights as part of public engagement and advocacy.

Possible Standards / Indicators to Measure Achievement

❑ Existence of comprehensive policy on gender equality and women's rights, shared with counterparts, and with public constituencies;

❑ Dedicated staff and financial resources to gender equality and women's rights programming, committed in long-term;

❑ Senior level staff (institutional "champion") with "line authority" and mandate for setting and achieving goals in gender equality and women's rights;

❑ Annual review and revision of program objectives and progress, implemented with counterparts.

2. **Are people-centred and responsive:** *respecting and promoting the dignity, agency and human rights of all people, supporting poor, oppressed and marginalised women and men to organise themselves to improve their material conditions and to determine and further their own development options.*

This principle makes explicit that development is a process of people's agency and empowerment to strengthen their participation in the social, economic, cultural and political life of their community and nation. This principle acknowledges that the work of CSOs impacts on the development prospects of the most vulnerable people, and recognises that the role of CSOs is to enable, rather than dictate, the development outcomes aspired to by the people with whom they work.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

❑ Seek to make the transition from funding intermediaries to include authentic people-to-people relationships;

❑ Take seriously the role and responsibility established in the *Accra Agenda for Action* and the *ODA Accountability Act* to "take into account" the perspectives, aspirations and goals of local communities;

❑ Establish and formalise the basis for Canadian counterpart relationships in advance of decisions concerning program and financing;

❑ Make explicit the defining qualities of the intended relationship, including the contribution and responsibilities of both counterparts;

❑ Strengthen the ability of counterpart CSOs to assert autonomy and independence;

❑ Invest in nurturing and supporting local capacity for program development and evaluation;

❑ Build program from the identification of local capacities as well as needs and vulnerabilities;

❑ Invest in practical means to include counterparts in CSO decision-making and governance;

❑ Prioritise public engagement activity to deepen the critical awareness of our own constituency / supporters concerning the complex reality and challenges of social justice action for development.

Possible Standards / Indicators

❑ Explicit statements defining the intended nature and quality of counterpart relationships, including mutual aspirations and expectations, independent of and prior to program and funding decisions;

❑ Practical methods and mechanisms for ongoing co-evaluation and learning;

❑ Mechanism for ensuring regular counterpart contribution to internal CSO decision-making and governance;

❑ Benchmarks and incentives within each CSO program area for engaging domestic constituencies about the challenges of the program and how it relates to the domestic context;

❑ Investment in research into best practices worldwide for "taking into account the perspectives of the poor".

3. **Are transparent and held to account:** *while respecting critical issues of privacy and physical security, manifest our commitment to accountability for our development efforts and our use of financial resources by communicating fully and openly with counterpart organisations and communities, other international partners, staff, donors, the public, and each other.*

Through this principle CSOs accept the connection between effective development practice and accountability. Transparency and the provision of accessible and relevant information is a first principle, however taking into account whether in particular situations specific types of information may endanger the organisational survival of partners and even the lives of people associated with counterpart organisations.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

❑ Establish clear and transparent accountability mechanisms, including with the Canadian public and program counterpart organisations;

❑ Develop mechanisms that formalise donor and CSO accountability as clearly and intensively as accountability to counterparts;

❑ Identify and apply qualitative variables in accountability mechanisms;

❑ Acknowledge the complexity and real cost of sound accountability procedures, and invest accordingly, including offsetting the demands made on counterparts with appropriate resources and capacity-building;

❑ Emphasise processes that harmonise and simplify accountability mechanisms and expectations among donors;

❑ Promote and engage in intensive collective investigation within the sector and among counterparts to develop and apply creative means to establish mutual accountability and institutional practice for development effectiveness;

❑ Be direct and transparent in public engagement with constituencies to help them understand, and accept, the real and appropriate costs of effective development action, and the necessity of a "long-view" in determining real impact.

Possible Standards / Indicators

❑ Mechanisms and standards of accountability are multi-directional, with expectation of transparency the same for CSOs and other funders as for counterparts, for example, concerning program activities, budgets and resource allocation;

❑ Accountability mechanisms and procedures are fully costed and resourced;

❑ Public informed of real-cost breakdown of money raised and spent, including administration and operations;

❑ Public engaged in a way that promotes a critical understanding of the immense challenges implied in development action that aims for substantive change in the conditions of the poor and the structures that impede their capacity to exercise their rights.

4. **Maintain commitment to ecological justice throughout all activities:** *promoting ecological and environmental integrity and sustainability as a cornerstone of all development action.*

Through this principle CSOs accept that wherever they act, and with whomever they interact, this action takes place in an environmental and ecological context that is integral to the cultural, material, and social conditions of the populations with whom we work, and must be taken into account in all actions and programs. It recognises that we cannot damage the earth permanently without damaging the condition of humanity permanently, and fatally; and that without nurturing the planet and its capacity to nurture us, we cannot improve the condition of humanity. It is the earth, first and foremost, and above all, that sustains life; it is our relationship with the earth, first and foremost, that defines human meaning, and the human collectivity. Justice demands that we respect and attend to the quality of the environment and the ecological integrity of every place and of every people, and so must be taken into account in all actions and programs.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

❑ Incorporate sustainability and ecological perspective within all programs;

❑ Include the ecology and environmental conditions in counterpart communities as a focus of analysis and action in programs;

❑ Acknowledge the primacy of environmental conditions as a critical variable in the health and livelihood opportunities of the poor and marginalised;

- Develop institutional policies governing ecological responsibility and "environmental stewardship" issues in all activities and actions;

- Recognise leadership of program counterparts, and the relevance of traditional knowledge, in issues of good ecological practice, pursuing active consultation and learning to constantly deepen awareness and good and appropriate practice;

- Engage in advocacy and public engagement on domestic and global issues of environmental sustainability and ecological stewardship.

Possible Standards / Indicators

- Institutional purchasing policies with criteria for environmental impact and sustainability;

- Financial and staff resources dedicated to implementing policies, and leading internal processes of new learning and experimentation;

- Sustainability "checks" at all points of the planning-to-implementation continuum;

- Acknowledgment, celebration and promotion of the expertise of counterparts and local communities in planning exercises, and in public engagement with domestic constituencies;

- Internal institutional process to explore and define goals towards achieving "carbon neutral" status within realistic timeframe;

- Collaborative mechanisms for joint-CSO research, advocacy and public engagement on issues of environmental justice.

5. **Promote global solidarity:** *engaging the Canadian public, decision-makers and political leaders to play a positive and constructive role in the promotion of global justice, the fulfillment of the human rights, and the development priorities and aspirations of all peoples of the planet.*

This principle emerges from the reality that the development action of Canadian CSOs inevitably must take place in Canada as well as the wider world, and concerns issues of global justice that apply in Canada as well as globally. Democratic development practice requires the exercise of the political rights of citizens and civil society organisations in Canada and in developing countries. Engaging Canadians, providing opportunities to learn and act in common cause and solidarity with vulnerable people as they strive for dignity and justice, is an indispensable development role. Because there are systemic issues at the root of global poverty, injustice and exclusion, CSOs educate and engage the public in advocacy for changes to structures, policies and practices that contribute to abuses and undermine effective development.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

- Clarify and distinguish among public education, engagement, and advocacy as modes of action;

- Prioritise and allocate adequate independent resources dedicated to this work;

❑ Incorporate counterparts into strategic analysis and public engagement activity to deepen understanding on the issues and encourage an ethos and language of common cause within constituencies of CSOs;

❑ Develop and emphasise a dynamic, holistic and integrated evidence-based analysis of development challenges and processes, and a whole-of-society vision of development effectiveness, to engage in policy promotion with analysts and decision-makers at various levels and within specific sectors;

❑ Emphasise the commonality and overlap in the global North and South among major issues of justice and sustainability, such as structural poverty, violence against women, exploitative resource extraction, food security, and ecological justice, among many others;

❑ Promote and contribute to cooperative joint-CSO and cross-sectoral public engagement action – domestically and internationally – on critical global issues of rights, justice and exclusion.

Possible Standards / Indicators

❑ Strategic alliances in discrete well-resourced public campaigns to achieve concrete policy objectives leading to improved conditions and enhanced opportunities for the poor and marginalised of all societies;

❑ Ongoing opportunities for people and communities within the domestic constituency of CSOs to meet with and exchange on common issues with leaders of counterpart organisations and communities from the global South.

6. **Build sustained, committed relationships based on a mutuality, shared mission and common goals:** *establishing mutually-accountable North-South relationships of respect, trust and long-term shared action, based on mutually-agreed and evolving development goals and obligations.*

This principle is at the heart of varying conceptions of authentic CSO counterpart relationships. The spirit behind this principle of "partnership" is that the relationship is based on parity, equality, equity and mutual commitment within a dynamic and long-term strategic perspective.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

❑ Recognise that it is relationships that are at the core of CSO action and identity;

❑ Invest in institutionalising long-term profound relationships with program counterparts, ensuring that relationships go beyond personal interactions to implicate the broader organisation and its constituency;

❑ Define and establish qualities and mutual expectations of institutional relationships before initiating program planning and negotiating financial agreements;

❑ Establish concrete procedures for explicit periodic review and affirmation, or refinement, of relationship;

❑ Establish mutually satisfactory conditions and mechanisms for ongoing monitoring, accountability and co-learning processes;

❑ Build common action on a programmatic rather than project basis, emphasising the longer-term in strategic discussions;

❑ Invest in public engagement activity that links domestic conditions and issues to the reality and experiences of counterparts, promoting a deeper, subjective understanding and commitment to the relationship over time;

❑ Use the nine "principles of development effectiveness" as the unified framework and lens for describing our CSO relationships and actions to our constituencies and the general public.

Possible Standards / Indicators

❑ Written agreements between CSOs and collaborating counterparts, socialised and understood throughout the respective organisations;

❑ Exchanges and collaboration that goes beyond discrete projects and financial transactions;

❑ Intimacy with the actions and issues of counterparts among core constituency;

❑ Opportunities for counterparts to contribute to reflections, strategic planning and public engagement activity of CSOs;

❑ Examples of systematised co-learning;

❑ Record of recurring successful processes of review and refinement of institutional relationships.

7. **Facilitate and build strategic collaboration:** *co-operating as equals with civil society organisations and other development actors, promoting synergy of approaches, strategies and actions to accomplish mutually-agreed objectives.*

This principle recognises that by relying on the combined positive qualities of creative autonomy, openness, and mutuality, we can promote coherence and synergy in our actions to enhance the contributions of ourselves and various other actors to achieve a deeper effectiveness and more durable impact. To achieve such synergy requires recognising that such cooperation – locally, nationally or internationally – depends upon balancing the inequities among the different actors, and developing fair, trusting and collaborative working relationship, in order to create the basis to work together for effective development outcomes.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

❑ Frame the goal and practice of synergy as a strategic and ethical imperative in enhancing development effectiveness;

❑ Strengthen strategic alignment and program collaboration among CSOs, domestically and internationally;

- Allocate adequate resources to ensure counterpart participation in priority-setting and program planning;

- Redress power imbalances through resource-sharing to enhance possibilities of cooperation and collaboration;

- Collaborate in multi-directional research and program action, N-S, S-S, and N-N;

- Dedicate the resources to seek synergies and invest in building and sustaining collaborative initiatives between different development actors;

- Take seriously MDG 8 ("new partnership for development") to build the capacity to engage, when and where appropriate, with "non-traditional" actors (e.g. private sector, military, et alia) who influence and impact the development context and possibilities.

Possible Standards / Indicators

- Development of partnership principles and policies guiding CSOs in outreach to seek synergies and develop joint ventures;

- Increased coordination and efficiency through harmonisation of CSO planning, reporting and evaluation frameworks, to enhance relevance and reduce local burden, while optimising resources available to meet core mission of counterparts;

- New forms of counterpart coordinating bodies that break down the donor-beneficiary dichotomy and emphasise collective local planning and decision-making;

- Specific CSO program funds available to facilitate and enable south-south dialogue and cooperation, and counterpart participation in international processes;

- National and international inter-agency campaigns carry forward political advocacy on core development issues;

- Emergence of new coalitions, consortia and other joint-agency programs.

8. **Promote justice based in appreciation, respect and application of diverse experiences and aspirations:** *focusing on the rights of marginalised individuals and groups, and ensuring their full participation in all development action undertaken or supported.*

This principle emphasises that as CSOs focus their development action on the inequities faced by groups and individuals marginalised within societies, they must constantly strive to appreciate, respect, and amplify the experience, aspirations and values of those with whom they work.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

- Ensure an institutional commitment to analyse and redress inequalities and power imbalances in external relationships and within our own organisations;

- Strengthen institutional understanding and use of human rights-based approaches to all activities, linking anti-discrimination and inclusion principles to concrete actions;

- ❑ Go beyond "representation" to real inclusion and influence of counterparts in framework development, planning and program implementation;

- ❑ Ensure diversity of voices and counterpart influence in CSO decision-making;

- ❑ Recognise the need for a variety of tools and approaches – education, advocacy, dialogue, demonstration;

- ❑ Develop capacity and methodologies of authentic consensus-building.

Possible Standards / Indicators

- ❑ Processes of internal review of concrete measures to ensure that a diversity of voices, experiences and perspectives are brought to bear in analysis, planning and decision-making at all levels;

- ❑ Policies in place to promote and enhance a human rights approach to development action;

- ❑ Participation of a range of development actors and counterparts in formal stages of the planning process, including evaluation;

- ❑ Consensus approaches increasingly prevail in strategic analysis and planning.

9. **Create and apply knowledge on an ongoing, intentional and reflective manner:** *systematically investigating, gathering and integrating information and lessons from actions undertaken, and from knowledge and experience shared among counterparts and co-actors, applying and revising analyses of coherence and effectiveness, constantly testing and sharing conclusions against progress achieved in terms of the organisational mission and the goals of specific development actions.*

This principle emphasises the importance for organisations to consciously and intentionally reflect on their practice and outcomes, systematise the conclusions, and apply this knowledge to remain responsive, effective and relevant. Regular organisation-wide, qualitative evaluative investigations, and shared reflective learning, is integral to assessing progress toward the mission and development goals, and adapting and refining strategies, priorities, modes and methodologies to achieve sounder methodologies and more effective long-term development action.

Possible Guidelines for Implementation

- ❑ Develop institutional policies that explicitly define effective development action as knowledge-based;

- ❑ Establish professional and ethical responsibility to engage critically in gathering and sharing reliable data and information on which to build institutional knowledge;

- ❑ Instigate institutional policies and procedures that explicitly value critical thinking, inductive processes of investigation, and transparency in the creation of knowledge;

- ❑ Dedicate internal staff and financial resources to ongoing systematic knowledge- generating processes;

- ❑ Foster space and a conducive environment for learning and exchange based on openness and trust within institutional and program activity;

- ❑ Apply diverse models of analysis and learning;

- ❑ Develop incentives to promote collaboration in the critical process of generating knowledge, and sharing and acting on learning;

- ❑ Reward innovation.

Possible Standards / Indicators

- ❑ Institutional mechanisms and procedures exist on a permanent and ongoing basis to share information and knowledge;

- ❑ People are brought together, internally and externally, for intensive exercises of action reflection and critique;

- ❑ Conclusions are tested by applying in real-time program application and evaluation;

- ❑ CSOs collaborate in processes to identify critical problems for research and investigation and to elaborate and share "best practices" for effective development action;

- ❑ Resources are made available for counterparts to carry out their own knowledge-building capacity, and to participate in collaborative initiatives to create and share knowledge locally and internationally.

SECTION TWO: CSO / GOVERNMENT DIALOGUE: IMPROVING ENABLING CONDITIONS

As part of the Canadian Consultation, CSO leaders and government officials came together for one day to explore key issues for improving enabling conditions for CSO development effectiveness. Government officials heard an oral presentation of the CSO work on principles and guidelines from the previous day, but did not have a substantial opportunity to comment on these outcomes. All participants benefited from a strong presentation (via video) by Tomas Brundin, from the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who provided a government view from Sweden on some challenging perspectives on CSO development effectiveness and government policies to enable CSO development efforts.

A series of parallel workshops were organised whose purpose was to identify how the Canadian government can best support CSOs as development actors. Canada, along with other donors, committed in the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, paragraph 20, to recognise CSOs as development actors "in their own right" and to "[ensure] that CSO contributions to development reach their full potential".

This Report sets out the results of these five workshops and suggests some overarching directions for improving enabling conditions. These directions arose in the debates and discussions of the workshops and as such do not reflect a workshop consensus, nor can they be

attributed directly to either government or CSO participants. They are put forward as various proposals for the multi-stakeholder dialogue process of the Open Forum on enabling conditions, and as an initial step in an ongoing CSO / Government Dialogue in Canada on these questions.

S2.1   Responsive Program Mechanisms

It was identified that many donors are increasingly averse to responding to CSO initiatives and autonomous programs when CSO priorities and programs do not fall strictly within the strategic framework established by the donor. However, others pointed out that responsiveness is not the antithesis of being strategic. It can be, and should be, one strategic approach among many to promote "aid effectiveness" among donors, and development effectiveness among CSOs. Without recourse to this approach, CSO relevance and effectiveness, which is rooted in deep relationships of mutuality and collaboration with CSO counterparts in the South, will be profoundly undermined.

To improve and nurture the prospects of creative, dynamic and effective responsive programming the following possible directions for good practice were identified. They apply equally to international CSOs in their relationships with counterparts, as to official donors in their relationships with international and local CSOs.

Possible Directions for Enabling Conditions

1. Donors, and Canadian CSOs themselves, need to define, emphasise, and develop together in donor / CSO partnerships, agreement on the quality of "responsiveness" as a key factor in, and indicator of, development effectiveness.

2. Donors, and Canadian CSOs themselves, should commit to and increasingly establish sustained responsive support to counterpart organisations, within a long-term development effectiveness perspective. While responsive support should be based on agreement with organisational missions and long term goals to promote sustainable positive transformation in the material conditions, rights, and livelihoods of the poorest and most marginalised populations, responsiveness will enable sensitivity to local conditions as corresponding strategic frameworks and program priorities evolve and change over time.

3. Donors should incorporate responsive programming within their operational strategies for achieving "aid effectiveness", and in discussion with CSOs, need to ensure the dynamic flexibility within their strategic frameworks that is required to anticipate and nurture CSO program initiatives and innovations.

4. Donors need to be clear, transparent, and timely in sharing revisions of their strategic framework with CSO partners, to allow CSOs to effectively demonstrate, when appropriate, the relevance of their respective programs within such frameworks.

5. Donors need to create specific funding envelopes that do not demand strict alignment of CSO programming with shifting donor strategic frameworks and priorities.

6. Donors and CSOs should consider increased provision of "core institutional funding" to counterpart organisations, beyond specific program and project funds, as a contribution to the indispensible ongoing activity of outreach, innovation and critical reflection that are critical to effective programming.

7. As the trend towards decentralisation of donor decision-making accelerates and becomes institutionalised, donors and CSOs should work together to ensure that this transition works to enhance responsiveness to varied CSO development experience and CSOs' own initiatives, as the rationale for decentralisation specifically intends.

8. Results-based management (RBM) methodologies based on logical framework analysis (LFA) need to be constantly updated and revised by both donors and CSOs to reflect the long-term and unruly nature of the development processes, and to accommodate and reinforce the complex qualities and processes leading to required program adjustment and real opportunities for learning.

9. Donors should introduce more dynamic forms and variety of accountability and reporting formats, beyond current exclusive reliance on RBM and logical framework analysis (LFA), to allow CSOs, and governments themselves, to more effectively communicate the conditions, challenges and successes of our specific and collective development efforts.

10. Donors and their CSO partners should work together to elaborate, defend and promote the development effectiveness rationale of responsive program approaches to the general public and to opinion-makers and legislators.

S2.2   Partnerships to Engage Canadians

Public engagement is at the heart of effective CSO action for development. It is through outreach and education among natural constituencies and the general public that CSOs engage Canadians in global issues of poverty, human rights and sustainable development, and build support for their own activities and those of their counterparts. Government mechanisms provide opportunities for Canadians from a wide range of constituencies to contribute to development by making charitable contributions, volunteering their services, learning more about development issues, or expressing their voice in support of development causes. Activities to engage Canadians is also the single most important factor in building public support for the government's own official development assistance (ODA) program, and for CIDA.

Yet some participants noted that public engagement outreach activity is in crisis in what many experience as an unprecedented politicised and hostile government funding environment. CSOs are experiencing increasing restrictions and conditions on public funding of such activity. There is an increasing perception by CSOs that organisations that carry out public engagement in a manner that can be interpreted as critical of, or counter to, prevailing government foreign policy, even with independent funds, may jeopardise their opportunity to secure public funding for their international programs, and perhaps even face challenges to their status as charitable organisations. To improve and nurture the climate and quality of public engagement activity of Canadian CSOs, the following overall directions for government enabling conditions were identified.

Possible Directions for Enabling Conditions

1. Donors, and CSOs themselves, need to reaffirm dynamic and powerful public engagement action as an indispensible factor in, and indicator of, CSO development effectiveness.

2. Public engagement should be defined, accepted and promoted by donors, and by CSOs, to include any and all of: education and awareness-building; research action on critical global issues; activity to generate resources for development activities of CSOs and their international counterparts; mobilising for development action; and advocacy on policy issues and human rights.

3. Because it is the most controversial, challenged, and challenging element of public engagement, advocacy on government policies and practices specifically should be accepted and understood by CSOs, and by donors, as an inescapable responsibility and ethical imperative of CSOs. Government policies benefit from CSO advocacy that is based on close working relationships with counterparts, providing evidence of the impact of government policies on the rights and material conditions of poor and vulnerable populations around the world, particularly in the communities served by these CSO counterparts.

4. Resources need to be specifically earmarked by donors for public engagement, with flexible guidelines that encourage rather than discourage public engagement activity as proportion of overall program. (CSOs in this workshop pointed to the limitations imposed by CIDA's funding guideline that no more than 10% of a proposal may be devoted to public engagement.) Reporting mechanisms should be adapted to the nature of different public engagement activities, and also to better adapt reporting to the donors' own ongoing needs to communicate with the public and justify their own programmatic efforts.

5. CSOs should investigate ways to secure significant resources, independent of public funds, to augment and extend their autonomous public engagement activity, and be able to explain clearly and directly to their private donors why this activity is at the core of CSO action and effectiveness.

6. In addition to ongoing engagement activity within their own natural constituencies, CSOs should explore and develop opportunities to pool efforts, resources and ideas in joint-agency public engagement activity that goes beyond "branding" exercises. Such exercises can be geared to expand the collective CSO reach to promote a wider public engaged in issues of global equity and development, and in the public policy processes that ultimately determine the extent and nature of Canada's international role and impact.

6. CSOs need to include their counterparts directly in the conception and implementation of public engagement activity, to help deepen the commitment of Canadians from one of charity and assistance, to one of common cause based on shared experiences and common aspirations for each other and for the planet.

S2.3   Direct Support to Southern CSOs

Although there have always been some exceptions, official donors have traditionally maintained their primary relationship with their own domestic CSOs, and through them supported the organisations and activity of southern CSOs with whom the northern CSOs have established counterpart relations and solidarity. In turn, southern CSOs' primary relationship has been with northern CSOs, rather than with governments. For example, most CIDA support to CSOs – probably about 80% – is channelled through Canadian CSOs who partner, in turn, with Southern CSOs.

Over time, this pattern has been shifting to include a much broader range of arrangements and relationships, including direct funding to southern NGOs by official donors. They do so particularly through their bilateral and regional programs, and in programs directed by decentralised ODA administered from embassies or consular offices. More recently, under the influence of the processes leading to the Accra Agenda for Action, and the choice of some major donors to extend the decentralisation of ODA decision-making, there has emerged a greater emphasis on direct support to southern CSOs. Inevitably these developments, while welcomed, have led to a questioning of the appropriate balance and role of northern CSOs in manifesting and facilitating northern solidarity and support for the activities of civil society in the global South. These questions are as critical to Southern CSO movements as they are to their CSO counterparts in the North. Following are directions that emerged from this workshop that may address some of the challenges related to these important issues.

Possible Directions for Enabling Conditions

1. Donors and CSOs need to acknowledge that support to and through domestic CSOs, and direct support to CSOs in the global South, are valid, essential and complementary models and strategies, and that both approaches need to be nurtured and encouraged.

2. CSO relationships with Southern CSO counterparts should be rooted in solidarity and common cause relationships that are deeper and more extensive than the simple transfer of funds and the receipt and preparation of reports to be forwarded to official donors. Such relationships will survive even in circumstances where Southern CSOs also choose to seek or accept direct funding. It is this quality of engagement and relationship that justifies donor governments' continuing support for their own domestic CSOs, even as they extend the use of the direct funding approaches with Southern CSOs.

3. Northern CSOs should take the challenge and opportunity to work with their counterparts in the global South to elaborate critically the actual and potential "value-added" that derives from such CSO relationships, and which must be protected and nurtured as the CSO sector evolves and develops in the new landscape of official development assistance post-Accra.

4. International CSOs currently raise and spend many billions of dollars annually, independent of – and often well in excess of – the public funds that they secure from their own governments. These independent monies are invested in their relationships with counterparts and their development activities on behalf of the most poor and marginalised in society. The trend to extend direct funding opportunities to CSOs in the global South needs to be done in a way that acknowledges, and does not undermine, this important contribution.

5. Direct funding is a model that most often applies to specific CSOs that are able and willing to demonstrate alignment of their activities with the strategic framework of respective donors. The trend to extend direct funding opportunities to CSOs in the global South needs to be done in a way that acknowledges their experience, expertise and insertion within the local social reality, and does not distort the priorities and qualities that have made them valued development actors and partners. Continuity of CSO counterpart relationships, even in contexts where some direct funding is being accepted and programmed, may be critical in maintaining this autonomy and independence.

6. Direct funding by official donors is made available primarily to the most "professionalised" and internationally-adapted CSOs. Donors and CSOs must work in ways to ensure that smaller, newer, and more remote CSO actors – often the front-line organisation of the "self-organised" who remain the most critical actors promoting the interests of the poor and marginalised – do not languish in the new environment, and that the essential diversity that ensures the dynamism and relevance of civil society is not eroded.

7. Action within civil society to address issues of livelihoods, poverty and respect for essential rights does not rely only on the activity of individual CSOs, but on the concerted collective action of CSOs working together in various networks, coalitions and movements, locally and globally. CSOs and donors should reflect and work in ways to ensure that donor direct funding is offered, chosen and used in ways that do not undermine the strength and capacity of CSO-generated collaborative efforts.

8. An indispensible contribution of Northern CSOs is their domestic public engagement activity to build global social solidarity and a commitment to development action, including popular support for the ongoing commitment of official donors. CSOs and the official donors need to ensure that the expansion of direct funding mechanisms is implemented in a way that continues to encourage, enable and nurture the sustained relationships among CSOs in the North and the global South, which is the life-blood of public engagement action in the domestic arena.

S2.4   CIDA-CSO Relations and Strategic Partnership

The context of development action of CIDA and of Canadian CSOs is in transition amidst an evolving international policy environment and a challenging and volatile domestic political landscape. The long-standing strategic partnership between CIDA and CSOs is experiencing unprecedented strain and questioning at the same time as the central role of CSOs, and the mutual reliance and interdependence of the public and voluntary sector in international development effectiveness is being reaffirmed at the global level post-Accra. Following are directions that emerged in the workshop to strengthen a CSO / CIDA strategic relationship, while addressing some of the challenges related to the important issues at play in improving the development effectiveness of CSOs globally.

Possible Directions for Enabling Conditions

1. CIDA needs to clearly and publicly reaffirm the central role of CSOs in the overall Canadian Government's commitment to addressing issues of global poverty.

2. CIDA needs to work with CSOs in finalising and operationalising its long-delayed statement on the role and relationship of CSOs within CIDA's long-term strategic framework for development cooperation.

3. CSOs should give increased attention to their role in explaining and supporting CIDA in its ongoing efforts to build understanding and support of Canadians for Canada's ODA program.

4. CIDA and CSOs need to take advantage of the significant achievement of the 2008 *ODA Accountability Act* to increase understanding and commitment of Canadians to the concerted actions of CSOs and the Canadian government to focus development cooperation on strengthening the rights of the poor and marginalised populations.

5. CIDA and CSOs should consider a process of mutual dialogue and reflection on how the *ODA Accountability Act* should influence priorities, strategies, and overall effectiveness for ODA.

6. CIDA should affirm and strengthen the role of Canadian Partnership Branch (CPB) in promoting the role, identity and profile of CSOs within the agency, serving as one important doorway into CIDA for CSOs, and an important window on CSOs for CIDA.

7. CIDA and CSOs need to build specific spaces and processes for regular strategic dialogue as an integral element of the ongoing historic relationship between the two sectors.

8. CSO public engagement activity needs to be deepened and extended to emphasise issue- and action-oriented outreach beyond mere fundraising. It should build commitment to the collective effort of international development action, and not merely support for the "brand" and actions of individual organisations. CSOs and CIDA need to work together to develop more creative and dynamic means of demonstrating the effectiveness of public engagement action, and bring the "stories" of Canadian social solidarity alive in ways that sustain public and political support for the CSO-CIDA partnerships.

9. CSOs and CIDA should consider ways to develop country and regional coordination mechanisms that include all CSO actors in order to build strategic synergies, complementarities and program collaboration. This will become especially important in the context of increasing donor decentralisation.

10. Where appropriate, efforts to build strategic, multi-level strategic collaboration among CSOs, with shared frameworks, evaluation, reporting, and accountability, would contribute significantly to enhancing long-term CSO development effectiveness. Such initiatives, supported by donors, would have the important additional benefit of nurturing innovation by sharing risk, and building local capacity by providing opportunities for CSOs of varying capabilities, experiences and expertise to work together and learn from each other.

11. CSOs and donors should recognise and re-affirm the critical element of ongoing learning and knowledge-building in achieving long-term CSO effectiveness. CSOs, with donor support, need to work together to promote co-learning exercises that systematise the lessons and "best practices" of their common action and develop the means to apply them directly in their respective development actions.

S2.5   After Paris and Accra: CSOs as Development Actors

The Accra Agenda for Action describes CSOs as "independent development actors in their own right whose efforts complement those of government and the private sector." While long asserted by CSOs themselves, this acknowledgement by the donors does have implications for the nature and quality of donor support of CSOs, and the relationship between them. It also presents dilemmas in determining the appropriate balance between support to governments and support for civil society, especially in all-too-common contexts where an institutionalised state is highly challenged or sometimes virtually non-existent, where a government is weak and unrepresentative. Following are directions that emerged from the workshop addressing some of the challenges in advancing the goal of including CSOs as central and indispensible autonomous development actors.

Possible Directions for Enabling Conditions

1. Donors and Northern CSOs need to acknowledge and respect Southern CSOs as the primary agents and drivers of CSO development effectiveness. Concerns among Northern CSOs that this shift may diminish their own role and access to funding, need to be addressed openly and collaboratively. Northern CSOs should work with their counterparts to clarify their appropriate roles and contributions, and develop strategies together to ensure that resources for their engagement and collaboration are available in the new funding environment.

2. Donors should review and refine their relationships with CSOs, recognised as independent development actors at the centre of the development process, and develop and share explicit policies that define the place and role of CSOs within the donors' overall strategic framework and plans.

3. The consensus acknowledgement by official donors that CSOs are everywhere "independent development actors in their own right" brings with it the obligation of CSOs globally to develop their own principles and guidelines to achieve CSO development effectiveness. This implies establishing standards and mechanisms of accountability to demonstrate to themselves, to their own constituency and communities, and to donors, that they are seriously, responsibly and democratically engaged in carrying out effective development action with and on behalf of the poorest and most marginalised.

4. There is a recognised need within the Accra Plan of Action to build more comprehensive and inclusive partnerships for development action, bringing together the contribution and perspectives of donors, governments, and CSOs. Prevailing isolation and fragmentation of efforts mitigates what the donors seek in "aid effectiveness" and undermines the possibility

of achieving what CSOs have envisioned as "development effectiveness". When the conditions exist, each should be working within common frameworks, in a spirit of co-ownership, driven by country-level goals. Donors as one of the drivers in defining such relationships needed to be more focused on the key role of inclusiveness, while promoting a stronger role for CSOs in setting national priorities.

5. In promoting collaboration and working toward common goals and action, donors will always need to take into account the diversity amongst the actors. CSOs are very numerous and diverse in nature, with many different specific experiences and interests; donors are also distinct in their styles, interests and capabilities. Finally, governments come in all shapes and sizes, and with varying inclinations toward democracy, authentic inclusion, and equity. Flexibility within coherence will be the standard to meet in moving forward the search for consensus and collaboration.

6. In carrying forward the opportunities and challenges of the Accra Agenda, all actors – donors, governments, and CSOs – need to incorporate an essential understanding that when advancing "local ownership", state-building alone is not sufficient. Rather the goal should to be nation-building, with an emphasis on creating a framework that embraces all in society, not only powerful and privileged elites. Donors themselves need to work more in this area, promoting internationally the importance and legitimacy of civil society in national development and in national governance.

7. CSOs need to immediately begin to work together to develop collective and cooperative approaches to accountability to demonstrate on an ongoing basis – to themselves, to their counterparts, to their constituents, and to their donors – that they are effective and responsible development actors, individually and collectively. Measures to be considered could include periodic processes of formal peer review, just as donors have established among themselves; and comprehensive joint-agency programmatic evaluation that engages fully other stakeholders, including the communities that are subject to CSO development efforts.

8. Donors should clarify the nature and quality of data they require to satisfy the accountability demands within government, and review the relevance of current mechanisms to do so. This might imply providing more resources and capacity-building to enable CSOs, and governments, to generate the data identified. It seems clear that the current exclusive reliance on RBM-type instruments is inadequate to the challenges and conditions faced by CSOs and their counterparts. These instruments may be creating the illusion of accountability while obscuring the reality and dilemmas on the ground, along with the true successes and the powerful "narrative" that they entail. In particular, RBM mechanisms, as enforced on local CSO counterparts whose logic and priorities naturally and appropriately tend to be far more iterative, often fail to generate aggregate data that is increasingly required.

SECTION THREE: STRENGTHENING CSO ACCOUNTABILITY

As is evident in the earlier sections of this Report, there was a universal understanding among participants in the Canadian consultation that CSOs need to reflect on and strengthen collective and cooperative approaches to accountability. These approaches must demonstrate on an ongoing basis – to themselves, to their constituents, to their partners and counterparts, and to their donors – that they are effective and responsible development actors, individually and collectively. A CSO-only session at the consultation began to explore and learn from different approaches to accountability for civil society actors.

At the same time, the preoccupation expressed by donors and Southern governments on this theme could give the impression that little work has been done in this area, or that the work which has been done has revealed a profound lack of accountability on the part of CSOs. To the contrary, it was noted by participants that decades of CSO evaluation and research has revealed significant impact, innovation and a record of learning and good practice. Intensive external evaluations of their organisations and work carried out in collaboration with major donors including CIDA have been consistently positive, with follow-up assessments demonstrating remedial measures that accentuate best practices identified. In terms of financial accountability, the extensive external audits to which CSOs regularly submit have similarly revealed that with rare exceptions the sector is meeting the highest standards of professional management and probity. CSOs are also accountable to Boards of Directors who provide oversight and due diligence on an on-going basis. In sum, CSOs compare quite favourably to official donors, and private sector entities, in their commitment to and demonstration of accountability.

This said, CSOs are not nearly satisfied with where they have arrived, and are committed to continuing to strive to be, as one senior official from CIDA urged, "the very best that they can be." In particular CSOs are aware that in the context of the commitments made in the Accra Agenda for Action there is a critical need to extend evaluation and accountability beyond individual organisations and the results of discrete, very localised interventions. Of course, ongoing monitoring and evaluation at the micro-level will remain indispensable. However, building the capacity and mechanisms to create aggregated results over time at the meso- and macro-level within and across sectors is also important. An ongoing challenge will be to demonstrate long-term and sustainable development effectiveness outcomes for the CSO sector itself, and to donors and governments and our publics, upon whose confidence and commitment CSOs rely.

In this regard, one theme that ran throughout the consultation, and the CSO-Government Dialogue, is the inadequacy of current accountability frameworks imposed by the donor community. Attempts to make "results-based" management and measurement more dynamic and flexible have yielded some good results, and no one any more would argue against including this tool in the CSO management kit, and prominently so. But, as noted in the Dialogue, this technique, alone, is insufficient. Relied on exclusively it obscures as much as it reveals, and what it does reveal too often offers little upon which to base corrective strategies.

CSOs may need to develop among themselves more profound tools of investigation that apply qualitative criteria and iterative processes. To achieve deeper accountability other logics other than RBM must also be applied, including the logics that emerge on-the-ground, the logics of the

poorest and the most marginalised, those struggling to reclaim their rights, their power and an equitable place in society, and from which we all have much to learn if CSO development effectiveness is to be achieved.

S3.1   Mechanisms

CSO participants explored the concrete experience and lessons of several models and mechanisms for CSO accountability.

S3.1.1 Self-Regulating Associations

Self-regulating associations are most relevant to professional groups whose members work in the public, or semi-public, realm, and to whom governments have ceded a regulatory mandate to adjudicate conduct and to hold members accountable to specific professional and ethical standards.   Tools developed include regulatory standards (mandatory) and ethical guideline (aspirational). The *Canadian Nurses Association* was an example examined by participants.

S3.1.2 Commonly-Established Standards and Best-Practices

There are many examples of coalitions of self-selecting member organisations that collaborate to research, develop and advise on minimum standards, operational guidelines, and best practices in specific fields of endeavor.   Based on an extensive consultative and consensual process, minimum standards are determined, which members agree to strive to follow and meet.   Often these "standards" are collected in a common "handbook", which may be periodically revised based on members' ongoing concrete experience in applying the standards. There is rarely a "regulatory" function built into these collaborations.   Members are responsible for adjudicating their own adherence to the guidelines.   *Sphere—the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response* was an example examined by participants.   In some respects the goals of the Open Forum itself fall within this approach.

S3.1.2 Codes

Many CSO membership councils and associations have developed comprehensive codes of ethics and / or conduct. The codes establish some mix of principles and standards of practice. Standards are usually mandatory, while principles tend to aspirational, and some codes include a compliance mechanism relating to the standards.   Members commit to adhere to the standards as criteria for membership.   Mechanisms for monitoring adherence are rare, but when present, tend to be mostly based on a periodic self-assessment.   At the same time, the Code is a usually a public document, and a condition of membership, and members can be open to challenges from other members and the public if they are perceived to be in violation of the agreed standards. The *Code of Ethics and Operational Standards* of the *Canadian Council for International Cooperation* was an example examined by participants.

S3.1.4 Peer Evaluation

Peer evaluation among CSOs is much more rare but in several of the break-out sessions, and in the plenary, it was raised as a mechanism to be explored. Reference was made to the well-established practice of periodical peer review among the donors within the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

Impediments

The following were identified as problems or impediments inherent in establishing effective self-governing mechanisms promoting CSO accountability and development effectiveness:

❑ Distinction between regulatory (mandatory) and discretionary (aspirational) standards;

❑ Principles and standards identified are subject to interpretation and difficult to judge "objectively";

❑ Very challenging task to disseminate and build awareness and capacity concerning common principles and standards;

❑ High turnover of staff, especially at the field level, requires constant attention and re-education;

❑ Standards can be difficult to operationalise and monitor under unpredictable conditions and circumstances on-the-ground;

❑ Voluntary mechanisms, and peer-to-peer approaches, are difficult to apply rigorously; CSOs do not like to interfere with or criticise each other; they understand the difficulties other CSOs face, are reluctant to open themselves to similar critique, and in any case, are preoccupied with their own problems;

❑ Broad diversity among CSOs means diverse priorities, emphasis, and interpretations of what is meaningful and important.

Possible Guidelines

The following were identified as guidelines in establishing effective self-governing mechanisms promoting CSO accountability and development effectiveness[5]:

❑ Mechanisms depend critically on demonstrated institutional commitment and political will;

❑ Institutions require explicit and strong policy statements, backed up with adequate resources and tools;

❑ Mechanisms need to employ a mix of regulatory and aspirational principles and guidelines;

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[5] See also, *Better Aid: Civil Society and Aid effectiveness. Findings, Recommendations, and Good Practices*, OECD 2009, which is a product of a the pre-Accra Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness, in which CIDA and CCIC played important leadership roles.

❑ Principles and mechanisms are best developed from and with those whose work will be measured;

❑ Essential to be clear who is accountable, to whom and for what;

❑ Mechanisms need to be "win-win" combinations, promoting learning while identifying concrete and achievable measures to correct weaknesses and increase effectiveness;

❑ Accountability mechanisms work best when they are clear, practical, easy to apply, and to report and act upon;

❑ Maintaining accountability is a normative as well as a technical exercise and mechanism need to reflect this;

❑ Mechanisms are most effective when they focus on the user / recipient, and rely on intrinsic motivation before extrinsic;

❑ Aversion to critique and conflict needs to be acknowledged and accommodated;

❑ Language in mechanisms needs to be accessible among diverse users and across sectors, regions and cultural conditions;

❑ Flexibility and adaptability are a critical element in mechanisms to be realistically applied in diverse and often-unpredictable conditions;

❑ Accountability needs to be understood and seen to be mutual, reciprocal, and multi-directional among CSOs, counterparts, official donors, and other stakeholders;

❑ Principles identified need to be applied internally within institutions;

❑ Audits are necessary to accountability, but not sufficient;

❑ Mechanisms need to help account not only for inputs (e.g. financial audits; activity audits; beneficiary audits), but also for outcomes; not just "best practices", but best results;

❑ We ought never impose principles and measurements on others that we do not accept for ourselves.

Issues for Further Reflection

The following emerged as possible issues that affect accountability mechanisms, but will require further reflection:

1. Attributing responsibility for results and outcomes—inferring direct cause-and- effect relationships; giving and taking credit, or blame—is complex and imperfect. The line from action to effect is rarely simple and direct, and when it is, the effect is often insignificant.

2. The current donor reporting regime is oppressive and impedes capacity for deeper accountability. It is as burdensome on CIDA and other official donors as it is on CSOs and does not create the kind of data and information that either party requires or can meaningfully use.   While CSOs, and many within the official donor community, acknowledge this, the political climate has yet to catch up with what is an unspoken consensus within the sector.

3. As discussed above, accountability mechanisms are increasingly expected to provide for the aggregation of results and outcomes over time. Many CSOs conclude that this level of abstraction cannot be usefully or meaningfully generated relying solely on current RBM instruments. Many within the official donor agencies privately concur with this conclusion. Time, resources and attention are required to develop and apply complementary modalities, with a concurrent lifting of the reporting burden to ensure that this can happen.

4. Government officials and CSO leaders together emphasise that there is an urgency among us to "tell the story, the bigger story" to increase and consolidate public support for development assistance. As one official asked: "We say that we want to change the world – well, are we, even in small ways?" Accountability to our constituencies, and to those with whom we work through our programs, demands a coherent and convincing answer to this question.

5. CSOs are reflecting on what accountability to Canadian constituencies means and on how their supporters can meaningfully be involved in the accountability process. It is not at all clear whether, if given the opportunity to participate, their criteria and measures would be the same as CSOs now use, or those imposed by funding relationships with official donors.

6. Transparency is assumed to be a criterion of accountability, one expected by CSO supporters and by counterparts, and donors. At the same time, full transparency is extremely difficult in practical terms, for a host of very good and valid reasons, and rarely measured. There is a need to reconcile this contradiction, or at least be clearer about it.

7. Beyond their programs of development assistance, CSOs must also be accountable to mandates to address the "root causes" of the economic and social dislocation of the poorest and most marginalised. Without this commitment the goal of achieving CSO development effectiveness can only be a chimera.

8. The conditions rarely exist to truly enable the communities of the poor, the powerless and most marginal to claim their rights and seize the economic and political opportunities that would allow them to transform the conditions of their lives. Regardless of any other interventions they make, CSO actors cannot claim to be fully accountable to their counterparts and the communities with whom they work if they do not also advocate and mobilise for change to the political and structural impediments that prevent the poor from being able to exercise their rights and to transform the material conditions of their lives.

9. Accountability mechanisms rarely examine the external conditions created by donors, host governments, and by CSOs themselves, that enable or impede people's own effective development action.

SECTION FOUR: OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Several issues arose in the context of the Canadian Consultation and the CSO / Government Dialogue that require much deeper consideration than was possible within the context of these meetings. These issues may require particular attention in the processes leading to the Seoul High Level Forum in November 2011.

1. CSOs are increasingly scrutinised by official donors, and by local governments, for carrying out functions and services that would to be more appropriately provided by governments, even as it is evident to all that in many circumstances national governments often have neither the capacities, the means, nor the political will, to fulfill these functions. A critical issue for CSOs into the future is the extent to which the "service" function of CSOs impedes the eventual evolution of circumstances where governments increasingly can and will fulfill these functions in a strong and soundly institutionalised state. This is a primary goal of "development", largely shared by CSOs and donors, and needs to be taken into account in defining and determining CSO development effectiveness.

2. Donors and governments are pointing to what they consider to be a dysfunctional expansion of the number CSOs at the local and international level. They argue that this proliferation risks a fragmentation of focus, and a diffusion of efforts, which undermines efficiency and CSO effectiveness. CSOs need to consider the dilemmas of balancing democratic diversity and dynamism with the issues of fragmentation, duplication and diffusion, and to create collaborative ways to address these issues.

3. Donors and CSOs alike are once again – after a hiatus of some two decades – showing some enthusiasm for strategic CSO coalitions, coordination and collaboration. Once a preferred model among CSOs, the popularity of this approach floundered somewhat beginning in the early 1990s when, under political pressure from Northern governments to show the national flag and demonstrate direct and discrete accountability for monies spent, donors became reluctant to provide funds for, or through, such coalitions. The shift back in favour of such initiatives requires serious study and consideration to ensure that initiatives are appropriate and effective. There is a long history of international joint-agency collaboration extending back three and four decades that would well be recuperated for lessons and guidelines.[6]

4. While the Accra Agenda for Action acknowledges CSO legitimacy as "development actors in their own right", donors tend to consider this acknowledgement to be predicated on a willingness of CSOs to clearly align their objectives and modalities within country programs. CSOs, they insist, have to be considered and funded as development actors and partners "with others…within a mix." At the same time, it is clear that bringing about the conditions that make CSO alignment and collaboration with specific governments' possible and feasible, will in many circumstances be a difficult challenge in the short, and even in the mid-term.   CSOs should not be merely "implementers" of development programs, but protagonists in the development process itself. This is the meaning and significance of the phrase, "actors in their own right." In this context, the issue of alignment of CSOs with donor and host government programs will inevitably be a complex and potentially contentious issue.

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6 This was a key focus of the CCIC Leadership Forum and National Consultation on Canadian International Cooperation CSOs and Aid Effectiveness, January 2008.

Canadian Consultation for the
Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness
March 16-18, 2010
Holiday Inn, Plaza la Chaudière, 2 Montcalm Street, Gatineau, Quebec

Agenda

Goals

1. To ensure a Canadian CSO contribution on CSO development effectiveness for the global Open Forum process; and

2. To identify areas to strengthen the development practices of Canadian CSOs and how the Canadian government can best support CSOs as development actors in their own right.

Objectives

1. To propose common principles and guidelines for CSO development effectiveness based on the lessons from Canadian CSO development practices;

2. To reflect on how to apply the common principles and guidelines to Canadian CSO practices, including mechanisms to ensure that CSOs are held accountable; and

3. To discuss, with CIDA and other relevant government departments, enabling policies and support mechanisms to maximize Canadian CSO development effectiveness.

Day One – March 16, 2010

Session with CSOs Only

8:00 am – 9:00 am   **Registration / Coffee**

9:00 am – 9:20 am   **Introduction**
Karen Takacs, Canadian Crossroads International and
Chairperson, Board of Directors, Canadian Council for International
Co-operation

9:20 am – 9:45 am   **Introducing the Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness**
Karen Takacs, Canadian Crossroads International

Day One – March 16, 2010

**Canadian Consultation for the
Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness**

Session with CSOs Only
(continued)

9:45 am – 10:30 am   **Presentation of Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness**
Anthony Scoggins, Oxfam Canada

10:30 am – 11:00 am   **Health Break**

11:00 am – 12:30 pm   **Discussions of the Principles at Roundtables**
Anthony Scoggins, Oxfam Canada
Michael Stephens, Canadian Council for International Co-operation

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm   **Lunch**

1:30 pm – 2:15 pm   **Applying the Principles to Our Work**
Gerry Barr, President-CEO, Canadian Council for
International Co-operation

Keynote Speaker: Moema de Miranda, IBASE (Brazil)

2:15 pm – 5:00 pm   **Applying the Principles to Canadian CSO Development Practices**
Introduced by Cindy Farrell, Canadian Hunger Foundation

Global Café: Table discussions drawing out the challenges and essential standards / guidelines for implementing the principles by CSOs. Each table will identify standards related to North / South relations and CSO engagement with their public constituencies in Canada.

Day Two – March 17

**Canadian CSO Government Dialogue on
Enabling Conditions for CSO Development Effectiveness**

Morning Session with CSOs Only

8:30 am – 9:00 am   **Coffee / Tea**

9:00 am – 10:30 am   **Applying the Principles**
Gervais l'Heureux, Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale

A Synthesis of the Global Café: Derek Evans, CUSO-VSO

Table and Plenary Discussion

10:30 am – 11:00 am   **Health Break**

11:00 am – 12:00 pm   **Effective CSO Accountability Mechanisms**
Betty Plewes, Moderator
Margot McNamee, Canadian Nurses Association
Susan Murdock, MiningWatch Canada and CCIC Ethics Review Committee
Mike Weickert, World Vision Canada, Sphere Project

A Panel Discussion

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm   **Introducing the CSO / Government Dialogue**
Gerry Barr, Canadian Council for International Co-operation

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm   **Lunch**

Day Two – March 17

**Canadian CSO Government Dialogue on
Enabling Conditions for CSO Development Effectiveness**

Afternoon Session

1:30 pm – 2:00 pm	**Welcome and Introduction to the Dialogue** Gerry Barr, President-CEO, Canadian Council for International Co-operation
2:00 pm – 3:40 pm	**Setting the Stage: Different Dimensions of CSO Development Effectiveness** Gerry Barr, Canadian Council for International Co-operation

- **CSO Principles and CSO Enabling Conditions: Outcomes from the CSO Consultation**
  Karen Takacs, Canadian Crossroads International

- **Community of Democracies Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society**
  Carol McQueen, Deputy Director, Democracy and Governance Division, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

- **Issues in Promoting CSO Development Effectiveness: A Government View from Sweden**
  Tomas Brundin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden (via Video)

- **Issues in Promoting CSO Development Effectiveness: Setting the Scene**
  Naresh Singh, Acting Vice President, Canadian Partnership Branch, Canadian International Development Agency

3:40 pm – 4:00 pm	**Health Break**
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	**Table Discussion on Issues in CSO Development Effectiveness for the Dialogue** What are some key issues for the Dialogue arising from the panel?
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	**Cash Bar Reception**

Day Three – March 18

Canadian CSO / Government Dialogue on
Enabling Conditions for CSO Development Effectiveness

8:30 am – 9:00 am   **Coffee / Tea**

9:00 am – 10:00 am   **CSOs and Development Effectiveness**
Gerry Barr, President-CEO, Canadian Council for International
Co-operation

Keynote: Margaret Biggs, President, Canadian International
Development Agency

10:00 am – 10:20 am   **Health Break**

10:20 am – 11:45 am   **Parallel Workshops on Areas for Improving Enabling
Conditions for CSO Development Effectiveness by CIDA
and Other Government Departments**

See the accompanying sheet for short descriptions for each workshop.

1. The Role of Responsive Programming Mechanisms

2. Partnerships to Engage Canadians

3. Balancing Direct Support to Southern CSOs and Support
   through Canadian Partners

4. CIDA-Partner Relations and How to Develop More Strategic
   Approaches

5. Implementing the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for
   Action by Donors and Governments: Situating CSOs as
   Development Actors

11:45 am – 1:00 pm   **Group Report Back and Plenary Discussion / Wrap-Up**
Gerry Barr, President-CEO, Canadian Council for International
Co-operation

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm   **Lunch for CSOs and Government Officials**

2:00 pm – 2:30 pm   **Reflections on the Open Forum Process**
Moema de Miranda, IBASE, Brazil

Day Three – March 18

**Canadian CSO Government Dialogue on
Enabling Conditions for CSO Development Effectiveness**

Concluding Session with CSOs Only

2:30 pm – 3:30 pm   **Bringing together the outcomes of the previous sessions on Principles, Guidelines, and the Enabling Environment**

Plenary Discussion

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm   **Next Steps**
Esperanza Moreno and Brian Tomlinson, Canadian Council for International Co-operation

Table Discussions: How do we make these principles, guidelines and enabling conditions "come to life" in the Canadian context and within our organizations beyond this Consultation?

Overview of the next steps in the global process and how this Canadian Consultation contributes to it

Wrap-Up

Karen Takacs, Chairperson, Board of Directors, Canadian Council for International Co-operation

Shams Alibhai
Executive Director
British Columbia Council
for International Cooperation

Iris Almeida-Côté
President & CEO
Canada World Youth

Johnathan Arnold
A/Director
Kenya and Uganda
Canadian International Development Agency

Deborah Bakker
Agente de Plaidoyer et de Recherche
Développement et Paix

Tyler Banderob
Youth Engagement Team Member
Jamaican Self-Help

Gerry Barr
President-CEO
Canadian Council for International Co-operation

Margaret Biggs
President
Canadian International Development Agency

Geneviève Boucher
Gestionnaire p.i.
Agence canadienne de
développement International

Chantal Boucher
Gestionnaire de programme
Agence canadienne de
développement International

Tony Breuer
Executive Director
CHF

Tomas Brundin
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden

Kim Bulger
Executive Director
MATCH International

Sarah Cashmore
Volunteer
Sombrilla Refugee Support Society

Louise Casselman
Social Justice Fund Officer
Public Service Alliance of Canada

Mohammed Chikhaoui
Directeur
Direction de l'organisation apprenante
et de l'évaluation
Oxfam-Québec

Mahjabeen Chowdhury
Asia-Pacific Development Coordinator
The Primate's World Relief
and Development Fund (PWRDF)

Andrew Clark
Director
Strategic Planning and Analysis
Multilateral and Global Programs Branch
Canadian International Development Agency

Don Cockburn
Performance Systems Coordinator
CUSO-VSO

Karen Cocq
Program Manager
Inter Pares

Mary Corkery
Executive Director
KAIROS

Steve Cornish
International Programs
CARE Canada

Denis Côté
Coordonateur, Groupe de travail
 sur l'Asie-Pacifique
Conseil canadien pour la
coopération internationale

Linda Dale
Children / Youth as Peacebuilders

Moema de Miranda
IBASE (Brazil)

Kathryn Dingle
Program Manager
Inter Pares

Elena Dinu
Project Manager
International Partnerships
Canadian Urban Institute

Jan Disselkoen
Learning and Innovation Coordinator
Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Jessica Dubelaar
Interim Executive Director
Ontario Council for International Cooperation

Emele Duituturaga
Executive Director
Pacific Islands Association of
Non Governmental Association

Derek Evans
Executive Director
CUSO-VSO

Cindy Farrell
Director Technical Services
CHF

Robert Fox
Executive Director
Oxfam Canada

Darlene Gage
Public Engagement Officer
British Columbia Council
for International Cooperation

Robert Gonneville
Directeur général
Terre Sans Frontières

Colleen Greidanus
Program Support Officer
Save a Family Plan

Cassandra Griffin
Program Support Officer
Save a Family Plan

Debbie Grisdale
Nurse Consultant, International
Policy and Development
Canadian Nurses Association

Sylvie Groulx
Diector General, Engaging Canadians
Canadian International Development Agency

Janice Hamilton
Executive Director
Manitoba Council for International Cooperation

Duncan Hanks
Executive Director
Canadian Baha'i International
Development Agency

Frédéric Hareau
Director Strategic Partnerships and Research
Canada World Youth

Lucy Hargreaves
Senior Program Officer
Aga Khan Foundation Canada

Richard Harmston
Manager
South Asia Partnership Canada

Diane Harper
A/Director General
Strategic Planning and Operations
Canadian International Development Agency

Jennifer Henry
Manager
Dignity, Rights and Development
KAIROS

Lina Holguin
Policy Director
Oxfam-Quebec

Brian Hull
Economist
The Hunger Project – Canada

Andrew Hurst
Team Leader
Policy Development
Canadian International Development Agency

Tom Huszar
Developement Officer, Ethiopia
Canadian International Development Agency

Michael Jay
Director General
Human Development
Canadian International Development Agency

France Joncas
Administrative Assistant
President-CEO Office and Policy Team
Canadian Council for International Co-operation

John Julian
Director
International Communications and Policy
Canadian Co-operative Association

Marisa Kaczmarczyk
Executive Director
Jamaican Self-Help

Ginette Karirekinyana
Présidente-directrice générale
Agence consultative en éthique
de la coopération internationale

Tim Kehoe
Director
Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Harry Kits
Policy Team Leader
World Vision Canada – Ottawa

James Kornelsen
Public Engagement Coordinator
Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Denis Labelle
Directeur général
Comité de Solidarité – Trois-Rivières

Jocelyne Laforce
Membre du conseil d'administration
Consultante en développement international
L'Œuvre Léger

Langis Lagacé
Directcor General
Economic Growth and
Environmental Sustainability
Canadian International Development Agency

Hélène Lagacé
Centre d'études et de coopération internationale

Jennifer Lalonde
Team Leader, Aid Effectiveness
Canadian International Development Agency

Tamari Langlais
Agente de formation et d'information
UPA Développement international

Réjean Lantagne
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