Scoping Study on IDRC-CIDA Collaboration

I. Introduction

In response to an internal request for information and guidance, PBDD carried out an internal study to collect insights and lessons learned from managing IDRC-CIDA co-funded projects. The study examined the nature of IDRC-CIDA partnership arrangements and relationships. It sought to identify factors that affect the development of a successful partnership with the Centre's most significant donor partner[1], and to generate recommendations to inform the negotiation and implementation of future collaborative initiatives with CIDA.

Nine IDRC projects with substantial CIDA funding (greater than one million dollars) were examined, including:

❑ Building Learning Systems for Honduras (LAC)
❑ Canadian International Immunization Initiative (CIII2) (Global)
❑ Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA) - Phase III (ASRO/SARO)
❑ Evaluation of Poverty Reduction Strategies (PARSEP) (SSA)
❑ Expert/Advisory Services Fund(EASF) – Phase III (MENA)
❑ Middle East Good Governance (MEGG) Fund (MENA)
❑ Scholarship Fund for Palestinian Women in Lebanon (MENA)
❑ Small and Medium Enterprise Policy (SMEPol) Development Project (MENA)
❑ Water Demand Initiative (WADIMENA) (MENA)

These projects were selected as they represent a diverse sample, varying in terms of their partnership arrangement, region of coverage, thematic focus and in the perceived degree of partnership success.

The following report provides an overview of the context for this study and a brief summary of the more salient findings. Finally, suggestions to facilitate and enhance the partnership experience with CIDA are offered.

II. Context

This scoping study is one of a number of inquiries carried out since IDRC's inception that have sought to examine the Centre's relationship with our main Canadian counterpart. Efforts to assess and probe the nature of collaboration between IDRC and CIDA have been pursued internally, collaboratively and by external actors, and are documented in various reports, notes and in the minutes of meetings held among policy staff and Presidents. Past initiatives to

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[1] CIDA is IDRC's top donor partner, and contributed 23% of external donor funding (over 12 million CAD) to IDRC's overall programming budget in 2006/07, including parliamentary supplements and transfers and project co-funding (less the 10% indirect cost).

enhance collaboration have, for example, prompted the development of a program resource binder in 1990 to guide collaboration between our institutions, and have driven on-going efforts to negotiate a suitable model agreement[2]. (See Annex 1 for a more comprehensive list of reports, notes and studies).

Past inquiries convey an institutional relationship with a history of strengths and challenges. For example, a study conducted by PBDD in May 2001, in which program staff from both IDRC and CIDA completed a questionnaire on the subject of collaboration between the two institutions, found that IDRC program staff acknowledged the benefits of additional resources brought by CIDA and appreciated the skills, country-level connections and knowledge contribution of CIDA counterparts. Despite the mention of several positive aspects of the collaboration, the 2001 study suggested that a number of operational obstacles continued to be encountered by officers from both organizations – particularly at the level of financial reporting, results reporting and regarding the contribution agreement.

As part of a 2001 review of IDRC-donor partnerships conducted by external consultants from Mestor Associates Canada, interviews revealed that project negotiations between IDRC and CIDA often failed to attend to the detailed discussions needed to adequately clarify all elements of the project plan and operations. Furthermore, "the objectives of each partner in entering the relationship were generally not sufficiently shared." (p. 35).

More recently, in "IDRC Experiences of Working with CIDA", an internal PPB summary document, additional challenges outlined include staff turnover and the fact that CIDA staff are often generalists as opposed to thematic specialists. The 2005 document also noted a lack of appreciation among CIDA staff for the role of research at the programming level. This particular concern is longstanding and was also mentioned in the "Report on the Current State of IDRC-CIDA Collaboration" (1988) where the author identified the "absence in each organization of knowledge about the other's mandate, organization and program of work" as one of the greatest impediments for collaboration (p.12).

A variety of suggestions have been put forward to enhance collaboration between our institutions. Some have been specific to particular elements of the institutional relationship, while other suggestions have called for more fundamental changes to the way the two institutions collaborate. For example, in Francoise Coupal's report (1989), it is envisioned that "A different kind of relationship will be required where creative bridges can be established between two distinct corporate structures and cultures which capitalize on the strengths rather than the weaknesses of the other" (p.17).

While posing similar questions to the 2001 inquiry, this scoping study was interested in gathering the experiences of IDRC staff who manage CIDA-funded projects and, further, examined the selected projects at the level of the contribution agreement to determine if any connections could be drawn between the perceived success of a partnership and what was agreed upon in the legal contract.

III. Findings

Eleven semi-structured interviews carried out with IDRC staff and examination of the contribution agreements for the nine projects selected suggests a wide range of collaborative arrangements and experiences are possible with projects co-funded by CIDA (see Annex 2 for a list of staff

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[2] The initial model agreement was developed in 1989, and at the time of writing, it is currently being revised to reflect changes in institutional requirements for both IDRC and CIDA.

interviewed, Annex 3 for the interview framework, and Annex 4 for a summary of findings from review of the contribution agreements).

On average, IDRC staff rated their partnership experience with CIDA as 3.2 out of 5.

1	2	3 ★	4	5
Failed partnership with unresolved challenges and few strengths	Weak partnership with a number of challenges	Average partnership with a balance of strengths and challenges	Productive partnership with few outstanding challenges	Extremely effective and successful partnership

Individual scores ranged from 2 to 5, suggesting that the perceived success of collaboration varies considerably and signaling that an opportunity exists to improve collaboration between the two agencies.

It must be noted that each project is unique, for example, in terms of how it was conceived, initiated, negotiated, planned and implemented, who participated in these processes (including other donor partners), the political context associated with the project, etc. As a result of the influence of these many factors on the collaborative relationship, the findings do not point to any particular step taken or combination of factors that can ensure the success of a partnership.

However, during the interviews, respondents shared valuable insights from their specific experience working with CIDA and suggested a number of factors or conditions that have proven to facilitate or compromise the success of project management and/or partnership performance.

The specific (and often related) factors that were indicated as having **a positive effect** on the success of IDRC-CIDA collaborations include:

- Clear understanding of comparative advantages of each institution
- Clear definition of roles and responsibilities articulated in the contribution agreement
- A governance structure that allows shared decision-making power, flexibility and fits the specific project context
- CIDA staff counterparts with relevant experience
- Continuity of staff assigned to the project
- Open communication and exchange of expertise, ideas, and knowledge

Conversely, factors that were indicated as having **a challenging or negative effect** on IDRC-CIDA collaborations include:

- Lack of understanding or appreciation for the role of research in development
- Lack of clarification around roles, expectations, vision and project approval processes
- A governance structure where CIDA has ultimate authority and control
- Inadequate budgeting to cover IDRC staff time
- Political tensions between CIDA and other donor partner(s)
- Confusion around reporting requirements
- Change in relationship and loss of shared vision due to staff turnover
- Lack of ability for IDRC to provide input into the project evaluation process

Other elements were found to have a more **variable impact** on the collaboration such as:
- Staff turnover – at times this could cause serious disruption in the project when it involved the loss of a key player who had important project history and a shared vision of the project aims, at other times it meant the addition of someone with fresh enthusiasm and relevant expertise valuable to the project and partnership.
- Active involvement of CIDA staff in the project – depending on the governance and decision making structures established for the project, this could either lead to a rich

collaborative experience, or a case of micromanagement or difficult partnership dynamics.

IV. Suggestions

Given that so many factors interact to affect a collaborative relationship, the following are merely suggestions to consider when working in partnership with CIDA, rather than a set checklist of steps to follow. These 14 tips are gleaned from IDRC staff experiences working with CIDA and provide guidance for laying the foundation through negotiation of an appropriate contribution agreement, and addressing the challenges involved in implementation and management of the partnership.

TIPS FOR PROJECT NEGOTIATION

Negotiating the terms and parameters of a new project or program, or a subsequent phase of a project, inevitably requires much dialogue and exchange of ideas. While the negotiations address multiple elements related to the project and its management, the results are reflected in at least two documents; the project document and the contractual agreement.

IDRC staff experience illustrates that what is written in these documents matters and can significantly affect the health of the partnership with CIDA. Not surprisingly, IDRC staff highlighted the importance of a well-negotiated contribution agreement. This was specifically raised by those interviewed when asked to reflect on what they would do differently in future collaborations. For example, one staff member said:*" Next time I would pay attention to the contribution agreement, and make sure roles and expectations are clear from the very beginning."*

It is critical to engage in thorough and careful negotiations and to clearly outline the financial and operational details of the partnership to facilitate a positive collaboration with CIDA. Of course, the actual relationship has much more breadth than what is written in the contribution agreement alone, however, this document is a useful point of reference that lays out the roles and responsibilities and outlines the decision-making process and governance structure to guide the collaborative relationship. Moreover, staff changes are a reality when working with CIDA, and new staff will often refer to the agreement to orient themselves and to understand the partnership mechanics. In the event that conflict arises, the contribution agreement is also a tool to consult for clarification.

The following tips for project negotiations are drawn from the interview findings and PBDD's experience supporting the partnership process at the Centre. They are not meant to be prescriptive, but rather to share what has been observed and to hopefully provide relevant insights for those engaging in the development of a partnership with CIDA. They reflect the multiple steps involved in the negotiation phase, namely project scoping, determining a budget and defining the terms of the agreement.

1) Project Scoping and Planning

> ➤ ***Start negotiations early, be thorough and patient.***

In the case of the PARSEP project, the negotiation phase took approximately 10 months in order to come to consensus on all the elements of the project, and to work out the terms of the relationship with CIDA and the multiple government partners in West Africa. This long period of planning and negotiations and the frequency of back and forth dialogue and decision-making permitted the project partners to reach a shared vision of the project concept, and to forge a relationship built on trust and open communication.

> ➤ *Ensure program fit*

It is important to program based on IDRC priorities and collaborate with CIDA where and when it makes sense. When seeking co-funding or assessing an opportunity for collaboration, be certain that the program or project is linked to other work CIDA is doing and prepare the proposal in the language and format that CIDA is familiar with.

> ➤ *Develop a common vision for the project that draws on IDRC and CIDA strengths and capitalizes on synergies within the mandates of both institutions.*

In order to develop a common vision and an effective partnership, it is critical to know our partner. We need to understand CIDA's organizational culture – it is very different from the culture at IDRC. Likewise, CIDA officers need to know who they are working with. Do not assume they are familiar with the Centre. Explain IDRC's approach to research, give concrete examples of the work we have funded, and take time to clearly delineate the role and value of applied research and fieldwork in the given project.

In the case of the CIII2 project, one of the reasons why CIDA sought to partner with IDRC was to add a research component to the work of the GHRI. In contrast, during the negotiation phase for the SMEPol project, IDRC had to work to convince CIDA and the Government of Egypt of the important role for research in this policy-oriented project. The complementarities between CIDA's experience in SME development and IDRC's research expertise, has contributed to a successful collaborative relationship.

> ➤ *Choose or design a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tool that meets both CIDA and IDRC needs.*

CIDA works primarily with Results-Based Management (RBM). While developing the M&E tool, efforts should be made to discuss the difficulty of attribution in project results. Work together to determine indicators that are acceptable for both institutions and to determine the role that each organization will have in the process of M&E. Consider how to include the details of the M&E process agreed upon in the contribution agreement.

The following advice was suggested in one of the interviews: *"I would advise staff to pay very close attention to what is in the Logical Framework and be sure you agree with these details. IDRC people tend to get tired and agree to things, but those documents become gospel once approved so we need to pay attention to these details. Roles, responsibilities and reporting needs to be very clear."*

> ➤ *Emphasize the issue of partnership and see that it is reflected through all elements of the project*.

Partnership is not just about having an IDRC and CIDA representative on a steering committee. It should be reflected in the decision-making processes, in the approach to project development, in the mechanisms for communication, in the design of the M&E tools, etc. As a partner, IDRC also provides a substantial financial and in-kind contribution to collaborative projects.

> ➤ *Document decisions and discussions.*

While you may be negotiating with a CIDA counterpart whom you know well, anticipate staff turnover in the course of the project. It is therefore essential to ensure that the history of decisions

has been tracked and recorded and the vision and approach will be clear to anyone joining the project at a later stage.

2) Budgeting

➢ ***Be careful not to underestimate the real time and cost of IDRC staff contribution to the project when developing the budget.***

It is important to be realistic about the anticipated workload required to develop and support a new project and effort needed to nurture the collaborative relationship(s). It is also critical to assess staff time limitations and to determine if there is need to budget for hiring additional project staff. Remember that the quality of a project is inevitably linked with the amount of time dedicated, and that shortchanging the project in terms of staff time will put stress on the team and potentially impact the project and partnership in a negative way.

3) Establishing Terms of the Agreement

➢ ***Clearly outline the specific roles and responsibilities of each donor partner.***

In reflecting on the Honduras case, the importance of clearly defining roles and responsibilities was stressed. It was felt that the initial flexibility of the project design turned out to be difficult to deal with, and it would have been preferable to establish clear understanding on each partner's specific role from the beginning. The contribution agreement for PARSEP, for example, takes four pages to outline the roles and responsibilities for the various stakeholders participating in the project.

➢ ***Develop an appropriate governance structure for the project to ensure effective decision-making and project guidance.***

Some governance structures are cumbersome and constraining while others help to tackle difficult decisions and to guide the project and partnership. The challenging experience of the MEGG Fund project underscores that a flexible and appropriate governance structure is key to the success of collaboration. The Consultative Committee governance structure adopted for the MEGG Fund affords CIDA ultimate authority[3]. This has led to micromanagement of the Fund's activities and has been especially tedious in terms of travel and project approval processes[4].

➢ ***Be aware of reporting and accountability needs.***

These needs vary from one institution to another. Be sure to seek clarification from CIDA counterparts to understand the underlying reporting needs, constraints and preoccupations of CIDA officers, beyond the tables and forms that are generally discussed.

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[3] In the Contribution Agreement, the specific roles and responsibilities of CIDA are outlined: "CIDA will approve the project implementation plan (including the programming strategy), activity workplans, activities to be funded by the Fund and reports.
[4] PBDD is developing a reference piece to describe a range of governance structures used in IDRC co-funded projects.

Note that while negotiating more favourable terms for IDRC is possible, it is important to bear in mind the reporting needs of CIDA. For example, the Honduras project[5] negotiated to report on the project's progress on an annual basis and in a narrative format, compared to the more typical biannual reporting schedule. The longer, more detailed narrative report did not satisfy the information needs of the CIDA officer and eventually, the Honduras team decided to provide results in the RBM format that is better understood and valued by CIDA counterparts.

TIPS FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

A well-negotiated agreement, while providing an important point of reference, cannot guarantee the success of a partnership. The interviews carried out and the review of past studies reveals that a whole host of other factors will inevitably influence the development of any partnership with CIDA. Therefore, Centre staff must be prepared to build and nurture the relationship and find creative ways to deal with misunderstandings or conflict throughout.

The following tips for facilitating a strong collaborative relationship are drawn from the interview responses and from PBDD's experience supporting the partnership process at the Centre.

> ➢ *Establish and maintain strong and open communication channels*

Communication is essential to building a good relationship. Keep CIDA well informed. Seek their comments on drafts and opinion on investigation of new themes and opportunities. Reporting is also a way of communicating with CIDA. While we need to be true to IDRC's approach and priorities, it is also important to communicate project results and progress to our donor partners in a manner that is useful to them. Many interviewees advised the use of RBM in reporting to be sure the work is clearly understood and valued by CIDA counterparts.

Open and effective communication can be facilitated by the involvement of key individuals with an affinity and passion for the project, from the active engagement of field staff and/or benefit from the presence of a regional office in the project country. Some interviewed also noted that a shift from positive to less effective communication occurred over the course of project implementation, related to staff turnover (for example, in the case of the Honduras project).

> ➢ *Be proactive to learn from similar projects supported by CIDA.*

Individual CIDA staff may or may not have knowledge of the subject area to contribute, but often have extensive knowledge at the country or regional level. Furthermore, CIDA may be funding other related projects or activities.

One of the main challenges from the WADIMENA project is that IDRC has had to take the initiative to collaborate with other CIDA projects relating to water management. In the interview, it was noted that, *"CIDA has not really provided a forum for learning between related projects."* As a result, it was advised that others working with CIDA should *"be proactive to learn from similar projects that have been supported by CIDA and also to keep the CIDA representatives fully informed, not only the Project Team Leader, but also those that have some influence on CIDA's programming."*

CIDA staff may or may not share information with one another. Therefore, the importance of keeping CIDA officers informed of activities in all the countries involved in a project was stressed

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[5] Note that the Honduras project had a Grant Agreement as opposed to the more detail-oriented Contribution Agreement typical with CIDA co-funded initiatives.

by those interviewed. Approaches include inviting CIDA representatives to visit a project site or partner, and/or to participate in a related workshop or event.

> ➤ *Clarify expectations from the outset and with each incoming CIDA officer.*

Expectations can change with new staff. Take the time to orient new staff to the project and try to understand his or her needs. Outline progress made and review the project vision and details of the partnership arrangement during briefings.

> ➤ *Address points of conflict or misunderstanding as they emerge.*

Approaches for resolving misunderstandings and conflicts with CIDA include:
- Convening meetings to clear up any misunderstandings. This is a common approach and it is advised to keep the meetings formal and to return to the contribution agreement and program documents as points of reference.
- Involving a Regional Controller, FAD and/or GAD staff, or more senior level program staff to address questions around financial reporting and accountability[6].
- Seeking advice from other staff, a manager, and/or PBDD to learn from other collaborative experiences.
- Commissioning an external review or study. For example, an external review of IDRC's role was commissioned to address concerns that arose in the management of the Scholarship Fund.

V. Conclusion

Program staff from both CIDA and IDRC continue to seek opportunities for meaningful collaboration, for instance, in the health sector, on private sector development and on gender and development issues. At the end of June 2007, IDRC had 16 active agreements with CIDA. These partnership initiatives proceed, experiencing both successes and challenges. Despite the trials involved in collaboration, IDRC and CIDA will continue to be important and complementary allies in Canada's work to contribute to global development.

Currently, efforts to improve the nature of our collaborative relationship with CIDA are being pursued through on-going dialogue between our respective policy divisions and Presidents. In addition, changes to the Model Agreement are under negotiation. While our relationship with CIDA is evolving, as an institution committed to on-going learning and change, IDRC must continue to reflect on and, where necessary, adapt our approach to collaboration. This is particularly important, as partnerships are inherently difficult and complex, especially when trying to bridge different organizational cultures and institutional priorities.

The purpose of this study was to gather IDRC staff experience, examine contribution agreements and to share our corporate learnings in order to inform and enhance future IDRC-CIDA collaboration. The findings from this study have been used to inform a series of tips described above. More generally, the findings align with and underscore the relevance of IDRC's 10 Principles of Partnership (see Figure 1).

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[6] In article 5 of the Framework Agreement recently developed to guide collaboration between IDRC and DFID, a specific process for resolving disputes was included. The agreement outlines that if a conflict cannot be resolved by the parties involved, they ought to "escalate the issue which is the subject of dispute to his/her next level supervisor." If the matter cannot be resolved in this way, mediation or arbitration can be employed.

Fig. 1: IDRC's 10 Principles of Partnership

IDRC's partnerships are built on the following principles:

1. **A shared vision:** Effective collaboration requires a commonality of purpose and full intellectual partnership. Partners must share a vision of the value of the research, the intended objectives, the potential outcomes, and the soundness of the methodology.
2. **Joint ownership:** The research protocol should be jointly elaborated, and the division of tasks should be clearly delineated to meet the needs of all partners.
3. **Shared control:** Southern partners should be able to take responsibility for managing the project and funds, to innovate, experiment, and learn.
4. **Reciprocal accountability:** A mechanism is needed to enable all partners to jointly monitor performance and be accountable.
5. **Sustained commitment:** Partners must provide sustained support for the duration of the work, confirming their reliability and commitment and thereby building strong relationships.
6. **Flexibility and versatility:** The partnership must adapt to changing circumstances and accommodate the full range of research support.
7. **Effective communications:** Partners must share information in an open, timely, and collegial fashion. They must respect the communication culture, resources, and perspectives of their partners.
8. **Streamlined administration:** Partners need to simplify, reduce, update, and harmonize their administrative rules and regulations.
9. **Coordination of efforts:** Partners need to communicate with other interested parties – and form alliances with them – to reduce duplicate or conflicting demands on Southern research institutions and help mobilize additional support.
10. **Effective follow-up:** After the end of the project, due attention must be paid to disseminating findings and promoting their use, as well as to building new partnerships to continue the work.

IDRC. (2001). *IDRC Annual Report 2000-2001*. Ottawa: IDRC.

In addition to adhering to the Centre's partnership principles, internally, we can make further efforts to strengthen our partnership with CIDA by sharing knowledge gained from a long history of cooperation with CIDA. Valuable sources for advice and insight on collaboration with CIDA or other donor partners include, for example, colleagues in programs, GAD, FAD, legal, EU, HR, Communications, RIMSD and PBDD. It is well worth consulting with others during the early stages of project scoping and development to benefit from their breadth of partnership knowledge and experience.

VI. Acknowledgements

Many thanks to all those who participated in this study, by openly sharing experiences and insights during the interviews, and/or through patient assistance in the search for documents, reports and project information.

VII. Annexes

Annex 1. Reports, Notes and Studies of IDRC-CIDA Collaboration

A. Internal

2007
IDRC, ENRM's Philippa Wiens prepared a revised version of an October 2005 note, **"IDRC Honduras Program lessons about working with CIDA"** (June 2007), to inform the Building Learning Systems for Honduran Development Position Paper.
- Records insights from the project experience and lessons learned. Main points include the need to clarify CIDA expectations of the partnership from the outset and with new CIDA staff, the need to clarify the role of research in the project for CIDA staff, the value of communicating using RBM and the importance of appreciating the different institutional culture at CIDA.
- Notes the advantage of working with CIDA given intimate country level knowledge and networks.

IDRC, Middle East Unit's **"Note on a Discussion of Middle East Project Management Issues"** (January 2007).
- Addresses CIDA concerns about IDRC's management of the Middle East files under the Middle East Unit (MEU) from IDRC's perspective. The projects discussed are funded primarily by CIDA: the Expert and Advisory Services Fund (EASF) and the Middle East Good Governance Fund (MEGGF).
- Idea that note might serve as a basis for a future exchange on the major management issues as seen by CIDA, and inform the design of any future collaboration in order to improve the partnership between the two agencies.

2006
IDRC, GEH's Sharmila Mhatre documented the critical factors in the success of working with CIDA on the Nigeria Project – Evidence-based Health System Initiative in a brief note called **"Working with CIDA"** (October 2006).
- The note was prepared at the request of PBDD. The main steps for the collaboration are outlined and the reflection illustrates the value of sharing experiences across the Centre.

Gail Larose Consulting, prepared, for IDRC the **"Review of the Role of IDRC in the Scholarship Fund for Palestinian Refugee Women in Lebanon"** (February 2006).
- To inform the decision of whether IDRC should continue to manage the fund in 2010.

2005
IDRC, PPB's Tavinder Nijhawan compiled **"IDRC Experiences of Working with CIDA"** (December 2005)
- Summarizes the challenges of working with CIDA and provides examples of successful collaboration as identified by IDRC programs staff.
- Annex outlines a wish list of ideas to discuss for future IDRC-CIDA collaboration.

IDRC, PPG prepared **"Closer Collaboration between CIDA and IDRC: An Issues Paper"** (June 2005)
- Illustrates the history of repeated calls for improved collaboration between CIDA and IDRC.
- Suggests meeting of senior management representatives to negotiate ways to improve collaboration.

2001

IDRC, PBDD prepared "**Management of CIDA-IDRC Co-Funded Projects: Working to Make Development More Effective**" (October 2001) and discusses the results of the survey completed by both IDRC and CIDA staff. Proposes that CIDA and IDRC:

- "Seek a clear shared understanding between the two agencies on the principles that should underlie partnerships between the two agencies at the program and project level." (p.3)
- "Use the findings of the surveys in IDRC… to improve the operational working conditions, or remove obstacles to collaboration." (p.3)
- "Clarify for staff the respective mandate and roles of each organization, and the rationale for partnership, so that the complimentarity of the two organizations is underlined." (p.2)
- "Ensure better exchange of information between each organization on strategy, programs and ways of working." (p.2)

IDRC, Notes from a **Meeting of CIDA's Executive Committee and IDRC's Senior Management Committee** (October 2001). The results of a survey (May 2001) conducted by PBDD regarding the future of strategic partnership between CIDA and IDRC were discussed during the meeting.

- "… survey results indicate the main obstacle encountered by officers of both organizations is one of operations; this issue must be addressed to improve and strengthen future relationships." (p.2)
- Recommends: (p.3)
  - Further dissemination of the contribution agreement
  - Joint research/strategic agenda
  - Building an accountability framework that will be comfortable for both organizations

1998

Kappagoda, Nihal (IDRC consultant) **"Research for Development and Policy Research: The Roles of CIDA and IDRC**" (November 1998).

- Prepared following a consultancy that was undertaken at the request of IDRC to obtain a clearer picture of the degree and extent to which CIDA supported research for development and to examine the collaboration that exists between CIDA and IDRC in funding such research.
- The study noted collaboration on a number of projects and remarked on the differences between IDRC and CIDA.
- "Improving the modalities for collaboration has been a concern since the beginning but has not been addressed on an inter-agency basis." (p.3)

1996

IDRC, Sylvain Dufour of GAD funded a consultancy by Rodger Schwass on donor satisfaction with IDRC. "**Partner Satisfaction with IDRC's Management and Administration of Co-funded Projects**" (March 1996) highlights a few areas where CIDA has problems with IDRC project management.

- "Special attention needs to be given to the relationship with CIDA. While some projects are going very well, there was considerable criticism of IDRC, most of which seems to be attributable to incompatible accounting and management systems and lack of information." (p.7)

1991

IDRC/CIDA, "**An Evaluation of IDRC/CIDA Collaboration**" (September 1991)

- Recommendations: (p. IV)
  - That CIDA and IDRC agree on a statement of rationale for collaboration taking into account their respective mandates and priorities

- o That CIDA and IDRC review collaboration at a senior level on an annual basis
- o That effective information exchange systems be implemented
- o That the issue of collaboration be made a regular item on the agendas of regional meetings of both organizations
- o That seminars and information sessions be organized periodically to increase mutual understanding and present opportunities for cooperation

1990

IDRC/CIDA, "**A Handbook for IDRC/CIDA Collaboration**" (September 1990).
- A guide designed to assist IDRC staff in understanding CIDA's work and style. Provides some guidelines and considerations for CIDA/IDRC collaborative projects and information on CIDA policies, priorities and programs.
- A comparison guide to IDRC was also prepared for CIDA Program staff.

1989

Francoise P. Coupal/IDRC (IDRC/CIDA Liaison Officer), "**A Report on the State of IDRC/CIDA Collaboration**"
- Mentions lack of collaboration in the early days: in the 1970s collaboration was "primarily sporadic and ad-hoc." (p.2) "While there was a willingness and an interest in establishing complementary working relationships, there was a difficulty in cleanly delineating respective roles, and a wariness in moving too quickly to forge institutional or organic links while each institution was in the process of evolving along unchartered lines." (p.2)
- Mentions an agreement reached in 1981 between the Presidents of both organizations to define the common ground for future IDRC/CIDA collaboration. (p.1)
- Identifies areas for improvement: "Greater knowledge of each other's operations and activities combined with more frequent interaction between professional staff of both organizations will require continuous efforts on the part of both organizations." (p.1)
- Raises the importance of the creation of "mechanisms that support and motivate collaboration." (p.1)
- Four fundamental reasons to foster collaboration: (p.4)
  - o It has become "increasingly important that the respective actions of each organization become complementary."
  - o "Collaboration could be both positive and mutually beneficial."
  - o Through collaboration, "both organizations could increase their efficiency and effectiveness…"
  - o Collaboration could translate "into more effective development efforts in developing countries and in a more unified Canadian approach to supporting development activities."
- Recommendation: "A different kind of relationship will be required where creative bridges can be established between two distinct corporate structures and cultures which capitalize on the strengths rather than the weaknesses of the other." (p.17)
- Stresses the importance of "commitment from the top and from those on the front-line to render operational collaboration in a meaningful and systematic way." (p.18)

1988

Marc Van Ameringen (IDRC-Executive Office), "**Report on the Current State of IDRC/CIDA Collaboration**" (June 1988)
- Mentions joint IDRC/CIDA President's Committee Meetings during the mid-1980s, where detailed discussions and decisions were taken on the substance and form for future collaboration. (p.3)
- Identifies the "absence in each organization of knowledge about the other's mandate, organization and program of work" as one of the greatest impediments for collaboration. (p.12)

- Identifies a number of administrative barriers to collaboration, relative primarily to approval procedures in CIDA for collaborative projects with IDRC and to CIDA's "contractual agreement for Canadian Executing Agencies where the requirements for monitoring, reporting and evaluation are inappropriate for IDRC…" (p.14)

B. External

2006
Danielle Goldfarb and Stephen Tapp of the CD Howe Institute**, "How Canada Can Improve Its Development Aid: Lessons from Other Aid Agencies"** (April 2006).
- A comparison of Canada's aid policies and operations with practices of other respected aid agencies, the report offers suggestions for reform.
- Calls for CIDA to "draw more heavily on relevant external research from the IDRC, universities, think tanks, and multilateral and bilateral aid agencies." (p. 21)

2005
Government of Canada, **"Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World"** is a statement on international policy that was tabled in Parliament in April 2005.
- Provides an overview of Canada's role in international affairs and some of the main trends affecting our place in the world. The statement also includes more detailed chapters on our diplomatic, defence, development and commercial policies.
- In order to ensure coherence among aid and non-aid policies and activities that impact developing countries, the Government will "better integrate best practices and policy research from the world-renowned IDRC into CIDA policies and programming." (p.9)

2004
CIDA, **"Sustainable Development Strategy, 2004–2006: Enabling Change"**
- "CIDA will develop new and innovative approaches to working with fragile states in crisis, in the face of new global realities (e.g. by collaborating with partners such as DFAIT and IDRC)…" (p.51)

2001
Mestor Associates Canada, **"Review of IDRC Partnerships with Other Donors"** (October 2001). As a component of the review, the consulting team was asked to look at the relationship with CIDA and to make suggestions for managing the partnership in the future.
- Principal finding is that "the Centre should see [the relationship with CIDA] as a priority for future work, not only at the level of President and Senior Management, but also at the program staff level where the interactions are more frequent and sometimes less harmonious." (p. 36)
- The report recommends (p. 55):
  - Appointment of one of the Vice Presidents to have responsibility for coordinating IDRC's relationship with CIDA;
  - Appointment of a liaison officer to provide support in institutional dealings with CIDA.

1987
Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade, **"For Whose Benefit? Report on the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on Canada's Official Development Assistance Policies and Programs"**
- Committee recommends more effective collaboration: "We are anxious to see this lesson applied by encouraging practical ways for IDRC research to be built into and more effectively related to CIDA's development projects and programs…" (p.20)

- "…we recommend that the two institutions establish a staff exchange program and make greater efforts to use IDRC research in CIDA's human resource development projects." (p.20)
- "We further recommend that IDRC follow up actively with CIDA … to ensure the practical application of its research." (p.20)

CIDA, "**Canadian International Development Assistance to Benefit a Better World: Response of the Government of Canada to the Report by the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade, September 1987**"
- Report accepts – in principle - recommendation that CIDA and IDRC establish a staff exchange program and make greater efforts to use IDRC research in CIDA's human resource development projects.
- Report states that "The two agencies will facilitate exchanges of staff when needs coincide." (p.48)
- "IDRC will attempt to ensure that the findings of research projects undertaken with its assistance find a practical application." (p.48)
- "CIDA and IDRC will continue to consider opportunities to undertake joint projects." (p.48)

1975
CIDA, **"Strategy for International Development Cooperation 1975-1980"**
- Point 11.4 illustrates commitment to strengthen collaboration: "While the IDRC is a Crown Corporation financed from public funds, CIDA and the Centre will seek to strengthen the cooperation between them so that each can benefit increasingly from the activities and experiences of the other."

Annex 2. List of IDRC staff interviewed

Charaf Ahmimed
Elias Ayuk
Kafui Dansou
Tim Dottridge
Roula El-Rifai
David Glover
Brent Herbert-Copley
Sofia Mendez
Sharmila Mhatre
Lois Stevenson
Lorra Thompson
Raul Zelaya

1. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate this partnership experience with CIDA?

1	2	3	4	5
Failed partnership with unresolved challenges and few strengths	Weak partnership with a number of challenges	Average partnership with a balance of strengths and challenges	Productive partnership with few outstanding challenges	Extremely effective and successful partnership

Project Negotiation and Development

2. Who initiated this project? Did we approach CIDA, or did CIDA come to us?

3. Would you say the negotiation phase was short or long? Why?

4. Who was involved in the negotiation process (from IDRC and CIDA)?

5. Were any issues raised during the negotiation that were not well resolved and are now having/proceeded to have a negative impact on the implementation of the project?

6. Was there good collaboration with CIDA during the project design phase? Do you feel that a shared vision of project objectives was reached?

7. On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you think this project fits with your IDRC program objectives?

1	2	3	4	5
Complete lack of fit with program objectives	Somewhat lacking in fit with program objectives	Adequate fit with program objectives	Good fit with program objectives	Complete fit with program objectives

Project Implementation

8. During the implementation of the project, would you say there was open, frequent communication between CIDA and IDRC? A good working relationship? Why or why not?

9. Were there ever points of misunderstanding (*e.g. importance of research for development, concept of capacity building, etc.*)? How were these dealt with and who was involved (*IDRC senior management, PBDD, FAD, GAD and CIDA senior staff, field officers, etc.*)? Do you feel like these issues were well resolved?

10. While there were most likely highs and lows during the partnership, what were 3 strong aspects of the partnership with CIDA?

11. What were 3 main challenges with the partnership? Considering your experience working with other donors, would you say these challenges are particularly unique to a partnership with CIDA?

12. Finally, if you were to do this project again, what would you do differently to improve the collaboration with CIDA? What would you advise others to do or not do when working with CIDA?

Annex 4. Summary of findings from investigation of contribution agreements

IDRC Co-funding
- IDRC financial contribution – 9/9 projects

Project status
- Phase I – 7/9 projects
- Phase III – 2/9 projects

Donor(s)
- CIDA alone – 4/9 projects
- One or more other donors – 5/9 projects

Governance structure
- Wide variety of governance structures (see Table 1 below for details)

Administrative structure
- New office established or new staff hired – 4/9 projects

Roles and Responsibilities
- IDRC/CIDA roles articulated in contribution agreement – 5/9

Technical Reporting
- Annual workplan – 5/9 projects
- Annual progress/narrative report – 2/9 projects
- Semi-annual progress report – 7/9 projects
- Final Report: 9/9 projects

Financial Reporting
- Biannual reporting – 1/9 projects
- Quarterly reporting – 6/9 projects
- Annual reporting – 2/9 projects

Cost recovery
- 12% – 1/9 (EEPSEA phase III. Was 10% for phase II)
- 10% – 7/9
- 0% – 1/9 (Scholarship Fund project waived administrative costs)

Monitoring
- IDRC responsible for monitoring – 2/9 projects
- CIDA responsible for monitoring – 4/9 projects
- No detailed mention of monitoring responsibilities in agreement – 3/9 projects

Evaluation
- CIDA-managed external evaluation – 3/9 projects
- IDRC responsible for evaluation – 1/9 projects
- IDRC to prepare M&E activity reports – 1/9 projects (CIII2: years 2 to 5)
- No detailed mention of evaluation responsibilities in agreement – 4/9 projects

Table 1: Summary of highlights from contribution agreements for nine projects with CIDA co-funding

Project	Other donors	Governance structure	Administrative structure	Management procedures	Technical reporting	Financial reporting	Cost recovery	Monitoring and evaluation
100133 - Building Learning Systems for Honduras *Grant Arrangement	No	Project led by IDRC in collaboration with the Pro-Mesas team (includes CIDA).	New office set up in Honduras. Hired 2 full time staff in Honduras to oversee project activities.	IDRC responsible for supervising project and communicating progress to CIDA. Managed by RPE PI, with support from POs in Ottawa and LAC. Activity approval process, accountability framework and performance review of IDRC used to manage budget and staff. Role of IDRC briefly outlined in arrangement. Limited detail regarding CIDA role.	+ Annual narrative report (rare but was negotiated to allow for a more comprehensive reporting.) + Final project report	+ Annual financial report	10%	Collaborative - CIDA monitoring through participation in IDRC field monitoring visits and project review meetings. Inform and provide CIDA with copy of evaluation.
102172 - Canadian International Immunization Initiative (CIII2)	Part of GHRI and other partners	GHRI Immunization sub-committee formed in 2003 with representatives from 4 GHRI partners. Outreach to eligible researchers, participate in the review and project selection process.	Part of GEH program. Consultant support for administration hired by IDRC in consultation with GHRI subcommittee.	Project will be managed by IDRC on behalf of GHRI and GHRI Immunization Research Subcommittee. Roles not outlined in agreement.	+ Annual narrative reports + Knowledge translation/ dissemination activity reports in years 3 to 5 +Monitoring and evaluation activity reports in years 2 to 5	+ Annual financial report	10%	Monitoring and evaluation activity reports in years 2 to 5.
003591- Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA) Phase III	SIDA Sponsor's group of key donors	Sponsor's group meets annually. CIDA a member. Approves the annual workplan and budget. Advisory Committee of senior scholars and policy makers.	IDRC responsible for coordinating and managing project through a steering committee.	IDRC responsible for project implementation Roles outlined briefly in agreement.	+ Annual workplan and budget forecast. + January and July newsletter covering highlights of previous 6 months (instead of semi-annual progress report). + Annual narrative report following RBM format. + Final narrative report. + Reports prepared by EEPSEA for submission through IDRC to CIDA.	+ Quarterly financial report + Annual financial report + Final financial report	12% Past phases were 10%.	CIDA responsibilities include monitoring the implementation and strategic direction of the project. CIDA will independently manage an external evaluation of the project.

Table 1: Summary of highlights from contribution agreements for nine projects with CIDA co-funding

Project	Other donors	Governance structure	Administrative structure	Management procedures	Technical reporting	Financial reporting	Cost recovery	Monitoring and evaluation
102111 - Evaluation of Poverty Reduction Strategies (PARSEP)	No	Unique structure designed to ensure national groups have decision making power and voice. Includes: + Comite de suivi-pays + Comité conjoint regional + Comité de consultation ACDI-CRDI	New office set up in Ouagadougou to coordinate the project.	IDRC in charge of managing the project but measures to ensure significant collaboration with partners. Roles well articulated in agreement.	+Annual work plan + Semi-annual report on outcomes + Annual report on project outcomes + Minutes of meetings + Final project report	+ Quarterly financial report	10%	CIDA to manage the mid-project evaluation.
100971 - Expert/Advisory Services Fund (EASF) Phase III	No	Consultative Committee (CC) formed with representative of CIDA as chair, FAC as a member and IDRC as a member and secretary. CIDA retains ultimate approval authority.	Part of Middle East Unit of SID.	IDRC responsible for day-to-day management of project. Project selection and travel must be approved by CC on a case-by-case basis. *"CIDA has ultimate authority in the approval of activity/sub-project work plans and annual works plans submitted to the CC."* Roles briefly outlined in agreement.	+ Semi-annual progress report. + RBM framework for reporting.	+ Quarterly financial report + Annual financial report	10%	IDRC to monitor and report on project implementation. CIDA commissioned an external evaluation in 2006, and IDRC contested the evaluator's conclusions. Document is still not finalized as an agreement has yet to be reached.
102872 - Middle East Good Governance (MEGG) Fund	No	Consultative Committee (CC) with representative of CIDA as chair, FAC as a member and IDRC as a member and secretary. CIDA retains ultimate approval authority.	Integrated with EASF group. Staff fees covered by both CIDA and IDRC funds.	IDRC responsible for overall implementation and management of Fund. Projects must be approved by CC and, ultimately, by CIDA. Specific roles outlined in agreement.	+ Semi-annual and annual narrative reports. + End-of-project report	+ Quarterly financial report + Annual financial report	10%	IDRC monitors projects. CIDA will monitor the overall Fund progress and management. No mention of evaluation process.
100486 - Scholarship Fund for Palestinian Women in Lebanon	Several other donors	Bids received and reviewed by a joint ad hoc committee from CIDA, DFAIT and IDRC. Project oversight provided by an international committee of donors. IDRC as holder of funds will	Part of Middle East Unit of SID.	IDRC responsible for administering project in accordance with own policies, rules and practices. Project must be implemented according to CIDA's RBM framework. IDRC oversees UNRWA's coordination of the program.	+ Biannual narrative reports + Final report + Evaluation report after year 4 + IDRC also supervises the reports developed by	+ Biannual financial reports + Final financial report	IDRC waived its usual admin-istration fee.	CIDA-hired external evaluation conducted in 2007. IDRC hired outside consultant to conduct a review of IDRC's role in 2005.

Table 1: Summary of highlights from contribution agreements for nine projects with CIDA co-funding

Project	Other donors	Governance structure	Administrative structure	Management procedures	Technical reporting	Financial reporting	Cost recovery	Monitoring and evaluation
		ensure project is well managed by UNRWA.		Roles not defined in agreement	UNRWA.			
100168 - Small and Medium Enterprise Policy (SMEPol) Development Project	Parallel funding from the Government of Egypt	Project Steering Committee (PSC) of IDRC, CIDA and Government of Egypt representatives. Provides overall direction and approves annual workplans. Project Management Committee (PMC) involving all 3 partners. Review progress, discuss future directions, provide advice and review workplans. SMEPol Research and Policy Advisory Committee advises on direction of research agenda.	New staff hired: Research Coordinator; MSME Specialists, Senior Specialist, Advisor; Administrative assistants and driver. Project administered from MERO and staff embedded within Ministry.	PIP to detail activities and responsibilities of all project partners. Start-up involves establishing necessary management structures, recruitment of staff. Roles not defined in agreement.	+ Semi-annual project progress report + Annual workplan + Annual project progress report + Final project report	+ Quarterly financial accounting reports	10%	CIDA hired mid-term external evaluation.
101806 - Water Demand Initiative (WADIMENA)	IFAD Indirect and in-kind contribution from JICA and GTZ	Project Steering Committee to advise and govern strategic direction. Meets annually or more often if needed. Applied Research/Scientific Committee (ARSC) to screen pre-proposals, provide comments to proposal, review progress reports and give technical expertise.	Part of RPE program and administered from MERO. Hired a full-time team of 3. Project Coordinator, Research Assistant, Project Administrator.	WadiMENA coordinated by IDRC in partnership with CIDA and IFAD. Role for IDRC well articulated in agreement. Less detail regarding CIDA role.	+ Annual work plan + Annual narrative performance report + End of project report + Copies of research reports	+ Quarterly financial reporting + Annual financial report	10%	External evaluation mid 2006. IDRC Project Coordinator responsible for ongoing monitoring.