

# ***CODE Program Evaluation***

## ***Final Report***

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## ***CODE Program Evaluation Executive Summary***

CODE is a Canadian non governmental organization (NGO) that supports literacy in a dozen or more countries by providing donated books and by developing environments for literacy, including community and school libraries, support for indigenous publishing, and training. The purpose of this evaluation was to examine the results of CODE's program since 1991 and help shape the new program submission so that future program performance can be enhanced. The evaluation is a cooperative endeavour of Universalialia, the Evaluation Division of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), CODE and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

All of the various stakeholders assisted with the evaluation by sharing, collecting or analyzing data, by reacting to drafts of this report, and by participating in the analysis of findings and interpreting them in the light of CODE's evolving program. Data were collected using face-to-face and telephone interviews, analysis of documents and data bases including prior baseline studies and impact assessments, and field studies in two countries. The report includes two extensive separate studies of CODE's programs in Ethiopia and Kenya. Extreme weather prevented the Kenya team from visiting CODE's major program site in the Marsabit area, limiting the scope of data collected. While the material within the report has benefited from the contributions of all stakeholders, Universalialia takes full responsibility for the report itself and any errors or omissions it may contain.

Readers should understand that this evaluation is the first to probe an NGO's program for community level impact within the framework of a Results Based Management (RBM) approach. Given that RBM is a framework that is still at an early stage of development for NGO programs supported by CIDA, this evaluation assesses CODE's program against criteria which did not exist until very recently. Therefore one of the purposes of the evaluation, and thus its emphasis on adherence to RBM, is to help CODE better understand its program performance and to outline a path for future improvement.

### ***Results of CODE's Program***

The general conclusions on results are:

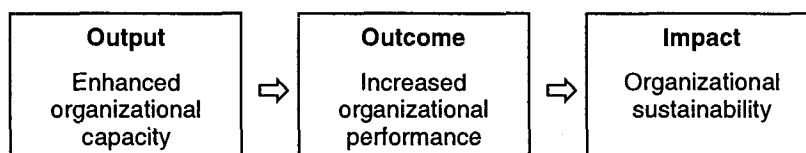
- CODE has generally achieved its targeted outputs.
- CODE has focused on program delivery of goods and services to achieve outputs rather than on more developmental strategies that might lead to higher level results.
- The program mixes and confuses various units of development change, so it is difficult to link programming to specified development targets.

## Results Chains

One major contribution of the evaluation analysis was the joint CODE/Universalia clarification of results chains for CODE's program. The clarification of the three results chains was used to analyze CODE's program over the past six years. The team identified the following three clear, though overlapping results chains:

- 1) Results in support of organizations in developing countries that also have a mission linked to literacy.
- 2) Results in support of literacy environments.
- 3) Results in support of individuals in Canada and in selected developing countries.

### 1. In support of organizations

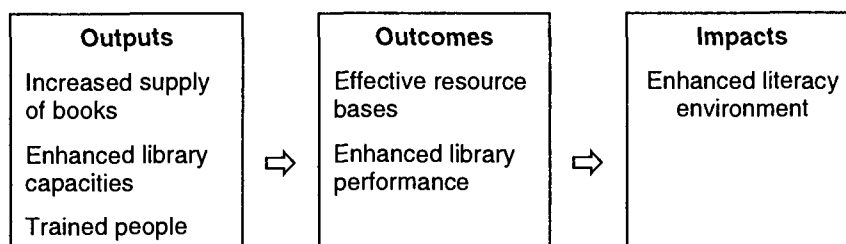


Given their diverse profiles and the challenging environment in which they operate, CODE has made significant progress in the way it works with and enhances the organizational capacities, performance and sustainability of its partners. Nonetheless, the analysis of the first results chain - support of organizations in developing countries, revealed that some of CODE's partners have extremely limited prospects of becoming sustainable literacy organizations independent of CODE.

Other partners – such as the National Library Service in Malawi, Progresso in Mozambique, and the Zambia Library Service – have their own mandates and resources, and characterize organizational units of change that are of the type that warrant continued support. Such partners should be viewed as a logical end point for CODE's assistance, with results measured in terms of the positive changes that CODE is able to make to such organizations.

A third group of partners are less established groups, or organizations essentially created by CODE to serve as implementation agents for CODE's donated North American books. Although some of these organizations will continue to be appropriate to CODE's work, they should be viewed as a means of achieving results in the other two domains (literacy environments and individuals) rather than as development targets *per se*.

## 2. In support of literacy environments (books, community and school libraries, human resources)

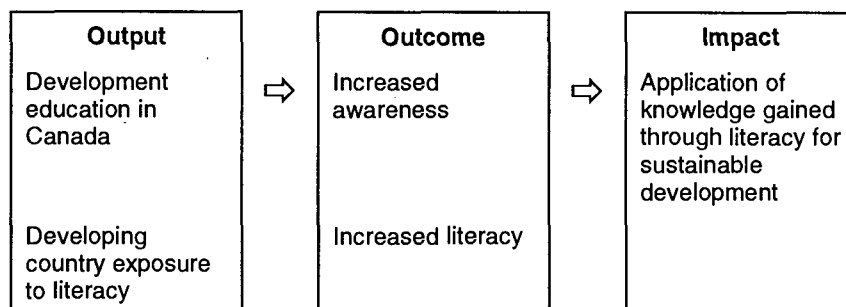


There are four dimensions of the second results chain – support of literacy environments: a) books, b) community libraries, c) school libraries, and d) human resources.

- a) CODE has distributed about 3.4 million donated North American books in the past six years, and has supported the production of over 1 million locally produced materials in the last three years (the only period for which these data are easily available). This has increased the availability and diversity of books, which is one of CODE's agreed outputs. However, there are not valid data on the situation before CODE arrived, nor is it easy to compare planned and actual deliveries due to a lack of clear definitions. Furthermore, the outcome of an effective resource base is not being achieved because the books have been dispersed so widely. The majority of libraries supported by CODE during the period have less than one book per three potential users, far below the UNESCO standard of three books per capita. Finally, the goal of a sustainable and expanding resource base is not being achieved in most communities.
- b) CODE has supported a wide range of community libraries, but even at the output level, many continue to face chronic resource constraints. Outcomes are hard to assess due to a lack of standards and/or benchmarks and the intended impact of sustainability is, for most community libraries, a distant prospect.
- c) School libraries have the advantage of being linked to a reference group of children and youth. CODE has supported many with marked improvement to pupil's access to books. Indeed, if it were not for the books supplied by CODE, many of the involved children would lack books in both their schools and in their lives. In general, at the outcome level, the books in the schools we studied have not led to demonstrable educational results, largely due to the many intervening contextual factors found in schooling in developing countries. This finding can be partially attributed to the fact that the evaluation was not supported by a detailed study on educational results for school libraries, but can also be attributed to the differing degree of support CODE gives to libraries. CODE's support ranges from donating to school libraries as little as a box of books to a significant critical mass, with the volume of books related to the impact on the literacy environment. Nonetheless, despite CODE's varying degrees of support to school libraries, and although CODE's program does not purport to target and improve the teaching/learning relationship in schools, the prospects for sustainability in the libraries of most disadvantaged schools still do not remain very high.

- d) CODE has also delivered a great deal of training since 1995 – over 11,000 days of training involving more than 1,000 literacy workers. Training varies by the values of the involved partners and attrition of trained people is a pervasive problem, but the results of training on libraries and literacy are positive.

### 3. In support of individuals



The third results chain, support of individuals, includes a Canadian component called Project Love which continues to be an appropriate and creative way to involve Canadian school children and their teachers in development education; the project is evolving in interesting ways. In terms of individual beneficiaries in the developing world, results are dependent on success in the other two results chains, particularly the second (support of literacy environments). The program has done a poor job of reaching some of its intended beneficiaries such as adults with less than six years of schooling and women, and there is no evidence in the data collected by this evaluation – or other impact studies that CODE has commissioned – of any measurable impact such as improved examination performance of students.

### *Development Factors*

The evaluation examined the various development factors considered by CIDA in its performance reviews of programs. CODE's program is viewed as relevant to both CIDA's priorities and the needs of partners and partner countries, as it addresses basic human needs, focuses on the poorest of the poor, and attempts to include the special needs of women in development. There are, however, issues related to the appropriateness of CODE's programming. Given the diverse range of partners, programs and communities that CODE works with, a strategy that provides tight coupling between the type of programming provided and a clear articulation of results with specified units of change would help make CODE's programming more appropriate.

In addition, CODE's program focus on providing resources (i.e. North American donated books) may not be taking sufficient account of what has been learned about sustainable development. Again, the mix of program resources in some settings could be improved. With regards to sustainability CODE has been successful with its partners in a few instances, but typically partner organizations at both national and local levels continue their dependence on CODE. There is also the reality that libraries take many years before they can reach the stage of development where they can sustain themselves. Clearer programming focus on organizations as opposed to individuals may be helpful in supporting sustainable development in such contexts.

CODE does however, have a sound and improving approach to partnership that is well-suited to the goal of creating sustainable local organizations through mutually beneficial relationships, however more emphasis must be placed on developing a clear conceptual framework in which to work with its partners. Finally, leveraging has taken place, but it tends to be relatively modest, raising potential issues about CIDA support.

### ***Management Factors***

Management factors were also considered in the evaluation. Cost effectiveness is problematic in two areas: 1) management systems have not generally identified discrete program component costs or linked them to corresponding results, so cost effectiveness cannot be ascertained, and 2) management costs are high because of multi-levels of management. CODE is addressing this matter by trying to tighten the coupling between program strategy and resources thereby making it easier to separate effects and costs. Planning also suffers from the previous limitation with the lack of clear and agreed upon units of change, both organizationally and geographically, making it difficult to plan for results. Program implementation is being managed for outputs, but not higher level results -- creating systems that support capacity development, but pay much less attention to enhancing performance of partner organizations.

Monitoring and evaluation have been limited by unclear conceptualizations of units of change and a lack of potentially rich and culturally appropriate qualitative data. Although CODE has been a leader among Canadian NGOs in attempting to analyze impact at the community level through conducting locally-produced impact studies, these studies could be better used by employing common frameworks that enable aggregation of results and lessons learned. Human resources are being managed effectively, and CODE has a suitable governance structure with the possible exception of local advisory committees which may need re-thinking should the strategy implicit in the recommendations be implemented. Finally, CODE's programs continue to be creative and innovative and CODE is continually exploring the implications of changes in the book publishing industry and what CODE should do with technological alternatives.

### ***Recommendations***

The challenge for CODE is to decide whether it wants to continue on the course it has followed in the past or make a major strategic shift. Given the possibilities and the conclusions of this evaluation, we make five recommendations:

1. CODE should clarify its development strategy, especially whether it sees itself continuing in the business of program delivery as opposed to the more difficult approaches of capacity development.
2. CODE should conceptualize its results chains more clearly and define program inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts that are linked to identified units of change.
3. CODE should become more strategic in its choice of partner organizations and in so doing, clarify the degree to which the intent of involvement is to develop the partner organization as a means of supporting literacy in a sustainable way, or to implement CODE's program in targeted literacy environments.

4. CODE's support for literacy environments should be based on clearly defined geographic areas and a concentration of resources that would enable each area to achieve defined standards of literacy infrastructure within a specified number of years.
5. CODE should continue to research the impact of its programs on individuals and manage programs to target defined groups of relevant disadvantaged people.

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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

The Canadian Organization for Development through Education [now known simply by its acronym (CODE)] began in 1959 as the Overseas Book Centre, where a group of volunteers collected, sorted, and shipped surplus Canadian books to developing countries. CODE has grown from an organization that simply supplies donated books to one that encourages the creation of sustainable literate environments in the developing world. To that end, CODE's programming is designed to make available printed material to children aged up to 15 years, and adults with six or fewer years of education.

In addition to book distribution, CODE has financed a variety of education and literacy projects ranging from support for development of community libraries to support for indigenous publishing. For example, Project Love is an initiative that links Canadian school children with those of developing countries by involving Canadian children in packaging basic kits including a notebook and pencil which are distributed to children in developing countries. The project serves as a tool to increase awareness of Canadians to the challenges faced by those in developing countries.

CIDA has invested \$19.6 million in CODE over the past seven years. The current program is designed to support sustainable, literate environments in 12 developing countries as well as development education in Canada. The program strategy involves intervention in geographic areas with low levels of literacy, partnerships with Southern organizations, and commodity provision. CODE describes the objectives of the program this way:

As a result of the program:

- the target group will be able to use printed materials more independently for educational, informational and recreational purposes;
- a sustainable effective and expanding resource base will be developed to support the promotion of a literate environment in the developing countries;
- more Canadians will become aware of development with particular emphasis on literacy; and
- CODE is able to manage effectively with existing resources.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Evaluation**

CIDA's Partnership Branch has pioneered efforts to understand its development partners through organizational assessments which have been instrumental in determining the nature of program funding for many non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To date the major emphasis has been on organizational capacity development which should lead to improved performance. This evaluation has shifted the focus from the organization to its programs, and specifically, program results.

Over the past several years, CIDA has embarked on an ambitious exploration of performance through Results Based Management (RBM). This evaluation has afforded the opportunity for Partnership Branch to examine the program of one of its significant development partners to learn about performance through an NGO.

As CIDA increases its focus on results, there is more and more interest in program impacts. In our experience, CODE has done more than most NGOs to document baseline status of communities with which it is working, and this evaluation offers a unique opportunity to consider program impact and the ways in which it can be understood and measured.

This evaluation has been conducted by Universalialia in partnership with the Evaluation Division of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) with whom it has been working for several years. Before the CODE evaluation process was underway, IDRC had expressed interest in participating in its field component. Universalialia invited IDRC to take part as a sub-contractor and has benefited from this partnership which has explored and tested new approaches to evaluation.

The evaluation has been guided by a Steering Committee that agreed on the following purposes for the evaluation:

- To document the achievements, constraints, and lessons learned from the last six years (1991/92-1994/95 and 1995/96-1997/98) of CODE's international program supported by CIDA's Canadian Partnership Branch
- To assess CODE's program in terms of CIDA's results based management framework and key management and development factors
- To provide data and analysis on the results of CODE's work in two countries, Kenya and Ethiopia
- To help Partnership Branch to understand the dynamic of evaluation for results in its development context
- To provide information to assist CODE in preparing its program submission within the RBM CIDA context
- To provide CIDA with a basis for informed decisions regarding funding of the upcoming program proposal
- To assist CODE and its partners to strengthen their results-based management for the next program submission

The evaluation is intended to provide both CIDA and CODE with an independent analysis of the trends and directions that CODE has taken during the last six years, while also making available specific details and information to assist in the process of collaborative learning that has been embarked upon.

## 1.3 Overview of CODE's Program

### 1.3.1 Program Context

CODE's program seeks to address the lack of literate/literacy sustaining environments in selected developing countries (currently 12). Underpinning this program is the belief that literacy allows for an educated and informed population that can better steer a society's course towards needed changes and social justice. As CODE states in its 1995 Program Submission:

*Literacy has come to be an essential tool for bringing about human development and basic changes in social and economic systems. As such, it is considered a prerequisite for sustainable development. Thus in the broadest sense, CODE aspires to increase acquisition by families and individuals of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living and sound sustainable development (CODE Program Submission, 20, 1995).*

Understanding the diverse challenges that CODE faces must evolve from an understanding of the people its program attempts to serve, and the places and contexts in which its program operates. The following section focuses on different aspects of these contexts as they relate to CODE's relationship with CIDA and its partner organizations and countries.

The philosophy of development and the attitude towards fostering social and economic change in countries of the South have undergone profound shifts in the last decade. The need to support vital issues such as gender and the environment has been recognized, and has been integrated, with varying degrees of effectiveness, into development programs. A greater importance has also been placed on developing participatory and integrated approaches to social change. Similarly, there has been an increased awareness of the benefits of investing in sustainable organizational units rather than individuals. While Northern NGOs may once have played leadership roles in promoting these values and innovative approaches, Southern development organizations are at least equally active in this regard. This effectively increases demands from Southern partners on Northern organizations to go beyond the basics of development and to develop an identifiable niche.

Watching through the ever-shifting kaleidoscope of development theories, CIDA has opted to give freedom to each of its partner organizations to choose and develop its own focus. These development concentrations, however, must be within CIDA's mandate in order to receive funding. For organizations seriously committed to helping communities meet basic human needs, there is a continuing debate around whether sustainable change, which yields fewer and slower results, costs more than non-sustainable "quick fixes" or whether sustainable costs would be significantly less if applied appropriately. Over the past 6 years CODE's programming has evolved to successfully address this same debate.

In assessing the results achieved by CODE, the last extensive outside evaluation, executed by the Hickling Corporation in 1990, states that the "general good level of efficiency and effectiveness of CODE's program/projects is such that in almost all cases

positive impact can be claimed” (Hickling, I,15,1990). However, the evaluation goes on to state that impact is complex and therefore, difficult to measure. CODE can, at most, be said to contribute to a strong post-literacy environment, but its activities cannot be seen as a panacea to illiteracy and its auxiliary problems. As Hickling notes, “the material being published with CODE support is not for core literacy programs. It is more in the area of ‘post-literacy’...as such, direct literacy impact assessment is not available” (Hickling, I, 12, 1990). The question of results inevitably disturbs the hornet’s nest issue of impact. This report looks at how CODE measures impact and also at how impact should best be measured (i.e. should it be measured in terms of organizations, communities and/or individuals)? The evaluation also addresses the more subtle problem of determining what kinds of results are reasonable for the cost of CIDA’s investment.

CODE’s strategy, as Hickling has noted, has been “to concentrate activities and investments so that they have an effect on specific target groups. These target groups may not, in themselves, be large in population but [they are] still influential as pattern setters...although the impact is not broad and societal, it is significant in terms of specific target groups (Hickling, I, 8, 1990).”

Socio-political factors that may impede CODE in obtaining its objectives include:

- real spending on education is declining in many of their target countries as governments and agencies wage battle against the results of falling economies;
- poverty of parents and children does not allow for spending on books other than textbooks; and spending of money on school uniforms rather than text books is an issue.
- World Bank/IMF Structural Adjustment Programs are making access to education among poorer groups within society less possible;
- low rates of literacy which are continuing to fall;
- few resources are being devoted to adult basic education;
- population growth continues to be a major factor in increasing illiteracy as the demand for literacy programs continues to outstrip resources;
- few trained librarians and inadequate school libraries; and
- educators are not book-oriented and fail to inculcate good reading habits.

### **1.3.2 CODE’s Beneficiaries**

CODE’s beneficiaries can be classified as individuals and organizations. The primary targeted individual beneficiaries are CODE’s two target groups: children to age 15, and adults with six or fewer years of education. Special attention is given to subgroups within these categories identified as deprived populations in either rural or urban settings. Wherever possible, programming seeks in particular to advance the needs and participation of women and girls, given their centrality to social development and the cultural, economic and physical barriers to their full participation in both formal and informal learning processes. Children and newly literate adults benefit by being exposed

to a diversity of literacy-promoting/supporting materials through school and community libraries. They are provided with the opportunity to reinforce their literacy skills and to develop reading and information-seeking habits. Of course, CODE does not target these priority groups to the exclusion of others. CODE-supported library facilities are also used by community members outside CODE's target groups. Agricultural extension workers, health staff, teachers, local administration staff and secondary school students over the age of 15 also take advantage of reading and reference materials available in community libraries.

Organizational beneficiaries include a range of public, private and voluntary organizations responsible for the delivery of education sector support. One of the main themes of CODE's integrated program is strengthening these two types of existing actors working to improve the literate environment. This is achieved through financial and material contributions, organizational development, and training support to specific institutions and their programming activities. This means that assisting school and community libraries as well as book publishing and selling entities improves the quantity and quality of their service to CODE's target groups. Libraries are strengthened through provision of books and training of library attendants. Of course, individuals as well as organizations benefit from this work. Librarian-assistants and teachers benefit from training and equipment that enables them to perform their duties more effectively. Publishers are supported through book purchases and publishers and their staff benefit from training in different aspects of book publishing and distribution.

### **1.3.3 Partnership with CODE**

CODE has developed successful partnerships both overseas and in Canada to ensure that its literacy programs are effectively delivered. CODE works with local partners in 15 countries overseas to promote and support "sustainable literacy environments" and with communities across Canada who deliver *Project Love* - CODE's development education program that raises awareness about literacy and development issues among Canadian school children.

CODE has partnerships with both formally recognized non-government organizations at the national level and informal groups at the community level. Over the past 6 years, CODE has developed different types of partnerships to meet its programming needs. These partners are either 1) organizations who share a like mission with CODE and therefore implement literacy programming with leveraging from CODE, thereby acting as an end for CODE (i.e. Malawi National Library Service, Zambia Library Service) and 2) organizations who act as delivery agents and implement CODE's programming as a means to achieve the end (CODE-Ethiopia, Tanzania Book Program).

At present, CODE is part of a network of 11 national non-government agencies from 10 countries. CODE supports this group of local partners by strengthening their capability to create a literate environment on a sustainable basis. In countries where CODE has a geographic focus, communities are involved in problem identification, needs analysis, generation of solutions, project design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation functions. A participatory process has been adopted in order to increase the abilities of the community to guide and shape their own development beyond the life of the project.



An essential part of CODE's decentralization towards the direct funding of local partners is the establishment of Local Advisory Committees (LAC's) in core countries. LAC's are for the most part made up of experienced nationals who play an active role in the design and review of CODE's programs. They provide valuable advice on national priorities and literacy issues, gain the support of people in the communities and ensure that stakeholder's needs and opinions are represented in the development of CODE's overall program strategy. Inclusion of individuals from participating countries on CODE's Board also ensures timely and pertinent inputs into CODE policies. Stakeholders in the decision-making process is also to enhance a better understanding of the needs of the target population.

CODE has also successfully involved government officials and local government departments with their programs and LACs, resulting in strengthened partnerships and more active community participation. Hickling noted that the "structure of LACs and counterparts, including the participation of individuals coming from a diversity of backgrounds and locations is one way CODE attempts to obtain project coherence between national and local needs (Hickling, II, 41, 1990)." However, while such partner groups can assure relevance to local needs, they are by no means a guarantee of success.

The approach that CODE takes towards working with its partners in the South mirrors that which CIDA takes with regard to its own partner organizations: the ultimate goal is self-sufficiency for the counterpart. In order to best meet this goal, CODE has developed a portfolio of partnerships, each specifically geared to affect change and promote sustainability in different target areas according to their specific needs and niches.

For example, CODE maintains that most programs, particularly those in the publishing development area, must be viewed as very long-term ventures which must go through a lengthy growth/maturity phase before they can begin to focus on self-sufficiency and complete cost-recovery. They would therefore require a partner who was able to support that type of long-term development towards self-sufficiency. Sustainability, CODE has concluded, can only be tested once programs have been commissioned to project holders; this, in turn, can only be accomplished if CODE identifies and makes efforts to maintain clearly stated exit points for its programs.

The criteria observed by CODE for entering into a partnership include that:

- it be mutually beneficial;
- there be compatible missions, goals and similar values;
- partnership will tangibly improve the effectiveness of programming;
- autonomy and financial independence of each is maintained;
- accountability to each other is created;
- collaborative planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating is agreed.

#### **1.3.4 CODE's Targeted Countries**

Since 1990/91, CODE has worked with 15 countries of which 12 are still involved. Each of the countries with which CODE works demonstrates different conditions of

literate environments. Exhibit 1.1 outlines the length of time that CODE has been providing or funding literacy programs with each partner country as well as an estimated rate of illiteracy.

**Exhibit 1.1 Countries Involved with CODE Programs in the period 1990-1998**

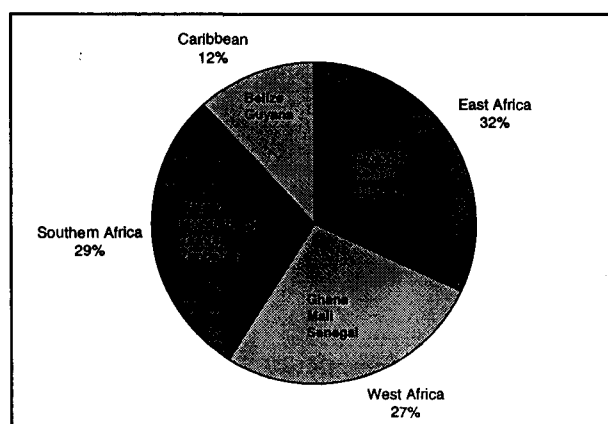
COUNTRY	NUMBER OF YEARS IN WHICH CODE HAS BEEN ACTIVE	ADULT LITERACY RATES: 15YRS + (1997)
Belize	11	70.0%
Burkina Faso	Involved in 1992	
Ethiopia	11	34.5%
Ghana	9	63.4%
Guinea	Involved 1990-92	
Guyana	11	97.9%
Kenya	14	77.0%
Malawi	10	55.8%
Mali	12	29.3%
Mozambique	8	39.5%
Senegal	11	32.1%
Tanzania	12	66.8%
Uganda	Involved 1990-94	
Zambia	6	76.6%
Zimbabwe	9	84.7%

\*Source: UNDP Human Development Report 1997

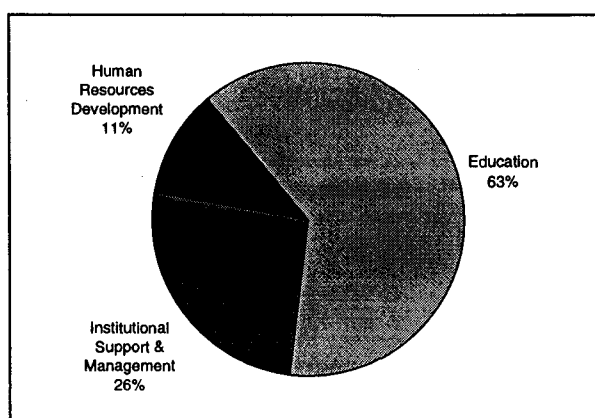
The approximate percentage of financial resources devoted to each region during the 1995-98 programming period is indicated in Exhibit 1.2.

The approximate percentage of financial resources devoted to the three sectoral areas covered by CODE's current three year program are broken down in Exhibit 1.3.

**Exhibit 1.2 Financial Resources by Region**



**Exhibit 1.3 Financial Resources by Area**



In order for CODE resources to be best used for meaningful and observable impact, “priority was given to “extra-rural” areas, i.e. communities where lack of information is a significant stumbling block to human development” (CODE Program Submission, 2, 1995). In accordance with this priority, a geographical focus was placed on rural sub-regions in the following five countries during the 1995-98 programming period:

- Ethiopia                      *Illubabor and Jimma Zones of Region 4*
- Kenya                      *Marsabit District*
- Tanzania                      *Regions of Lindi, Ruvuma and Mtwara*
- Senegal                      *Pikine*
- Mozambique                      *Province of Cabo Delgado*
- Guyana                      *Rupununi (hinterland)*
- Senegal                      *Pikine (disadvantaged urban area)*

### **1.3.5 Library Development**

CODE’s belief has been that the provision of appropriate reading materials, whether produced locally or imported from North America, must be accompanied by an infrastructure that will ensure that books are used effectively. Research commissioned by CODE has demonstrated that after the availability of schoolbooks, one of the most important factors in learning at all levels and thus, in basic education, is time spent in a learning environment. Thus, CODE supports public libraries as it believes this to be one of the most economical means by which a community can be supplied with continuous, free printed material. It should be noted, however, that in the context of CODE’s literacy programming, there are differing degrees of libraries. In some countries, CODE supplies a box of books or fills a library shelf with books, making a small contribution to the targeted literacy environment. In other countries, CODE books provide a significant critical mass which in turn, contributes greatly to the literacy environment. These differences are important to understand when we talk about CODE’s library development activities and their impact.

#### ***Community Libraries***

CODE has assessed that, for the most part in its partner countries, information reaching rural communities is inadequate to support the development process. Strengthening community libraries is a major part of improving access to and use of printed materials. Effective grassroots development is often rooted in community initiatives such as CODE’s community libraries, and is sometimes more limited in formal institutions such as government regulated schools. CODE’s support of community libraries encourages local involvement in planning and delivering relevant community learning. CODE’s community libraries also provide a learning environment and access to materials for adult learners; learners who are not necessarily part of the formal education system.

#### ***School Libraries***

The Development Assistance Committee for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has stated in its 1996 Report that:

*Among the first priorities for future action should also be to raise the quality of schooling...A pilot survey of schooling in least developed countries, conducted by UNICEF and UNESCO, illustrates critical situations in some countries [including] schools without textbooks (DAC Report 1996).*

CODE has provided reference material—encyclopedias, dictionaries and atlases—to rural and school libraries, thus contributing to their expansion and development.

### **1.3.6 Project Love**

Project Love, which began on St. Valentine's Day 1988, "encourages Canadian school children to become involved in a global community service during St. Valentine's week." (CODE Annual Report 1993-94, p. 1). It provides an opportunity for Canadian school children to learn about developing countries and participate in a "hands-on" way in development activities by providing school supply kits to children in a developing country.

As part of the Project Love experience, Canadian school children study the country to which the kits will be sent (either as part of the school curriculum or an addition to it), raise funds for the contents of the kits (which consists of a pencil, an eraser, a notebook, and a ruler), assemble the kits, and write a personal letter to a child in the developing country to be included in the kit. Responses to the letters are usually made by the recipients of the kits, which at times include pictures. Longer-term relationships may develop through pen pal associations. Through involvement in the Project, it is hoped that increased awareness of literacy issues in developing countries is instilled in the participating Canadian children, their teachers and parents, as well as other Canadians through media exposure of Project Love activities. Project Love also provides recipient children with school implements for them to better participate at school. The general objectives of the program are found in Exhibit 1.4 below.

#### **Exhibit 1.4 General Objectives of Project Love**

1. To foster awareness among Canadian elementary school children of the importance of sustainable development in the Third World through participation in a hands-on learning experience that provides them with the opportunity to contribute to enriching the educational opportunities of a student in another country.
2. To facilitate an on-going, active exchange between children in Canada and the Third World.
3. To provide a vehicle through which Canadian communities may become more aware of the importance of education in the development of individual communities.
4. To provide an opportunity for Third World students in Canada and Canadians with Third World experience to play an important role in publicising development issues.
5. To focus on Canada's role in the developing world and to provide ways in which individual Canadians, especially elementary school children, can support this role.

## 1.4 Methodology

### 1.4.1 Introduction

Our approach to the generation of information for this study has been to work closely with CODE and its development partners to create a detailed, living portrait of CODE's program in the context of its various environments. During the initial phases of this study, the methodology underwent several shifts and changes, in consultation with CODE and CIDA, in order to ensure the greatest possible accuracy and depth in the data solicited. Details of the methodology are found in the Evaluation Workplan (Revised – January, 1998) and in the materials and report pertaining to the Workshop held in Nairobi, January 11-13, 1998.

This section presents the major methodological components.

### 1.4.2 Overview

Key components of the evaluation are listed and described in Exhibit 1.5.

#### Exhibit 1.5 Summary of Evaluation Components

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
Work plan	Universalialia developed several drafts of work plans which were discussed with a Steering Committee that included CIDA and CODE and that guided the evaluation at critical points.
Nairobi Workshop	A workshop was held with African consultants, CODE partners in Kenya and Ethiopia, and the IDRC Office for East Africa. It refined methodology and instruments for data collection and agreed to a strategy for case studies of Kenya and Ethiopia.
Kenya and Ethiopia Case Studies	Case studies of CODE's work in these countries were conducted by the local consultants under guidance from IDRC and Universalialia and with the support of CODE.
Data collection from CODE Partners and LACs	Partners and LAC members in all 12 countries were contacted by Fax, telephone and in person.(49 total)
Data collection from CODE 's Board	Members of CODE's Board were interviewed.
Data collection from CODE Staff	CODE staff were interviewed over a period of weeks, some on several occasions. In addition, there was frequent telephone and electronic communication.
Document and data base analysis	The evaluation team reviewed these data.
Analysis	Analysis took place at all levels – for case studies and as reflected in the overall report.
Reporting	Drafts of the case study reports were reviewed by Universalialia and IDRC and then revised versions were reviewed by the Steering Committee. Similarly, the overall report was presented to the Steering Committee and revised.

### 1.4.3 Sources of Data

#### *Documents and Data Bases*

The evaluation draws from a wide range of CODE and CIDA documents. It also includes data from CODE's data base which was initiated to include data for the past three years. We also accessed and processed data from the Kenya Book Foundation and statistical data from the governments of Kenya and Ethiopia.

#### *Existing Impact Case Studies*

Data includes the findings of 15 impact case studies completed by local consultants for CODE in previous years. These were helpful in assessing results for the early years of the six year programming being reviewed here, and as comparative data.

#### *Case Studies in Ethiopia and Kenya*

The case studies conducted as part of the evaluation were used as sources of data for this report. The methodologies used are contained in the separate reports (Annexed to this volume) and the information on people interviewed has not been repeated except for members of the LAC and partner organizations.

#### *Interview Data*

Data in Canada were collected through interviews with 10 members of CODE's Board, with five CODE management and program staff, and with CIDA officers involved on the Steering Committee. Data from countries in which CODE has been active were collected in various ways.

#### *Evaluation Team*

The Evaluation Team consisted of three Universalia consultants and a subcontract with IDRC involving a senior evaluator and two local consultants. Universalia's responsibilities have consisted mainly of developing the evaluation instruments, supervising data collection and conducting analysis according to the evaluation matrix. With contributions from IDRC and the local consultants, Universalia has prepared this report. The individuals involved and their roles are summarized in Exhibit 1.7.

#### **Exhibit 1.6 Members of Evaluation Team**

MEMBERS OF THE EVALUATION TEAM	TITLE/ROLE
Gary Anderson	Head of CODE Evaluation; President, Universalia
Susan Gomez	Data collection and analysis, Consultant, Universalia
Anushree Varma	Data collection and analysis, Consultant, Universalia
Stephanie Garrow	Data collection and analysis, Consultant, Universalia
Terry Smutylo	Management of Field Component, Head of Evaluation Division, IDRC

MEMBERS OF THE EVALUATION TEAM	TITLE/ROLE
Edith Ofwona	Contracting and Logistics, IDRC, Kenya
Sheila Parvyn Wamahiu	Kenya Case Study, Consultant, Nairobi, Kenya
Sara Ruto	Co-Researcher, Kenya Case Study, Faculty Member, Kenyatta University
Aklilu Kidanu	Ethiopia Case Study, Director, Miz-Hasab Centre for Development Research, Training and Publications
Gullilat Abera	Research Assistant, Ethiopia Case Study
Makonen Bekureyesus	Research Assistant, Ethiopia Case Study

In addition to these external members, CODE and its partners contributed to the support of the case studies. We wish to thank Tesfaye Dubale, Executive Director of CODE-Ethiopia, Abdulkadir K. Guleid, Project Officer, CODE Marsabit and Jephew Murang'a, Manager of the Kenya Book Foundation who participated in the Nairobi Workshop where the methodology for case studies was refined and who accompanied the consultants in some of their data collection.

#### 1.4.4 Limitations

A variety of factors have defined the parameters of this evaluation.

1. The concepts of results-based management and the CIDA performance review framework are relatively new and were not in place at CIDA for most of the last six years. This has meant that CODE has not conceived of data in terms of these approaches. We recognize that we are, in a sense, imposing present-day perspectives on the past. However, our purpose is largely to learn from the evaluation and for that reason the frameworks which are in themselves helpful have been adopted in this report. We in no way want to make judgments of CODE using standards that were not present when CODE received its funding.
2. Ambiguities as to definitions are also apparent. There is a lack of common vocabulary for basic entities such as books. UNESCO defines a book as a bound publication of at least 48 pages. CODE has used the term to include newsletters and other reading materials that do not fit within the usual definition of a book, as well as for voluminous reference books. Thus, results based on the number of books are of questionable validity. Definitions are also lacking for type of books, type of library, library user vs. borrower, books vs. titles. . For example, users refer in some instances to those people who enter the library, and in other instances to those who borrow books; this term may make reference to the number of children in classes where CODE-supported books are used, or again it may refer to the number of children in library periods CODE is aware of the issue and is taking steps to address it.
3. For the purpose of this evaluation, in-depth case studies have been confined to only two countries, Kenya and Ethiopia. We do not believe, however, that many of the effects and impacts findings of this evaluation can be extrapolated to the set of all 12

program countries, given the diversity of country contexts in which programs are operating.

4. A further limitation occurs through the lack of baseline data, making it difficult to determine the situations that existed before CODE's work in partner countries. We note, however, that the frameworks and methodology used focuses on building understanding of libraries as performing organizations and consequently is not seriously affected by a lack of static baseline data.
5. Data collection within the evaluation has also been circumscribed by different factors. Data collection from CODE's African partner organizations and Local Advisory Committees has consisted of written commentaries to supplement phone interviews in order to harvest as complete data as possible. Wherever possible, phone interviews were the chosen *modus operandi*. Interview subjects were informed by both CODE and Universalialia in advance of the evaluation and general themes of the interviews. Effort was taken to ensure as wide a cross-section of respondents as possible. Nonetheless, the impossibility, given the schedule, of contacting partners beyond the reach of telephone, fax and e-mail may have limited the partners interviewed to a select strata in urban areas and/or had the necessary resources for telecommunications. A full third of the partner list provided were accessible only by mail. All partners with fax numbers were sent an interview questionnaire and, ten days later, a round of reminders were sent out to those who had failed to respond. All partners accessible by phone were called on at least three separate occasions between 9am and 4pm (their local time) for interview appointments. Difficulties in reaching partners via phone were due to busy circuits, changed numbers, numbers out of service, no response, and dead phone lines. Partners in the field and CODE both provided gracious and willing assistance in locating partners whose coordinates had changed. In the final analysis, we believe that we have sufficient data to make reasonable generalizations possible.
6. The last set of limitations concern the problems experienced in trying to access the Marsabit District of Kenya. In the three month period of the evaluation's data collection, Marsabit was inundated by floods, banditry, malaria and Rift Valley Fever, a disease that kills within two or three days. Despite the valiant efforts of Mr. Guleid, the CODE Project Officer in Marsabit, travel proved impossible for much of the time and prohibitively expensive otherwise. Furthermore, the situation was hardly conducive to the collection of useful data. Given such circumstances, the team, in consultation with CIDA and CODE, reluctantly canceled the Marsabit visitation and changed its focus to more accessible libraries near Nairobi and Kisumu.



## **1.5 Overview of Report**

The following chapter describes program results, followed by Chapter 3 on development factors and Chapter 4 on management factors affecting CODE's program. The report includes two important annexes as separate volumes: Case studies on Ethiopia and Kenya. Material from these annexes has been integrated in the main report, but the full annexes are included as they were submitted by the African consultants on the team. The various findings are synthesized into conclusions at the end of each chapter and in Chapter 5.

## **2. Program Results**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores the various ways of conceptualizing results for the CODE program. It then examines the results within each of the various results chains from the available data.

### **2.2 Conceptualizing Results**

In order to understand results, it is useful to develop "Results Maps" that indicate the intended connections between results at various levels (activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts). A positive outcome of the evaluation was the clarification, from CODE, of how it views its results chains. Based on discussions with CODE staff, Universalis has reorganized the result chains proposed in the initial draft of this report to better coincide with the direction in which CODE's programming is moving in the future. The evaluation goes on to organize its analysis of results following this agreed upon framework. CODE's results are therefore conceived in three interrelated chains related to: literacy partner organizations, literacy environments, and individuals. Thus, results of CODE support can be conceived of at the following three levels:

1. the creation of a literacy environment, through the provision of books, printed materials and associated infrastructure (libraries, training etc.)
2. the development and strengthening of literacy partner organizations and networks at the local and national levels, through capacity-building; and
3. equipping individuals with skills and knowledge that helps them improve their lives, through literacy.

Results in these three domains, broken down into the common denominators of activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts are shown in Exhibit 2.1.

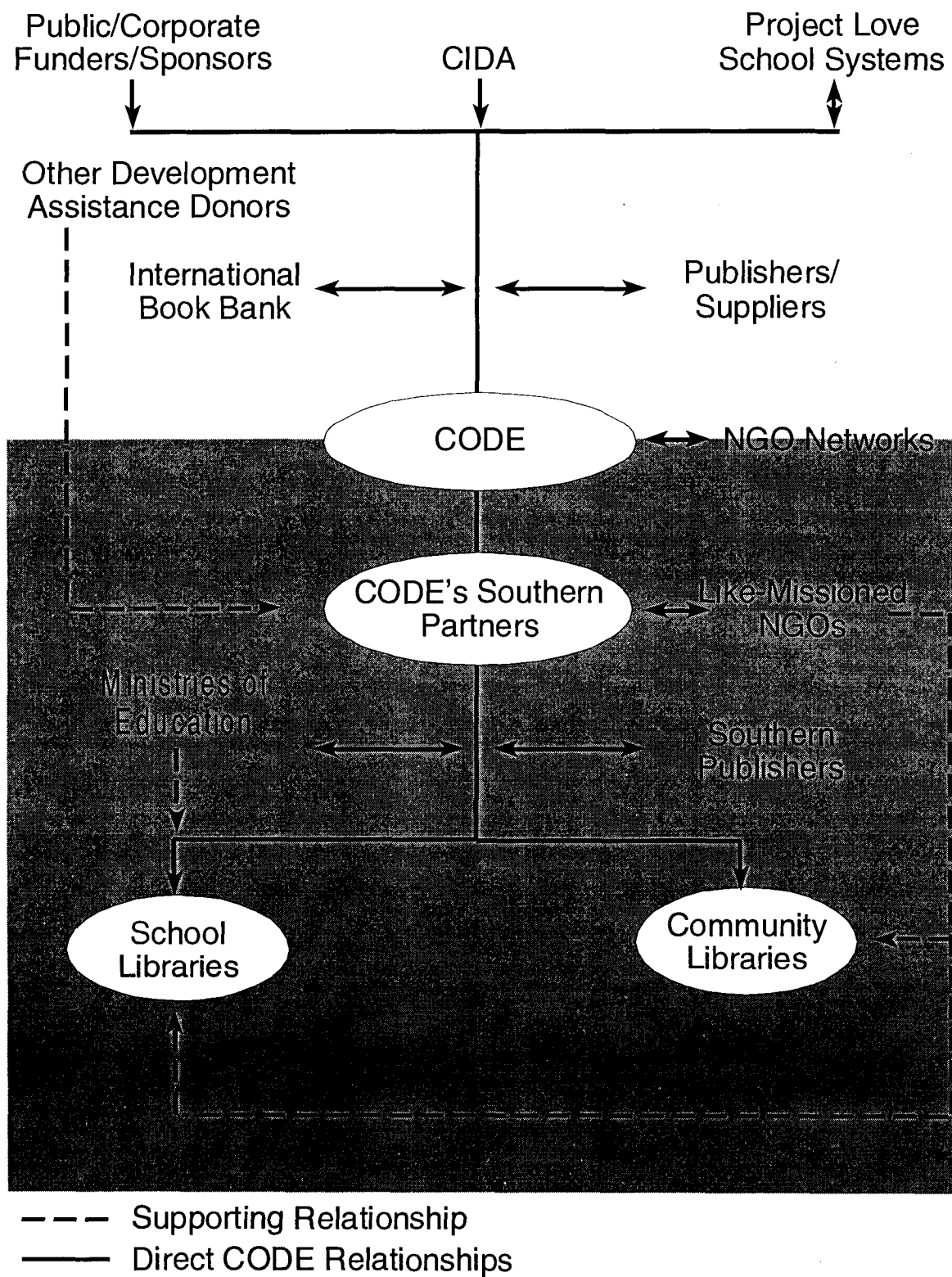
The various elements noted in the columns can be targeted in programming and can be monitored as a way of gauging effectiveness.

The results chain for literacy environments is fairly straightforward. The organizational chain can be clarified by considering the organizational relationships that CODE has. This network of relationships is shown in Exhibit 2.2. The three key players in CODE's programming are CODE's Southern partners, CIDA and CODE itself. There are some groups who provide support directly to CODE headquarters in Canada. These groups are mainly different donor groups, including CIDA, CODE Inc. and other public and corporate sponsors, Project Love school systems, the International Book Bank, publishers and suppliers. CODE in turn, acts as a catalyst for its Southern partners to branch out and form linkages with like-missioned NGOs, Southern publishers and production centres, ministries of education and school and community libraries.

### Exhibit 2.1 Results Chains for Literacy Partner Organizations, Environment and Individuals

LEVEL OF RESULT	SUPPORT OF LITERACY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS	SUPPORT OF LITERACY ENVIRONMENT (ACCESS)	SUPPORT OF INDIVIDUALS (CANADIANS; CHILDREN AND NEWLY-LITERATE ADULTS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD)
<b>Activities</b>	training of literacy promoting agents	purchasing, collecting & sending donated books	targeted youth and adults with less than 6 years of education
	exchange of lessons learned among CODE network	annotated cataloguing and distribution of books	programming activities focused on the needs of girls and women
	studies and evaluations of CODE programs	development & production of books	development education aspect of fundraising by Canadians
	capacity development of CODE partners	studies on literacy environment	assembling Project Love kits
		fundraising in support of literacy organizations	Ngoma and media promotion
			advising by CODE volunteers
		capacity development of school libraries	
		capacity development of community libraries	
		capacity development of reading material production centres	
		LAC program advice	
<b>Outputs</b>	enhanced capacity of CODE partners and project holders	Increased availability (and diversity) of appropriate North American Books	Greater participation in literacy by girls and women
	CODE country plans, project approvals, studies that generate lessons learned	Increased availability (and diversity) of appropriate locally-produced books	Increased use of services and materials available in CODE-supported libraries
	enhanced capacity of CODE as a learning organization	Increased availability (and diversity) of other literacy supporting materials (newsletters; pamphlets)	
		increased quantity & quality of literacy workers	

LEVEL OF RESULT	SUPPORT OF LITERACY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS	SUPPORT OF LITERACY ENVIRONMENT (ACCESS)	SUPPORT OF INDIVIDUALS (CANADIANS; CHILDREN AND NEWLY-LITERATE ADULTS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD)
		<p>enhanced capacity of school libraries in developing countries to administer and manage activities supporting a literate environment</p> <p>enhanced capacity of local literacy material production centres</p> <p>enhanced capacity of community libraries in developing countries to administer and manage activities supporting a literate environment</p>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	enhanced performance of CODE partners in supporting literacy	<p>effective resource base to support the promotion of a literate environment in developing countries</p> <p>enhanced performance of community libraries</p> <p>enhanced performance of school libraries</p> <p>Also see Organizational &amp; Individual Outcomes</p>	<p>enhanced literacy of children and newly-literate adults in targeted communities</p> <p>Canadian elementary school children and teachers aware of development and literacy issues</p> <p>Canadian elementary school children and teachers aware of development and literacy issues</p>
<b>Impacts</b>	sustainable partners for literacy development in core developing countries	<p>sustainable and expanding resource base to support the promotion of a literate environment in developing countries</p> <p>sustainable school libraries in core developing countries</p> <p>sustainable community libraries in core developing countries</p> <p>Also see Organizational &amp; Individual Impacts</p>	application of knowledge gained through literacy for sustainable development

**Exhibit 2.2 CODE's Relationships with Development Partners**

The results chain for individuals is also fairly clear. We have made one refinement, however, which is the chain for the Project Love component. It is depicted in Exhibit 2.3.

### **Exhibit 2.3 Results Chain for Project Love**

<b>LEVEL OF RESULT</b>	<b>IN CANADA</b>	<b>IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES</b>
<b>Outputs</b>	funds raised by children to purchase materials for kits material is purchased to go into kits kits are assembled	kits distributed
<b>Outcomes</b>	development education awareness in schools materials used within school curriculum public awareness	appreciation partnerships (e.g. pen pals)
<b>Impacts</b>	expands potential career paths of students  increased development education volunteerism at CODE and other NGOs  increased public support for NGOs and ODA	teaching/learning more effective

Collectively, we believe that these results chains and maps are useful in studying CODE's results. We suspect that they may also be helpful to CODE in clarifying its programming objectives.

## **2.3 Introduction to Analysis of Results**

The following sections expand on each column of the results map presented in Exhibit 2.1 to examine results at the output, outcome and impact levels. The analysis of results is therefore divided into the following three sections: 1) Literacy Partner Organizations; 2) Literacy Environment; and 3) Individual Beneficiaries. Again, the framework for this analysis reflects CODE and Universalialia's reconceptualization of the results chains.

## **2.4 Results for Literacy Partner Organization Support**

### **2.4.1 Outputs of Supporting Literacy Partners**

**Finding 1: CODE's program has made direct and tangible contributions to the capacity of its Southern partners.**

Our interviews with Southern partners indicated that CODE sponsored organizations typically had two to ten employees, averaging about five staff working on CODE projects. Without exception, partner organizations claim that CODE has been vital in strengthening their abilities to administer and manage literacy-promoting activities. Guaranteed annual subventions provide a strong base on which organizations continue to build services. Book shipments often generate funds to help run the organization's

activities. Publishing houses, book distribution centres, NGOs and libraries have been strengthened through human resource and institutional development.

One example is the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF) and Zimbabwe Book Development Council (ZBDC). These organizations, affiliated with CODE since the early 90s, attribute their origins to CODE's "visionary" agreement to establishing and funding them in conjunction with the Zimbabwe Educational Book Project. A central office with shared rent, office equipment, staff and infrastructure was provided for the three infant organizations which now are operating successfully as fully-fledged institutions in Zimbabwe today.

#### **2.4.2 Outcomes of Supporting Literacy Partners**

##### **Finding 2: CODE has had positive results in enhancing the effectiveness of its Southern Partners.**

The missions of most Southern partners relate to literacy development and incorporate the distribution and/or publishing of books. CODE has undoubtedly assisted them in moving towards fulfillment of this aspect of their missions. Indeed, in most cases, CODE is responsible for these organization's ability to provide books at all. Thus, general effectiveness is not a major concern. CODE's southern partners have more performance problems in terms of efficiency, relevance and sustainability – the other dimensions of organizational performance.

#### **2.4.3 Impacts of Supporting Literacy Partners**

##### **Finding 3: Several of CODE's Southern Partners that are independent literacy development organizations have become sustainable organizations for literacy development, but other current partners are either extremely fragile or merely CODE's delivery agents both of which are highly dependent on CODE's continuing support.**

Some of CODE's partners are relatively strong institutions in their own right such as the Malawi National Library Service, the rural Library and Resource Development Program (RLRDP) in Zimbabwe and Progresso in Mozambique. They have a mandate and programming beyond CODE, and so are able to extend their own work with CODE's support. Some of CODE's less institutionalized partners have demonstrated success in achieving sustainability. For example, the Guyana Book Foundation, sponsored by CODE since 1990, has been able to secure three contracts with the European Union projects in Guyana, for the acquisition and delivery of books to schools and resource centres, as well as the provision of training for teachers and the furnishing of libraries.

A second type of partner are those national, regional or community partners/NGO's that see themselves doing CODE's work; they are the means through which CODE's programs are implemented. It is these partners who rely heavily on CODE's financial support, since their main "raison d'être" is to implement CODE's programs.

Our review of the records indicates a large number of partners of this type during the time period of the evaluation. They have come and gone as partners which is costly and

does little for enhancement of literacy in a sustainable way. It is relatively easy to find partners wanting support; it is much more difficult to find partners who will be capable of supporting literacy long after CODE withdraws.

Fragile partners face numerous obstacles in becoming self-reliant, but the major one is the relative lack of available financial support either within their countries or from the international community, particularly when they are CODE's creation as delivery agents. The great need for literacy environments locally reflects a lack of demand and readiness to pay for literacy enhancement while international donors willing to support such efforts are few. Consequently, the partners we interviewed continue to be dependent on CODE for financial inputs. Funding through CODE has ranged from 100% for some partners to discontinued funding for others. CODE has also funded specific one-time *projects* without the intention of providing on-going funding; with these arrangements not really being considered as true "partnerships". The majority of organizations that reported sources of funding however, stated CODE as their largest donor.

*KBF has been quite successful in raising funds to cover its operational costs through a cost recovery programme. However, at the current level of spending weighed against its income, it will not be able to expand its operations to other areas of the country. The KBF manager has already expressed concern that the income level this year may be affected negatively by the increased charges (and this is borne out by the declining sales recorded by KBF since the book charges were increased in April last year. In January this year, the charges were increased again).*

*KBF's long term sustainability may also be threatened by the fact that it has no assets: the properties on which they are located both in Nairobi and Kisumu are donated and accessible only due to the goodwill of the donors. Were that goodwill to be withdrawn, the organization would have problems making alternative arrangements. (Wamahiu, 1998, Pp 60 -61 )*

## **2.5 Results of Support for Literacy Environments**

### **2.5.1 Introduction**

The following section presents findings related to the environmental context in which CODE implements its literacy programs. The environmental context is influenced by political, economic and social forces at both the national and community levels and effects the way CODE increases access to literacy. This section is organized around four types of support for literacy environments: 1) books; 2) community libraries; 3) school libraries; and 4) development of human resource capacity.

**Finding 4: The environmental context is a significant determinant of the extent to which CODE's Southern partners are able to perform.**

It is very difficult for a partner organization to perform when the environment is not supportive. The communities and national environments in which CODE operates are themselves often not propitious to CODE sustaining its programs and benefits.



Conditions of potential political unrest in some countries make delivery of projects more difficult. Worse still, in some countries all print materials are viewed with suspicion by governments that do not tolerate free expression. Natural conditions, such as lack of electricity and/or telecommunications hamper performance. Environmental disasters such as flooding may hamper delivery of books and programs..

In order to deal with the vast differences displayed in the level of national development in CODE supported countries, CODE has pinpointed recent significant socio-political trends that may foster (or inhibit) the maturation of a literate environment.

Changes that improve the potential for a literate climate include:

- the flourishing of democratic and multi-party systems;
- that freedom of expression seems less threatening;
- fewer restrictions are applied to the private sector, and specifically to the publishing industry;
- authority appears to be less centralized, with more decision-making power being transferred to local administrative units;
- the role of the non-governmental sector is viewed with less suspicion and, as a result, governments are more willing to acknowledge the role of NGOs in the development process and to seek their guidance on solving long-standing problems.

Using its indicators of success, CODE may be able to predict the possibility of different levels and types of success in different environments and select for involvement those communities that have suitable pre-conditions for achieving certain results. For example, the Kenya Book Foundation deals with environmental forces from the national education system, making it difficult to develop a diverse reading culture and sustained literacy environment.

*The Kenya Book Foundation operates in an environment that is not very conducive to the development of a reading culture and sustained literacy environment. The demand for books is driven more by the need to achieve (e.g. perform well in examinations and teach more effectively) than for gaining knowledge for the sake of knowledge. School and institutional libraries, where they exist, therefore prioritize books which are directly relevant for the national and institutional curriculum. Even those institutions which would like to promote a reading culture are constrained by limited financial resources.*

While we were not part of discussions about the choice of countries for previous CODE involvement, we have not found a coherent rationale until the current 1998-2001 program submission in which the CODE Board has recommended that management develop criteria for selecting countries for CODE's involvement. We endorse this principle and the proposed strategy. We suggest that CODE consider additional criteria as it continues analyzing its results.

## *Results of Supplying Books in Support for Literacy Environments*

### *2.5.2 Outputs of Supplying Books*

**Finding 5:** Through the provision of donated books, CODE has appreciably increased the availability of books and other print materials in 15 countries during the period 1991-1998.

This result responds to column two of Exhibit 2.1 at the output level. Exhibit 2.4 shows the number of books shipped by CODE to each of 15 countries by year. The numbers of books are considerable and, according to CODE, amount to 300 tonnes per year. In some cases the books are distributed throughout the country; in other cases, they are targeted to designated areas. Library extension and resource sharing has also taken place through the use of bicycles and book boxes. Popular education methods have also been explored with study circles becoming a means for sharing locally available knowledge. In Ghana, services offered by the Ejura Community Library include outreach programs to schools, which consist of quiz programs and study hours. While we have no reliable and valid data on the situation before CODE intervened, the overall result is enhancement of books available in the environment by 3.4 million volumes.

**Exhibit 2.4 Number of North American Books Shipped by CODE, 1991-1998**

Country	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	Total
Belize	39,478	25,035	18,816	35,728	15,877	20,388	15,809	171,131
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	47,903	0	0	0	47,903
Ethiopia	54,268	21,003	39,827	53,339	57,663	16,988	17,841	260,929
Ghana	114,960	41,735	65,620	99,870	64,558	79,249	100,779	566,771
Guinee	12,433	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,433
Guyana	77,267	0	54,041	40,937	48,387	46,118	25,789	292,539
Kenya	17,737	37,902	46,605	58,534	57,154	102,533	100,779	421,244
Malawi	75,151	51,948	52,637	29,800	23,982	24,270	35,394	293,182
Mali	0	18,197	22,000	47,650	52,223	25,070	33,210	198,350
Mozambique	32,654	0	0	0	0	0	0	32,654
Senegal	0	0	29,608	53,786	24,295	16,880	0	124,569
Tanzania	23,965	55,846	42,441	37,878	42,371	35,858	29,426	267,785
Uganda	51,033	41,856	35,908	0	0	0	0	128,797
Zambia	42,631	29,957	41,285	36,794	48,351	52,014	57,874	308,906
Zimbabwe	104,048	19,120	55,406	64,398	38,746	26,827	0	308,545
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>645,625</b>	<b>342,599</b>	<b>504,194</b>	<b>606,617</b>	<b>473,607</b>	<b>446,195</b>	<b>416,901</b>	<b>3,435,738</b>

The Ethiopia Case Study reports that 90% of 140,986 books distributed by March 31, 1997 had been confirmed as received.

**Finding 6:** Through support for indigenous publishing, CODE has increased the availability of a more diversified supply of books and other print materials in local languages in five countries during the period 1995-1998.

CODE also supports indigenous book publishing and book purchase. Funds have been available to subsidize book production costs (e.g. ink, plates, staff, operational costs, other publishing inputs, etc.). Production support has also provided financing to

publishing feasibility studies, designed to gain a broad and more in-depth understanding of the publishing industry so that inputs can be more carefully targeted.

To support autonomous publishing, CODE also finances the purchase of books that, for the most part, are published in developing countries. According to CODE, buying locally published titles serves two purposes. First, it provides culturally and linguistically compatible materials to learners. Secondly, it stimulates the local market and encourages competition, thereby providing an incentive to local publishers. In several of CODE's program countries, book selling is considered an unglamorous activity that, traditionally, gets very little attention from aid agencies. However, a viable book selling sector is essential if a local publishing industry is to survive. Before considering the quantitative data, several examples of CODE's experiences with indigenous books indicate the ways that this is done:

- In Belize, 12,000 copies of a children's newspaper were published. The newspaper is intended to foster a reading habit among primary school children. CODE supported the project by purchasing 40% of the monthly print run for distribution to children in poorer areas of the country. A newspaper subscription program and a corporate sponsorship program were introduced in order to further recover costs.
- In Guyana four books were published under the Children's Book Project. CODE purchased 60% of the print run and had them distributed through the Guyana Book Foundation and the Library Development Project to schools and libraries in outlying areas. Guaranteed book purchases help reduce risk for publishers and hence encourages them to publish more.
- The Free Press, Guyana, working with CODE since 1993, produces with CODE's support the country's sole children's magazine, entitled "Holidays" dealing specifically with Guyanese issues. The annual magazine serves as a reference and supplements school books, and its distribution to even the hinterland areas of the country is guaranteed through the Guyana Book Foundation.
- Red Thread Press, Guyana, involved with CODE since 1986, is engaged in innovative publishing that has broken new ground, including the publication of Amerindian stories in two regional languages, Makushi and Wapishana. The writers are young Amerindian teachers, aiming to create stories, exercises and supplementary reading with a social message directed mainly at students of primary schools. Resource persons have been engaged to represent these oral languages in a written form using the Roman alphabet. Simultaneously, the value of these perishing cultures has been reaffirmed through encouraging families to use and develop their languages, while reading has also been advocated.
- The National Library Service, CODE's partner in Malawi, has launched the Werangani Series to make up for the shortage of children's books on the local market. Nine titles have been published in the local language of Chichewa under this scheme, with the latest story aimed at stimulating girls' interest in education. The NLS's efforts in indigenous publishing support the government's

encouragement of publishing in other indigenous languages such as Tchiao and Tunbuka.

Statistical data were available for the last three years only, and these are summarized in Exhibit 2.5. Note that these data suffer from inconsistent meanings and/or perceptions of the term "book" (e.g. in Ethiopia, many of them are newsletters), and may be incomplete for the past year. Nevertheless, the results are again impressive in the sense that CODE has contributed to enhancement of the number of literacy materials in the environment.

**Exhibit 2.5 Number of Locally-Produced Materials with CODE Support, 1995-98**

COUNTRY	LOCAL BOOKS PURCHASED	LOCAL BOOKS PUBLISHED	TOTAL
Belize	4,870	0	4,870
Ethiopia	13,621	300,887	314,508
Ghana	105,636	0	105,636
Guyana	41,498	0	41,498
Kenya	17,899	3,000	20,899
Malawi	38,500	174,000	212,500
Mali	2,060	103,244	105,304
Mozambique	123,480	0	123,480
Senegal	3,012	0	3,012
Tanzania	5,637	79,000	84,637
Zambia	2,776	0	2,776
Zimbabwe	37,035	0	37,035
TOTAL	396,024	660,131	1,056,155

**Finding 7: While CODE appears to have achieved its output targets, the nature of program plans make it difficult to compare planned and actual results.**

The amount of books that CODE plans to send overseas compared to the amount actually sent is difficult to discern from year to year and from country to country. For example, between 1994 and 1997 CODE shipped 1.526 million books after projecting that a total of 1.5 million books would be sent. This data appears difficult to pull out of CODE's documentation, program plans and proposals, although it very well may exist.

Another challenge is the inconsistent units of change used to take inventory of the books being sent overseas. At present, CODE plans in terms of the number of containers of books it sends, however containers hold a varying number of books, depending on their size. Some containers may also be full of books with a limited number of titles, again making it hard to differentiate between the "number of titles" being sent vs. the "number of books". CODE must make clear distinctions about what units of literacy support to use, as well as which units are useful to monitor.

The same situation exists with CODE outputs that relate to training of literacy workers and availability of appropriate literacy support materials. Information comparing plans to actual results may exist, but is difficult to locate.

**Finding 8: Southern partners feel that CODE has been successful in increasing access to books in their countries.**

Interviewed partners were highly positive in their comments concerning CODE's provision of books. The majority of CODE's Southern partners have reported that CODE has helped significantly in directing increased resources towards the improvement of education. The foremost way in which this has been done has been through the donation of books and in their distribution. In many countries, CODE has been instrumental in providing books to those who can least afford them. Some of their comments were:

- The Tanzania Book Program, working with CODE since 1987, reports that support received in the form of books has helped foster the reading and writing abilities among school children and adult learners. CODE's program has helped to alleviate the shortage of reference books in schools and other educational institutions.
- Improvements were reported in students' scholastic performance and spoken levels of French in those who attended Dioro II School where the Code-supported library is located.
- The Guyana Book Foundation describes the situation of schools as desperate; 50% of students attend schools in which there are no texts. This, combined with a core of untrained and unqualified teachers, have contributed to the decline in education standards and literacy. CODE's books and funds for library development and training of teachers in literacy have all helped to address such problems and improve education.
- The Kuzwano Women's Association, a wing of the Commercial Farmer's Union in Zimbabwe, distributed over 2000 text and exercise books to schools on commercial farms in 1996. Parents are unable to afford books, and therefore these books are the only ones the children have and use.
- The Zambia Library Services states that CODE has provided books whereas the government has only issued promises. The Ministry of Education declared that every school should have a library, but did not state from where the books would come. Now the majority of basic schools, providing the first nine years of education to Zambian students, in CODE-program provinces, have libraries. Many of these libraries have grown out of seed collections of CODE books.
- Help for Progress, in Belize, working with CODE until 1988, was able to provide books to rural schools whose students had no other means or opportunity for having books. They were able to use and improve their reading skills through the use of simple booklets with drawings and pictures.

The other contributions to the literacy environment have been through Project Love which is discussed with results for individuals in Section 2.6.

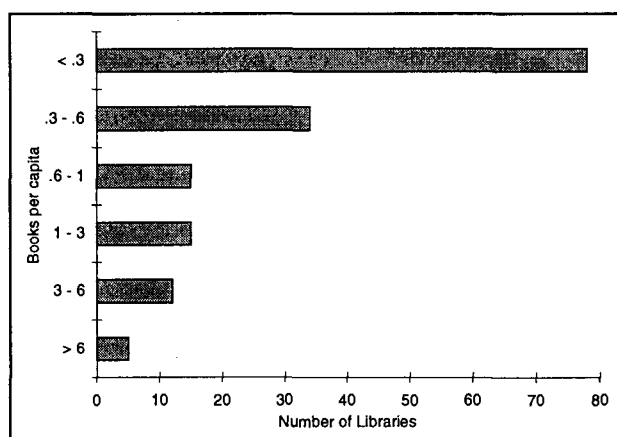
### 2.5.3 Outcomes of Supplying Books

**Finding 9:** Despite the overall increases in literacy materials, most of the involved libraries/ communities continue to be far below international standards in the number of books per capita, raising questions about the effectiveness of the resource base.

Moving to the outcome level of column one, Exhibit 2.1, we can consider the extent to which the resource base is effective in supporting the promotion of a literate environment. For the past three years, CODE has attempted to generate data on the number of CODE books supplied to involved libraries. Exhibit 2.6 summarizes these data. We caution that these data reflect only what CODE has supplied, and many libraries have additional materials.

However, even if the totals are doubled or trebled, literacy environments are still inadequate. Furthermore, some of the libraries that are apparently best off are school libraries which have better ratios merely because they have a smaller capita. Clearly, there is a long way to go to reach the UNESCO standard of three books per capita. CODE is encouraged to consider the implications of this finding, some of which are to: 1) Continue to collect such data as well as baselines when CODE first becomes involved; 2) Classify libraries by type for better understanding; 3) Consider the extent to which future programming can best balance breadth of coverage with the need for a critical volume of books.

**Exhibit 2.6** Number of CODE-Supplied Books per Capita, 1995-98



**Finding 10:** CODE programs reflect a real imbalance in their depth-breadth coverage, affecting the way they successfully implement their overall strategy for results.

Many developing countries are populous, and often tens of thousands of books do not go far enough to meet literacy needs in such settings. This is not to discredit that the distribution of a small number of books can have impact on literacy development, however, the issue points out the need to consider a depth-breadth balance. CODE has a varied approach to how its programs address the depth-breadth balance. For example, in Kenya the amount of books supplied by CODE and distributed by the Kenya Book Foundation make a very small impact, given the overall need.

*Though the network of KBF member schools appear to be large, when considered against the total number of primary and secondary schools in the country, they are really a drop in the ocean: the number of primary schools to which KBF donated books during the three years under consideration are less than 2 percent of the 16,115 primary schools and*

*between 7 and 9 percent of the 2,354 secondary schools in the country.*  
(Wamahiu, 1998, p. 45)

CODE has targeted specific districts in some countries, which helps; however, in countries with a national partner, such as Kenya, this is more difficult. Is it optimal for CODE to work at both the national and district level in a country as vast as is Kenya? CODE needs to consider all the implications of the depth-breadth balance in its overall strategy for results. In assessing this balance, CODE must also make distinctions between “number of books” and “number of titles”. In both the purchase of books and the distribution of donated books, large runs of books of one title are published in order to be cost effective. Therefore, CODE has not only to consider breadth of coverage in relation to the need for a critical volume of books, but also coverage with relation to an adequate diversity of titles.

There are many contextual subtle issues that in the past may have hindered CODE from accomplishing the maximum possible. In several countries CODE has found it challenging to work with Education Departments or Ministries. For example, in working with governments, CODE has not always been able to maintain control over the distribution of books through government departments. Governments are unable to favour one district over another, and -- in many instances -- sending a limited number of books throughout a large and populous country greatly dilutes impact.

#### **2.5.4 Impacts of Supplying Books**

**Finding 11: Results in producing a sustainable and expanding resource base are mixed: in conducive contexts impact level results have been achieved; whereas in many problematic environments, there is still a long way to go.**

At the impact level of the results chain, we have insufficient data to fully explore whether the resource base is sustainable and expanding in all contexts. However, we do have credible data for some countries. In the most positive situations, CODE has supported sustainable Southern partners who have gone on to serve the need. For example, in Guyana, CODE's work with the Charity Community Library has contributed to a growing recognition in a wider community of the potential value of the library, demonstrated by a pledge of \$1000 worth of books to the library by the Regional Democratic Council of Region II. (figure is based on \$100,000 Guyanese dollars exchanged at 100:1)

Most contexts, however, are much more challenging. Creating a culture of literacy presents different challenges depending on the community involved. Given the traditional and oral culture of some of CODE's target communities, programs must be developed appropriately so that impact is achieved and a sustainable and expanding resource base is developed. This may involve branching out from library development programs to a more “popular education” based, holistic literacy program approach. Although CODE's libraries act as a vehicle towards developing a literate culture, CODE should consider the challenges surrounding the following literacy situation in Gore, Ethiopia where CODE has been active since 1988:

*Gore is a traditional rural community. Wednesdays and Fridays are fasting days in accordance with the religious principles of the Orthodox Church. Women seldom venture outside their homes. The degree of poverty is all too obvious: the houses are very modest, many people go barefoot, there is electricity but no running water. Yet this area is regarded by the Ethiopian authorities as relatively well off. The area suffers from geographic—and informational—isolation. During the week spent there, I failed to come across anyone reading a book or a newspaper outside the community reading room. Rural Ethiopia is still an oral culture. In fact, reading in public is not an activity which is socially acceptable! It could even be considered rude since it forces the reader to isolate himself or herself from others (Kidanu, 1998, p.1)*

The Gore case study demonstrates the challenges of creating a “sustainable and expanding resource base” in a community which lacks a basic level of formal educational development before it is ready for CODE’s interventions. In addition, the Gore case study shows that the local library committee was able to purchase about 20 books a year period. In the context of Gore, this is a substantial accomplishment, but in a library with 842 books, it hardly constitutes a “sustainable and expanding resource base”.

Creating a culture of literacy requires fostering activities in both the home and community. These activities can include newspapers, book and magazine reading, library use and letter writing, but most importantly should be relevant to the needs and priorities of the individuals and their communities themselves. For example, in the community of Dioro in Mali, it was noted that there was evidence that information learned from books has influenced the way of thinking regarding health issues and deforestation matters in the community. As soon as individuals or communities are witness to the power and influence of their new literacy skills, they will become increasingly motivated to continue their learning. It is not until this stage of the learning process is achieved that individuals may show an interest in reading and library use given the availability of interesting and pertinent material that is neither blind nor limited to the culture, history and experiences of a people.

The implications of our findings about differential impact in different contexts suggests the importance of CODE considering its strategy for intervention in particular contexts. We offer no solutions, but merely suggest that CODE take note of the level of difficulty in given settings and program accordingly. The dilemma is that some of the neediest settings present the greatest difficulties.



## ***Results of Supporting Community Libraries***

### ***2.5.5 Outputs of Supporting Community Libraries***

**Finding 12:** While CODE has established many community libraries where none had previously existed, and strengthened many that were in existence, many of the facilities face capacity constraints of all sorts.

As a result of CODE's intervention, there are now several hundred libraries where none previously existed. There are also stronger previously-existing community libraries containing more books and furnishings. However, most of the libraries reviewed lacked basic infrastructural capacity. They are lacking in floor space, chairs, tables, electricity and toilet facilities. The Ethiopia case study (p. 24) considered the high turn-over of librarians to be a significant capacity constraint, and throughout the studied sample, libraries were constrained in operating hours. A lack of petty cash can debilitate libraries by creating bottle-necks for lack of simple commodities. The situation once again raises the question of concentration. While one cannot generalize, it is likely that in many situations it would be better for CODE to provide additional support to existing partner libraries than to open additional libraries lacking in the capacity to function efficiently and effectively. CODE should also look at efficient, cost-effective ways to relate its level of success to the environmental conditions of communities.

### ***2.5.6 Outcomes of Supporting Community Libraries***

**Finding 13:** CODE's program has made significant contributions to the effectiveness of some community libraries.

The Ghana Book Trust distributed both donated books as well as locally published books that were purchased with a grant from CODE. Books were distributed to several libraries. At Winneba Library, for the year ending June 1992, 2,691 books were borrowed compared to 1,900 books borrowed during the corresponding period of the previous year. At Hohoe District Library, the inclusion of books in the Ewe language has "brought about a significant change in the composition of the users of our library. This time it is no more a place for students and the educated in English, but a place for those who can read Ewe as well. It is a place for housewives, farmers, carpenters and the rest. It is interesting to hear that even some students from the functional literacy classes are also using the library." The Bibliothèque Départementale d'Éducation Populaire et Sportive de Pikine in Senegal provides books in Wolof and Pulaar, as well as discussion groups on African writers. The community library of Dioro in Mali has received 90% of the library's books from CODE, thus enriching the literacy environment of the community.

**Finding 14:** The appropriateness of community libraries varies by the type of material available and the setting and user's language, occupation, age and gender.

The appropriateness of books requires that users have minimal literacy in the language of the materials. For many libraries, languages are diverse and English and French are at

best second languages, and at worst, completely absent from local culture. Thus, North American books lack appropriateness by their very nature. As well, the reading level is often beyond most users, especially those with less than six years of education, who may relate to the content, but cannot assimilate it. On the other hand, in impoverished environments, such books may be the only access to knowledge, since people are not able to afford even school texts. While schooling requires reference books that supplement for inadequate texts, users who are not in school tend to prefer newsletters and booklets in local languages (Kidanu, 1998, p. 23). Ethiopian women felt that the community reading rooms in Yayu and Mettu lacked materials relevant to women's concerns; adult users of the community library in Pikine in Senegal did not use the library more often because of the lack of new materials.

**Finding 15: Although many community libraries have been established and supported by CODE, there are no indications that these libraries are benchmarked to a set of standards, making it difficult to manage for results.**

CODE has successfully supported and helped develop a network of community libraries in its 15 target countries. In some cases these libraries stand on their own and in others they are part of a reconfiguration of services provided by primary school libraries. Although CODE uses indicators such as *book ratio per capita* to monitor the success of interventions, there is no evidence of major standards that libraries can be benchmarked against. By adopting standards, CODE would be able to focus on developing the capacity and performance of libraries as organizational units. Once a library has achieved the determined standard, CODE could consider transferring its support to another community or region. Hand in hand with setting standards is establishing a geographic focus, which again helps CODE to target its resources and manage for results. Supporting community libraries across an entire country again raises the question of depth-breadth impact. Setting clear geographic targets for where libraries will be supported, depending on the country context in which CODE is working, will not only improve CODE's ability to manage for results, but will ensure that standards are best met.

CODE will need to adopt a standard, and experience is not much of a guide. We suggest that the decision be value-based, at least until such time as further research provides clearer answers. For example, CODE might say that every school library it supports should achieve the standard of one book per child within three years of CODE involvement. The standard is clear, understandable and attainable, and it would force CODE to avoid the temptation of spreading beyond what it has the resources to do.

**Finding 16: There are various ways to consider the efficiency of a library which might be useful to CODE in monitoring future community library performance.**

Performance can be assessed in many ways. For example, in Gore, the reading room contains 1,132 books and had 6,294 users and 202 borrowers in 1997. Arithmetic ratios would suggest that the average book was "used" 5.6 times in the year, and that less than one-sixth of the books were borrowed. We will not attempt to judge whether this is

“good” performance. It certainly provides a useful baseline for consideration of efficiency. Efficiency of a library can also be judged by assessing how relevant books are to users’ needs and how well librarians disseminate relevant information to potential users.

Furthermore, while in no way comparable, the data on Canadian libraries is instructive. According to the Book and Periodical Council (1997), 34% of Canadians over the age of 15 visited a library at least once in the past year. Public libraries also circulated 4.5 times the number of books than the population of Canada. CODE might try to generate comparable data in the settings in which it works.

### 2.5.7 *Impact of Supporting Community Libraries*

**Finding 17: CODE’s assistance provides important motivational support to local partners; however, it is a big additional step for partners to sustain their resource base and take full ownership of their programs.**

Like other forms of community development, in the case of CODE-supported libraries, sustainability comes once the community itself moves from passive dependence to taking ownership for the state of affairs. Local economic, social and political context is a major determinant of the extent to which community libraries can become financially sustainable. This context greatly influences how communities mobilize themselves to take ownership of development projects. The situation in many development contexts can be quite fatalistic as shown in the Ethiopia study:

*In regards to sustainability, it is hard to argue against the predominant view that it is a bit too early even to think about it. In a way, there is a lot of truth in this argument. To begin with the program is less than 4 years old, and it takes much longer than that to develop the culture of reading and self-sufficiency in the long-term. Ethiopia is a very poor country, where the majority of its population is illiterate and lives in subsistent farming. There are also cultural factors that work against the interests of potential female beneficiaries. Under these conditions it is hard to see where the local support for such programs could come from. The community is too poor to come up with the funds required to buy books that have to be imported; the Ministry of Education doesn’t have or could not afford to have a special book purchasing and distribution program at the primary education level; non-government organisations may give a one-time assistance but not continuous support because it will drain the funds allocated for their regular activities. (Kidanu, 1998, p. 24)*

*As far as how long it might take before the community is mobilized to fully support the reading room, estimates range between 3 to 10 years. But this is a factor of economic development in general and the expansion of literacy, in particular. These happen to be the two main things that have evaded the country for a number of reasons. (Wamahiu, 1998, p. 46)*

Although organizational motivation is one way for CODE to help move its libraries towards sustainability, in the end it really does not take programs where they need to be.

CODE can continue to support the building of community committees, forming partnerships with government ministries, NGO's and LAC's – however at the end of the day, if a library's resource base isn't sustainable, all motivational efforts will have been futile.

## ***Results of Supporting School Libraries***

### ***2.5.8 Outputs of Supporting School Libraries***

**Finding 18: By increasing access to books, CODE's program is enriching the learning environments of a wide variety of schools in targeted countries.**

Since 1990/91, CODE has supplied 3.8 million books to 15 countries. In the period 1995/96 to 1997/98, CODE's data base indicates that 805,087 books were sent to primary schools and 191,306 to secondary schools and tertiary educational institutions which is a substantial contribution. It should be noted, as well, that the books supplied are reported to be of high quality, "...the overwhelming majority are new and hard cover" (Wamahiu, 1998, p. 22), suggesting that these books are also a qualitative enhancement to the schools that receive them.

- The Zambia Library Service, working with CODE since 1989, maintains that without the assistance of CODE, many school libraries now operating would not even have started. A number of libraries have been started or founded out of a collection of CODE books.
- In Ethiopia, CODE has supplied 8,904 books to 11 primary school libraries. While this is significant, it falls well below the need. For example, in Chanchu primary school, CODE books amount to 0.75 books per pupil; whereas, in Yekatit 23 primary school, there are only 0.14 books per child.
- "The CODE provided text books have become not only the source of knowledge to both students and teachers but also the means for teachers to catch up with the requirements of the school curriculum and the demands of the students." (Kidanu, 1998, p. 32)

CODE's project in Marsabit, Kenya is another success story. CODE launched its library development program for Marsabit district in 1988-89 and since then a total of 12 community libraries and 22 primary school libraries have been established. Although the area was not visited during the evaluation because of severe flooding, past research demonstrates that the Marsabit program has successfully achieved complete book coverage at the school level. This coverage also complies to certain standards, making it unique from other elements of CODE's programming. The Marsabit example shows the value in developing an entire geographic region with communities as the unit of change. And when compared to CODE's national partner in Kenya, the Kenya Book Foundation, the disadvantages of spreading resources too thinly across an entire country are clear.

**Finding 19: Many school libraries lack management capacity.**

In many of the libraries visited, performance is being affected by a lack of basic management wherewithal. The space and the books may be available, but local people remain unsure of how to organize and manage the library for the benefit of the users.

- The Comité de l'organisation canadienne pour l'éducation au service du développement (COMITÉ-OCED Segou) in Mali received approximately 18,200 books from CODE during 1992. Since postal and transportation problems are severe, the Comité had to find creative ways to distribute the books to 40 schools. Most of the titles proved to be useful although "some of the books are not appropriate and cannot be used by the schools". Significantly, feedback from the schools indicated that nobody had any of the skills needed to organize and manage a library. Consequently, through the COMITÉ-OCED, CODE financed a librarian training program.
- "The lack of space is a severe problem in the performance of the library. This is ironic, given the large compound that the school has. This is also reflection of the fact that a large number of students come to use the library at the same time." (Kidanu, 1998, p. 32)

*The Kisumu Polytechnic Library, located in the third floor, is too small to accommodate the estimated 1,000 users. With a seating capacity of sixty, the library is used by even as many as 140 students at any one time. (See Table in Appendix I). Sometimes, therefore, the users overflow from the library room to the corridor outside! (Wamahiu, 1998, p. 13)*

*Though both SLP Samaj and Ngong Hills Academy are relatively well stocked with 5,000 and 10,000 books respectively, the space is not enough to allow readers. The new SLP Samaj school library can take up to 40 readers. (Wamahiu, 1998, p. 28)*

**2.5.9 Outcomes of Supporting School Libraries**

**Finding 20: With respect to effectiveness, CODE books have provided significant support for the education of children and youth in Kenya and Ethiopia; however, the large number of intervening contextual factors prevent establishment of clear relationships between access to CODE books and increased pupil learning.**

Despite the fact that CODE does not supply school texts, many of the books supplied are used by pupils in support of their studies. In many cases, there are few available school texts in impoverished schools, so the CODE books are important learning resources – if not the only available resources. The fact that educators are charged with selecting the books undoubtedly helps ensure their appropriateness to the school curriculum, as corroborated by students in Kenya. Moreover, the books are used as reference materials by teachers which provide multipliers in their influence on student learning. Access to CODE books, therefore, facilitates learning, but it does not guarantee it. Indeed, the Kenya program study shows inconsistent relationships between the availability of books and national examinations results in the locations that had this

information. Moreover, CODE does not purport to be a schooling organization, and can hardly be accountable for school results when its program does not target the teaching/learning relationship *per se*. In hostile learning environments, there are many necessary conditions for learning, none of which are sufficient on their own.

- BRC Publishing in Belize, working with CODE in the 1980s, reports that together they changed the face of education in Belize. Prior to CODE's intervention, in 1984, 80% of students accepted to attend high school hailed from urban areas. Now that books for study and learning have become more readily available to rural areas, 70% of students accepted to high school are from rural areas. The innovative work done by CODE and BRC acted as a catalyst for the government to begin taking action.

*It is difficult to isolate the receipt of KBF books as the single factor in the improvement or otherwise in the national examination results, whether at the primary or secondary levels. So many other factors come into play in influencing the results, including the school leadership and management, resources available, the student population size, the level of teacher turnover (or persistence) and the quality of the library among others. For example, the number of candidates sitting for KCPE gradually went up between 1993 and 1996, before stabilizing in 1997. The Deputy Head at Victoria Primary claimed that increase in number of streams in the school from single to double has adversely affected its KCPE performance and ranking. (Wamahiu, 1998, p 33)*

**Finding 21: The efficiency aspect of performance related to school libraries varies by context and the capacity of the school library.**

There are many dimensions of efficiency that relate to CODE's support of school libraries. One dimension is whether the books are reaching the target audience.

*There are clear indications that CODE's programs in the areas visited are achieving their goals in an efficient manner: a total of 140,986 books were issued nationally (with a 90% confirmation rate; a total of 4,765 books were distributed to the sites included in this study which averages out to 1 book per 5 students; the number of users is increasing from year to year, particularly in Gore where the number jumped from 4,261 in 1994 to 6,294 in 1997, representing a 48% increase just in 4 years. This performance becomes even more significant considering that during these 4 years CODE's budget decreased from 365,473 Canadian Dollars to 125,115, representing a 192% decrease. Granted that most of these decrease could be explained by the interruption of the initial fund to set up the program, there were real decline of funds in the latter years as a result of cuts in CIDA contributions.*

*The poorer and remote member school/institutional libraries do not receive information on new consignments consistently and on time. This has negative implications for them as schools with better access to information*

*(and with resources such as telephone and transportation) have better chances of selecting the best books for themselves.*

Another dimension is how much usage books get. In most situations, CODE books are relevant and in high demand by multiple users, as is the case for facilities. The data and descriptions collected conger up an impossible image of five students in search of each book, and once they find it, they still must share their chair with a score of other pupils!

*The institution also faces the problem of stolen or lost books. Sometimes though, the popular books may not be lost, but merely hidden by students keen to have sole access to them. P. 23*

There are several factors affecting student usage: seating capacity, library hours, borrowing policy and access to materials. Only three of the eight school libraries in Kenya had seating for readers.

*Shortage of space, at an average of about 35 square meters, is a recurrent problem in all sites visited. The number of chairs at the library range from 15 (in Chanco) to 42 (in Yuyu) while the number of students range from 1,683 (in Chanco) to 8,196 (in Yekatit 23). All in all, in the sites visited, there are 22,762 students for 163 chairs. This comes to 140 students per chair. This obviously puts severe limitations on the number of users who could be reading the books. (Kidanu, 1998, p. 50)*

The financial environment in which school libraries operate is another dimension that affects school library efficiency and performance. One example of how a lack of financial commitment to education affects the successful performance of school libraries can be taken from Ethiopia where the policy of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education prohibits primary schools from raising funds in support of educational development directly from the public. This policy ultimately undermines any organizational move towards achieving financial sustainability.

*Although the Zone buys items (mostly stationery) for the school library, there is no direct cash contribution incoming from anywhere. This puts severe limitations on the day to day activities of the library. (Kidanu, 1998, p. 32)*

There are also overriding contextual issues in the education sector. In some countries governments invest little in education. For example, in Ethiopia only 13.8% of the national budget supports education. Pupil:teacher ratios are typically 30-60 to one. Language diversity is a major challenge.

**Finding 22: School libraries are relevant to CODE's target group of youth in schools, particularly in settings where books of any kind are in short supply, though they may not be the most appropriate response to the need for educational materials.**

*The relevance of books for the recipient institution is ensured in several ways:*

- *The preliminary selection of books is done from a catalogue sent from the International Book Bank in the USA. Normally, the KBF*

*manager in Nairobi does the selections based on the feedback he receives from the schools. If any client happens to be visiting the office during the time he is doing the selections, he solicits their assistance.*

- *This system of sending the catalogue first before packing the containers.*
- *The institutions themselves do the selections from existing stock. If irrelevant books are selected, then it is the representative of the client institution who is to blame. As reported in Chapter 2, the librarian/library teacher is not always consulted to help identify the needs of the library.*

In the most impoverished settings, the CODE books are substituting for a dearth of school texts. We question whether reference materials are the most relevant approach to the more fundamental problem of a lack of text books. This is by no means a simple issue, but it raises questions about the need for CODE to diagnose settings and to allocate resources suitable for the need. This is not to suggest that CODE enter the thorny sphere of school texts, but only to suggest that there may need to be a basic level of educational infrastructure for CODE's approach to reap the greatest potential benefits.

*A significant number of books meant for primary schools end up in secondary schools. This is not to detract from their usefulness; it is just that these books are perceived mainly by the public schools to be more appropriate for use in the lower secondary given the level of English fluency of the students.*

*Many of the KBF books end up as reference books for schools and institutions with few resources. Teachers and teacher trainers find them particularly useful. P. 62 Though KBF does not target adults with less than six years of literacy (a CODE priority), the bulk of KBF's beneficiaries are children under 15, youth and young adults. Other category of users are teachers and teacher trainers, a very vital category for the promotion and sustenance of a literacy environment. From this perspective, CODE's programme in Kenya is very relevant to the needs of the country. P. 65-66*

*In addition to reading the newspapers, teachers use the libraries mainly for reference purposes. At Korogocho, only five of the teachers reportedly frequent the library on a regular basis. At Senior Chief Koinange, teachers who attend evening classes in management and accounts make good use of the library. However, as the Deputy Head of Victoria Primary observed, since improved academic qualification ceased to be the basis for the promotion of teachers, teachers stopped reading anything but books that have a direct relevance to their teaching subject. P. 37*



### 2.5.10 Impacts of Supporting School Libraries

**Finding 23:** Financial sustainability of school libraries varies according to the setting, ranging from settings where CODE books are a useful supplement to existing libraries to those where CODE has provided a base for a sustainable library, to those where dependence on CODE will be required for many years.

The financial sustainability of school libraries is linked to the type of partnership that CODE has developed with the organization who is supporting the library program itself. Partners such as the National Library Service in Malawi have their own mandates and resources and can use CODE's books to further strengthen their support of library development. These organizations will better be able to support library development after CODE's interventions in capacity building. Other partners, such as CODE-Ethiopia are organizations essentially created by CODE to serve as implementation agents for their donated North American books. These organizations are seen as means to achieving results within literacy environments and individuals, rather than development targets *per se*, making them much more dependent on CODE's support.

*The chances for the library to survive if CODE stops assistance is very low because (i) the books are just too expensive for the schools to buy, and (ii) they are not readily available in the local market. As one staff of the school put it 'the school doesn't have funds even to buy chalks' (Kidanu, 1998, p. 33)*

*All these are attempted against the odds - a not too affluent or supportive community and a rigid government policy. One is at a loss as to what immediate solutions to suggest. But in the long-run, these efforts would have to continue until they gather enough momentum to pull the public on their side. . . . Quitting at this point would be like pulling the rug under those committee members who are trying their best. If this happens, all efforts made so far will go down the drain and it would be hard to restart a similar program in the future. (Kidanu, 1998, p. 52)*

## Results in the Development of Human Resource Capacity

### 2.5.11 Outputs of Developing Human Resource Capacity

**Finding 24:** CODE has increased the quantity and quality of literacy workers in partner communities, though not all training supports positive reading behaviours and it is of uneven standard. Attrition of trained personnel is a continuing challenge.

CODE has supported various types of training: library management, librarianship, various aspects of publishing, book repair, writing and teaching. CODE has also supported the training of teachers, volunteers, management committee members and LAC members. Since 1995, the data base indicates that 3,837 individuals were involved

for at least one day of training for a total of 11,324 training days. The average duration of training was 9.74 days. There was also a lot of incidental training of less than a day.

Training can provide direct support to the library or book production, for example, or it can focus on suitable usage of books. CODE staff report major observable differences when visiting libraries with and without trained staff. Also, there are major differences among countries. For example, the Ghana Library Board espouses traditional views of librarianship and emphasizes elaborate classification and storage of books which requires a full month of training plus a two month internship. On the other hand, RLIDP in Zimbabwe trains for much more community intervention involving study circles, with modules on such things as gender and development. Thus, training of librarians tends towards management of supplies (books), or interventions that help get books used more effectively. The evaluator's observation is that training is currently of variable duration, purpose and standard, and CODE might be well-served by developing common emphases and training standards.

The other big issue is attrition. Unfortunately, trained people often move, which makes sustaining capacity building efforts, such as training, a challenge. Experience in many developing countries suggests that systems for continuous training are necessary to compensate for the attrition that occurs in environments where anyone with training becomes mobile. Some countries train two at a time so that there is a back-up should one leave.

## 2.6 *Results for Individual Beneficiaries*

### 2.6.1 *Outputs for Individual beneficiaries*

**Finding 25: The number of school kits assembled and distributed has been on the increase since the inception of Project Love, providing growing numbers of Canadian school children with opportunities to participate in and benefit from Project Love.**

Since Project Love's inception, over 265,000 school kits have been donated and assembled by Canadian children and shipped overseas to developing countries. As shown in Exhibit 2.7, Project Love has been effective in increasing the numbers of Canadian communities and schools that have become involved.

**Exhibit 2.7 Project Love Kits and Canadian Involvement**

FISCAL YEAR	KITS ASSEMBLED	KITS DISTRIBUTED	# OF COMMUNITIES INVOLVED	# OF SCHOOLS INVOLVED
1992/93	60,445	55,000	67	?
1993/94	75,032	60,445	88	322
1994/95	80,000	75,032	115	329
1995/96	88,000	80,000	149	418
1996/97	?	88,000 (?)	?	460

\*Source: CODE, Project Love Annual Reports

Production and distribution of kits to school children from countries such as Malawi, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Guyana, Belize, among others (see Appendix II for individual Project Love result chains) provide Canadian school children with an initial exposure to the day-to-day literacy challenges faced by children in developing countries. Letters sent to and received from kit recipients facilitate active exchange between children in Canada and the developing world, as well as providing Canadian children with the opportunity to receive first-hand responses to their work with Project Love.

CODE is beginning to explore additional innovative development education linked to Project Love. For example, school-net web sites are providing participants with additional development education material and schools are inviting visiting nationals such as students to talk to classes. Links are also being made with the Canadian Teacher's Federation summer program for teachers. We commend these initiatives, and suggest that Project Love continue to engage in such activities. It might be useful to link with CIDA-funded education projects to enable efficient exchange and additional leveraging.

**Finding 26: While CODE has targeted women, with a few notable exceptions, results in increasing women's involvement have been modest.**

UNICEF's latest study of education in the South shows that, of the 140 million children not attending primary school, about 60% are girls. Of the world's nearly 1 billion illiterate adults, nearly two thirds are women.

In 1995, CODE asserted its intention to address such key issues as

*access to education and educational materials and the quality and impact of education and educational materials on girls and women (CODE Program Submission, 1995). Women represent a large share of CODE's target group of adults with six or less years of formal education. Learning and reading materials developed by CODE's program are open to everyone regardless of gender. The question of accessibility as yet, however, does not appear to have been dealt with either by previous evaluations or by CODE itself. In 1990, Hickling stated that "there are issues which...concern more directly the development of women...which can be addressed in a more specific manner...The impact of CODE's projects on women cannot be accurately assessed with the current indicators confined to \$ figures of beneficiaries numbers (Hickling, II, 42, 1990).*

CODE has begun to explore library development from a gender perspective, citing libraries as one of the most efficient ways of improving and sustaining literacy skills in rural areas.

*[T]he library is potentially more flexible and non-discriminatory. This is because there is no rigid timetable, curriculum or pre-requisite other than reading skills. Therefore it can cater to the needs of people with different educational levels and experiences. (Peasants and Educators: A study of the literacy environment in rural Tanzania, SIDA, June 1994, as quoted in CODE Program Submission, 3, 1995)*

However, according to CODE's baseline studies, its own libraries are used more frequently by men and are, in fact seriously under-utilized by women. In Gore, Ethiopia, for example, only 16% of users of the community library were female, though female usage is on the increase. In Mocimboa da Praia in the province of Cabo Delgado in Mozambique, mothers were unfamiliar with the exact nature of services provided by the community library. In Kenya, the issues surrounding cultural biases and high opportunity costs of educating girls were raised.

*At the household level, high opportunity costs specially for girls arising both from cultural biases and poverty, is not conducive to extending reading even for examinations, still less for leisure, to the home setting. (Wamahiu, 1998, p.60)*

One of the pre-requisites, as CODE has noted, for the library to fulfill its potential as a promoter of gender equity, is for its shelves and tables to be stacked with a collection of reading materials that can stimulate the interest and curiosity of its users. Beyond that, however, there is an urgent need for CODE to prioritize studies into understanding how women can be encouraged to use CODE's resources in ways which can produce fruitful results for them.

It is particularly important that CODE gain an understanding of the many ways in which its programs affect, or fail to affect, women. Firstly, literacy initiatives in the developing world are often justified and supported by the conviction that literacy is a strong indicator of improved health, welfare and economics. Female and maternal literacy, in particular, has often been cited as one of the strongest contributors to decreased malnutrition, decreased infant mortality rates, increased children's education and general improvement in the health and status of the family. Secondly, as democratic and multi-party systems emerge, it is especially important for women to become literate in order to become informed voters and engineers of social change. Thirdly, the context of women within CODE's programs needs to be considered for the purpose of determining the efficacy of programs highlighting the role of women, such as the publication of women's magazines, as well as to set the compass for future directions.

**Finding 27: CODE donated books are not reaching identified target groups efficiently.**

Efficiency refers to doing things at the least cost or in the best way. The main issue here is with CODE's defined target groups. While books are reaching them, the majority of books in many situations are reaching other groups which reduces efficiency in terms of serving the identified groups.

*Eighty percent of the books that are shipped to Kenya by CODE are supposed to target the primary level. However, as we have seen, books reaching primary schools were between 44 percent and 58 percent in the three years being evaluated; many of the books targeted for the primary level actually end up in secondary schools. This is because the level of fluency in English of a significant proportion of the students entering secondary schools is low compared to the standards in the high cost public and private schools, as well as in Canada. Many of the readers, meant for*

*the primary level, may actually therefore, be more appropriate for the secondary school students (Wamahiu, 1998, p. 59)*

Similarly, in Ethiopia many of the books are reaching other target groups which reduces efficiency of serving groups.

*The main beneficiaries of the reading room in Gore are: (i) educational institutions: the students and teachers, (ii) agricultural offices: especially the veterinary people who need books for reference, (iii) health clinics who are allowed to borrow books, (iv) prison inmates who receive books in their cells, and (v) other individuals including pensioners who just walk in to read books of interest. As a special program for women, the library is open on Wednesdays and Fridays between 4 and 5 p.m.. When women are given additional help on how to use the books and are encouraged to use the library for cultural awareness.(Kidanu, 1998, p. 40)*

There are also issues relating to the parts of a country being served as is shown in the following quotes:

*A look at the book distribution data by province . . . reveal that KBF reaches all the provinces. However, North Eastern and Coast provinces are the least served. The institutions served by KBF in the two provinces were a negligible 21 (3.8%), 9 (1.6%) and 13 (2.8%) in 1995, 1996 and 1997 respectively. Within the three years, the two provinces received a total of 2,372 (1.2%) books only.(Wamahiu, 1998, p.47 )*

*The distribution of books by KBF is demand-driven. It may therefore be argued that the Coast and North Eastern provinces are underserved because there is no or little demand for books in these areas. However, the demand for books itself depends on (a) the dissemination of information regarding the KBF programme; and (b) the cost effectiveness of acquiring books all the way from Nairobi and since mid-last year, from Kisumu. There is evidence indicating that the word-of-mouth method primarily used by KBF to publicize itself may not effectively be reaching the unreached populations. Secondly, the method of physically selecting books from the Nairobi and Kisumu offices is too expensive and time-consuming for distant and poorer schools.(Wamahiu, 1998, p.48-49)*

*Though the process of approval is simple, efficiency is hampered because of the following factors:*

- *Dissemination of information on KBF and its mandate is not systematized*
- *Locating the Venue a Problem*
- *Centralization of the distribution system*
- *Information on consignments not made available to clients consistently*
- *The Non-Existence of Catalogues/BookLists*

- *Insufficient Personnel to Assist.* (Wamahiu, 1998, p. 48-50)

This is not to suggest that the books are going to waste. Rather, it suggests that CODE's vision of the ideal target group is not shared on the ground, or the local partners are not able to develop ways of favouring these groups. We conclude that CODE should explore ways of harmonizing its goals in this regard with those of each Southern partner. Another problem is that there is a lack of funds available for distributing books to distant and poorer schools. CODE should therefore look at how to balance the trade-off between getting books to where they're most needed vs. the self-sufficiency of partners. These issues are discussed further in the conclusions of this report.

Further data indicates that about half the users were below the age of 15 and that 40% of female users were in the 10-14 age group, whereas for males, 52% were 15-19 years old. This data shows the wide range of users who do not necessarily fall into CODE's target beneficiaries.

## 2.6.2 Outcomes for Individual beneficiaries

**Finding 28: Project Love provides a means to "personalise" donations to the developing world for Canadian school children, and contributes to increasing their awareness of literacy issues of developing countries.**

Project Love is not unlike other NGOs that identify an individual child within a community in the developing world to "personalise" the act of donating funds (e.g. by providing the opportunity to donors to write to a specific child, send and receive pictures, and so on). Project Love kits and their distribution to children in developing countries play a similar role. Although in terms of cost-effectiveness, it may be argued that it is more efficient in the short-term to donate funds to local providers to purchase locally-produced school material to distribute to school children, by doing so the long-term benefits to Canadian children would be curtailed. By involving Canadian school children in the process of kit assembly, and by enforcing the personal contact between Canadian students and students of the recipient country through correspondence and pictures, CODE contributes to the development awareness of Canadian students. This is witnessed through testimonials from Canadian teachers such as: "Pupils were very impressed with the needs of students in other countries and thankful for their own bountiful supplies"; "The awareness and commitment of the children grew . . ." (Project Love Annual Report 1993-94, p. 4). In some cases, teachers have reported that pen pal relationships have been maintained due to previous Project Love involvement. In addition, through media coverage of Project Love activities in Canada, literacy issues in developing countries are presented to the Canadian public at large.

## 2.6.3 Impacts for Individual beneficiaries

**Finding 29: The available data demonstrates little evidence of impact on individuals as proposed in CODE's program strategy.**

This is not to say that there are no individual success stories. However, it is not possible, given the scant data collected on individual beneficiaries and the multiple confounding effects, to separate the contributions and attribute particular impacts to CODE. What

CODE is providing is a necessary condition for impact in the settings where CODE works, but we are uncertain of the extent to which it, by itself, is sufficient. The cancelled field trip to Marsabit, where some of the most useful data might have been found, contributes to this overall lack of data. However evidence of impact was not found in Ethiopia or in CODE's own impact studies, presenting the evaluators with real concerns.

## 2.7 *Conclusions*

Analysis of CODE's program leads to these conclusions:

1. CODE has increased access to books in the locations in which it has worked, but in many cases, the number of materials provided are insufficient in providing a critical mass of books for the evident pressing needs. The shortage exists at national and community levels and within many community and school libraries being supported. We wish we had clearer answers, but we are not able to judge whether it is better to provide "insufficient food to all or sufficient food to fewer". We do feel, however, that the issue of depth of coverage is critical and one that CODE should focus on in its future programming. The current plans to focus on a more limited number of countries is a sound beginning that should be considered at other levels as well.
2. CODE's programs have successfully managed to produce agreed outputs but not necessarily outcomes and impacts. This stems from the fact that CODE's origins have been in supplying books or inputs which clearly translate into capacity outputs. CODE places less emphasis on the outcome level of its interventions, as this requires other program strategies, namely institutional strengthening, to support the promotion of a literate environment. CODE's current plans demonstrate more of a commitment to expanding the means of literacy support through clarification of partner capacities, information technology, network development and use of new resources, better preparing them to produce substantive outcomes and impacts.
3. CODE's Southern partners are key to results. We are impressed by the partners we have contacted and commend CODE's efforts to support and nurture them. We feel that by considering these partners as the key focal point for development, CODE can maximize its results within its available resources. In order to do this, clear expectations of the different types partners must be outlined so that appropriate results are achieved. This being said, the prospects for sustainability are far greater through support for appropriate partners than by merely distributing books. The critical factor is therefore determining distinct expectations for partnerships in light of the environmental context of the countries in which CODE is working. CODE must first analyze country contexts and then decide which type of partner to work with to achieve results in that context. With regards to the environment, CODE should consider working with its partners and other Southern NGOs to advocate actions that may be needed in the education sector, and particularly with education ministries.
4. CODE-supported community libraries do not relate well to CODE's current target audiences. In our view, it makes more program sense for CODE to consider the community library the focal point for development and let that organization nurture

the audience that it feels relates. CODE must therefore take special care in choosing its partners to make sure that they relate to the audiences they want to reach. In considering the library as the focal point for development, CODE must create a set of standards to assess the efficiency and performance by which community libraries are operating. This is not to suggest that CODE abdicate responsibility for targeting specific priority groups, but it could do so in creative and innovative ways such as by providing additional targeted program thrusts for such groups. For example, there could be special support such as special materials and incentives to libraries that actively encourage the participation of women. Libraries that develop outreach mobile program could receive special consideration, and so forth. It should also be remembered that CODE believes strongly in developing, with their partners, adapted models of libraries to suit local needs. These libraries sometimes have little to do with the northern concept of a library.

5. School libraries, like community libraries, are worthwhile targets for development support *per se*. There are many challenges, but unlimited possibilities to provide needed, meaningful support. Additional work might be done to classify libraries (such as primary school, small secondary, large secondary, tertiary, etc.) to facilitate study of programming alternatives that give good results. Future sustainability of school libraries varies depending on such things as Ministry of Education policies and the ability of schools to raise funds. Over the long term, the role of CODE's partners may be a pre-condition for sustainability. Some partners have national mandates which are being strengthened through CODE's support, thereby ensuring future supply of books and support to school libraries. Other partners are merely the implementing agents of CODE's programs, leaving school libraries more dependent on CODE's inputs to ensure their future sustainability. As well, CODE might work with its partners to gain better understanding of how to deal with the issues surrounding a lack of school texts and how this relates to CODE support. For example, CODE may wish to maximize its results by working in settings that already have basic numbers of school texts, avoiding the inherent contradictions in supplying substitutes when actual school texts would be a better investment.
6. Results for individual beneficiaries are an important downstream objective. They provide a human dimension to results. In attempting to capture them, CODE may wish to re-orient its data collection system on library users to include more pointed and meaningful data on users and borrowers. Librarians, for example, could be encouraged to collect examples of users who have been particularly impacted.



### 3. *Development Factors*

#### 3.1 *Introduction*

CIDA's Partnership Branch has developed a *Program/Project Performance Framework of Results & Key Success Factors* as appended to the materials for the Kenya Workshop. The development factors identified are used as the framework for this chapter, and the management factors identified are used to organize the subsequent chapter.

#### 3.2 *Relevance*

Relevance refers to whether the program makes sense in terms of the conditions, needs or problems to which it is intended to respond. To be relevant, a project should be consistent with the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries, the country and region. It should also be consistent with CIDA policy, priorities and programs, with Canadian foreign policy and with the efforts of local organizations and other donors addressing the same needs or problems.

**Finding 30: The development approach used by CODE in programming for enhanced literacy is relevant to both CIDA priorities and for the most part to the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries.**

Literacy development responds directly and fundamentally to basic human needs. As CODE points out in its current program submission, illiteracy is both a cause and a consequence of poverty and underdevelopment. Thus, CODE's core mission responds directly to one of CIDA's central priorities. It is also relevant to the needs of targeted beneficiaries as there is a proven positive correlation between social development indicators and increased literacy. CODE and its partners have clearly thought out how and where its programs should contribute to improving the literacy environment of its targeted beneficiaries and countries. Rather than focusing on developing the "functional literacy" of beneficiaries, CODE's programs address "literacy support" through focusing on increasing and maintaining reading behaviour once basic literacy has been obtained. This type of program is relevant to local needs and priorities when it is targeted to appropriate partner organizations and their beneficiaries and effectively delivered to achieve results. CODE continues to re-conceptualize its programs and plans so that there are closer links between the type of program provided and clearly articulated results. This will ensure greater program relevance with regards to meeting beneficiary needs and priorities for the future.

CODE also works in countries and communities that are, for the most part, poor thereby responding to another CIDA priority. The proposed shift to include only countries classified as low in human development will re-confirm this principle and remove current anomalies. CODE is also sensitive to the need of women to be equitably included in its programs. It is noteworthy as well that through its development education programming, CODE spreads information about sustainable development to Canadians.

### 3.3 *Appropriateness*

Appropriateness of design refers to the extent to which the project resources, capacities and selected strategies are sensible and sufficient to achieve intended results (i.e., evidence of stakeholder satisfaction with and commitment to intended results and methods chosen to achieve them, Canada's capacity to provide goods and services required to achieve intended results; resources and services designed and delivered in a manner that effectively responds to conditions (including risks), needs or problems identified; application of lessons from development experience).

**Finding 31: CODE's program results have been conceptualized using three different and loosely coupled results-chains. This has made the appropriateness of CODE's programming questionable.**

In its efforts to promote awareness and understanding through education, CODE has focused its strategy primarily on building a sustainable literacy environment in the communities in which it works (results chain one). This is undertaken primarily by the distribution of books and other resources to communities in need through community and school libraries. These literacy environments cannot be sustained without organizations that strengthen and sustain the resources after CODE funding ends. It is for this reason that CODE's strategy also includes support of literacy partner organizations (results chain two). CODE also supports targeted groups of individuals in their acquiring of literacy skills (results chains three).

At present, these three results chains are overlapping, raising the question of whether or not it is appropriate for CODE to effectively manage for results at all three levels. It is also difficult for CODE to know whether selected partners will develop in needed ways or how to mix the provision of books with institutional strengthening. For example, CODE may supply a critical mass of appropriate books to a school library, without committing resources to ensure that library staff are trained to provide literacy support to students. Alternatively, CODE donating a supply of reference materials to a school without text books raises questions of the appropriateness of development inputs. CODE must therefore look at whether or not it has the right mix of programming inputs, especially in light of the fact that their primary input is provision of books.

Nonetheless, CODE has done a good job in developing logical framework analyses for many components of its program which is helpful. The proposed 1998-2001 program further defines CODE's integrated approach to literacy support which includes: access to a place of reading, reading materials, reading promotion activities, training and community governance. As noted in the previous chapter, however, sometimes resources are spread in ways that provide too little to too many beneficiaries. CODE needs to continue to consider its development theory and ensure that programming keeps current with what CODE is learning.

Some particular examples illustrate the challenges:

- It is difficult to match appropriately the investment in infrastructure with that in the reading material itself. Lack of adequate or available space for reading rooms (e.g. community libraries in Lindi and Mtwara, Malindindo and Mbangamao

Libraries in Tanzania) or inappropriate furniture (e.g. Nyoni Library in Tanzania) provides limited incentive to undertake reading in the libraries, consequently affecting the appropriateness of programming.

- The issue of appropriateness is also reflected in the types of books that are received by libraries. For example, books received by the community libraries in Mbinga District in Tanzania are few in number and are mainly meant for low level readers. This poses a challenge for those library users who have attained a level of literacy that requires more complex reading material in order to continue advancing reading skills. The fact that, in certain cases, reference material for adults is less available than is desired also poses challenges to those who wish to use the library as a source of practical information. This is the case, for example, at the Charity Community Library in Guyana, where the range and level of books provided does not meet some of the needs of people in the community (e.g. books required on agriculture, religious material, books for young people).

CODE must therefore, carefully consider the challenges in determining the optimal mix of programming and leverage points for assistance to ensure that their overall strategy is appropriate to the development needs of targeted beneficiaries. This can be done by tightening the coupling between results chains and consolidating the support of literacy environments result chain so that it is less multi-faceted (i.e. target resources only to school libraries).

**Finding 32: The appropriateness of development programming centered on donated North American books has been questioned by some, defended by others.**

The appropriateness of CODE's program to the needs of the populations that it seeks to benefit is crucial both to the organization's objectives as well as to its reputation. CODE has received criticism from partners for supporting the "supply side" of development through the donation of North American books. While national book selection committees are responsible for gauging the usefulness of the North American reading and reference materials, and books such as encyclopedias, dictionaries and four-colour picture books may provide a base stock of reference and library books, questions do arise as to the worth of sending out surplus or donated North American books.

While CODE strongly supports indigenous publishing of materials as diverse as visual dictionaries and women's magazines, it does not seem to even broach the ethical issues involved in the export of North American culture and values through the dissemination of North American literature. In Guyana, it was noted that CODE's uniqueness among literacy programs stemmed from its commitment to providing quality books in good condition. Other organizations have often taken the stance that any books are better than no books, however CODE does not partake in this dumping of books, but encourages recipients to perceive themselves as partners. CIDA must therefore look at the development priorities it has outlined for the next century and decide how it wants to support an agency whose interventions are primarily "supply oriented."

**Finding 33: The mechanism of developing partnerships and establishing priorities with partners contributes to ensuring the appropriateness of CODE's inputs to local needs.**

In its selection of partners, CODE chooses like-minded organizations that share the objective of promoting awareness and understanding through education while encouraging self-reliance. The majority of CODE's Southern partners affirm that congruence exists between their overall objectives and those of CODE, stressing, for example, the importance of Library Management Committees, the need for supported activities to be results-based, and placing the focus on disadvantaged groups.

Demand-driven response by CODE partners to requests made by target beneficiaries also contributes to the appropriateness of CODE programming. The appropriateness of many projects comes through the fact that organizations, in many instances, are responding to what has been requested from them by target beneficiaries. This ranges from women asking for literacy classes for themselves to parents requesting books for their children. People and schools often identify projects that need to be undertaken. Several CODE-funded organizations note that they only support activities among population groups and locations where need has been expressed and local input/participation offered. Partners also claim that working closely with participants in the education field as well as community members to assess needs aids in maximizing benefits and appropriateness.

Book selection strategies involving partner organizations assist CODE in providing partner organizations with appropriate materials. For example, organizations like the Tanzania Book Program and Zambia Library Service assure the appropriateness of materials by requesting CODE to send books according to priorities they establish about subject-matter and level depending on the demands received from users of the books. This is witnessed in the Goaso Community Library in Ghana, for example, where material is provided in Asante Twi to the library which operates in a township that comprises mainly speakers of that local language.

In the case of indigenous publishing, CODE has taken strides to assist the publication of reading material in local languages. In fact, CODE assists the publication of reading/learning material in 17 languages for both children and adults. Training in library management provided by CODE has also assisted libraries to strengthen the skill sets of those managing the libraries. The appropriateness of published material is also demonstrated by lasting results: "How to prepare a Compost Heap", a pamphlet published by Help for Progress in Belize, through CODE's paper support program, has remained in use and circulation in the country's remote villages since it was published in 1987-88.

### **3.4 Sustainability**

Sustainability is equated to continuing relevance and to the ability of programs to survive in a supportive environment that has access to sufficient amounts of resources. Relevance is assessed in various ways, but largely according to whether key stakeholders are willing to support the processes and products of programs.

**Finding 34: CODE's programs continue to be dependent on CIDA's financial support.**

CODE has acknowledged and experienced firsthand the hazards of depending so heavily on CIDA's support. However, self-sufficiency through the pursuit of alternate sources of funding has proved to be a difficult challenge. This challenge has prohibited CODE from accessing all available CIDA funds. At the programming level, CODE's commitment to indigenous publishing reflects a long-term approach, cognoscente of the fact that indigenous publishing efforts may not rapidly become self-supporting. CODE's programs have a middle-range appeal and cannot compete with the appeal of other development programs, such as those to feed the hungry. CODE therefore views fundraising within a long term plan of progressively developing more relationships with institutions and individuals. Although it has experienced a significant increase in donations from its affiliate profit corporation CODE Incorporated, the fact remains that CODE has been unable to increase donations significantly from the Canadian public over the last eight years and will be faced with the challenges of implementing a new 3:1 cost sharing agreement with CIDA. This ultimately affects the long-term sustainability of CODE's programs.

**Finding 35: Southern partner organizations vary in their prospects for sustainability; however, for the most part they continue to be fragile organizations dependent on the support of external donors.**

Partners in the South maintain that CODE's support will have a lasting effect on regions served; however, individual Southern partner organizations may not be able to survive once CODE withdraws its funding. Partner organizations, for the most part, draw largely on CODE's financial support, either in funds or in materials such as books from which income is generated. In terms of institutional capacity, partners noted that training activities have strengthened staff's abilities sufficiently so that they will be able to respond to future projects, CODE's or otherwise. A number of organizations report that a strong base of adequate and effective administrative structures have been established. However, time is still needed at many institutions for these structures to be fully sustainable.

Several partners interviewed no longer received CODE support, yet had been able to continue some scale of activities, and in a minority of cases even expand and add to programs. To many of CODE's current partners, however, withdrawal of CODE support would mean a marked scaling down or restructuring of activities. Other partners see little hope for survival without CODE's support as book shipments, for example, are very important to generate funds from user and membership fees to run operations. Certain partners depend on the provision of graphic and printing supplies, prohibitively expensive in those countries, to support their own activities. Partners noted that CODE was important not only for its material input, but for the moral support and information that it provides. Almost all partners noted that CODE's withdrawal would result in a funding vacuum important for development and expansion of literacy services. The most viable route to sustainability was perceived to be the support and improvement of local publishing capabilities to ensure that regions are not dependent upon donated books.

A minority of organizations noted that that CODE project activities have given them visibility and credibility, enabling them to attract other financial resources. Partners most confident in their ability to remain financially viable after CODE funding ceases are those guaranteed an annual subvention by government. Support from local or national sources, however, does not appear to be forthcoming in most cases. This situation once again raises the issue of the importance of sustainability of the organizational unit in order to attain a sustainable literacy environment.

**Finding 36: Due to the difficult country and local contexts in which CODE operates, coupled with relatively minimal investments per setting, in most cases the prospects for sustainability of local libraries are not strong in the short term.**

Sustainability of CODE libraries varies from country to country and according to individual situations. Southern partners pinpointed government intervention and community support as being the factors that will determine the future of libraries should CODE withdraw its support. Of the libraries studied for the impact studies undertaken by CODE, for example, it was stated that six community libraries do not have their own budgets; one described its budget as "...too small to support any meaningful development program for the library . . . it is just peanuts" (Ejura Community Library Survey), and one stated that those libraries receiving CODE's assistance are "too dependent on the organization" (Community Libraries in Lindi and Mtwara, Tanzania).

In Belize, LAC and partner members observed that CODE's libraries were sustainable; however, not in the poorest or most rural areas, due to the lack of resources in those areas. Partners in Guyana state that, given the low levels of literacy, lack of a civil society and poverty in that country, CODE's support is essential for the supply of reading material and ongoing training necessary for the survival of libraries. According to Guyanese partners, no other agency has stepped forward to accomplish the type of work that CODE does and, were CODE to withdraw its support, libraries—particularly school libraries—would probably not be viable. However, since the government does provide some funding, a modicum of services would continue. A similar situation renders CODE's support critical in Zimbabwe.

In Tanzania CODE's sponsorship is seen by partners as being indispensable to its libraries. Rural libraries are totally dependent upon CODE for furniture and other supplies as well as books. In Zambia, the situation appears to be somewhat different, partners stating that some libraries may attain self-sufficiency within a few years; however, withdrawal of CODE needs to be done gradually, over a period of two to three years. Nevertheless, CODE's books have been identified as essential and, while some services may only be reduced, many libraries will not be able to continue without them. Partners in Mali deem CODE's support necessary to libraries, however note that designated resource people are guiding these libraries in the direction of sustainability. The partner in Malawi, without sustainable local means of book acquisition, is at risk as are libraries. In Ghana, CODE supplies the bulk of books to libraries, close to 90% according to partners. CODE also funds training of library assistants and its assistance is important for sustaining and developing services.

Self-sufficiency among libraries in the regions CODE has favoured is difficult because, while community support may be strong, financial and other resources are not easy to generate in these areas. Additionally, problems like currency devaluation also thwart the process of sustainability, particularly in countries that depend on export books and materials. The majority of the LAC members interviewed were unable to put forth suggestions, outside of what is currently being undertaken, as to how to increase self-sufficiency.

### **3.5 Partnership**

Partnership refers to the shared responsibility and accountability for results, including the existence of collaborative learning within and between Canadian organizations and their Southern partners.

**Finding 37: CODE's association with Southern organizations has in many cases led to successful partnerships with shared responsibility and accountability for program results.**

CODE has used differing patterns and partnerships to accommodate local capacities and needs. Some of CODE's partners are national institutions in their own right, such as the Malawi National Library Service, and are able to extend their own work with CODE's support. Other partners, such as CODE Ethiopia, are organizations essentially created by CODE to serve as implementation agents for CODE's donated North American books. At times there has been more than one type of partner in a given country. For example, in Kenya, CODE has partnerships at the national level, with the Kenyan Book Foundation, and at the local levels, as in the case of partnership with the Marsabit district. The issue of multi-partner relationships raises the matter of how CODE thinks about partnerships in the different countries in which it operates. We have not attempted to analyze all the patterns or their rationales, but we feel that strategically, CODE's choice of partners and program for their sustainability is key to fulfillment of CODE's mission. CODE must have a clear understanding of the capacities of its current types of partners and must communicate its expectations of those same partners so that programs and organizations are strengthened appropriately. The current program submission goes a long way towards clarifying CODE's strategy, and we endorse it.

CODE has been applauded by the vast majority of its Southern partners for listening, being flexible and being cognizant of the development factors which have been obtained on the ground. Many partners state that CODE guides, but does not direct programs and that a strong process of collaborative learning increases their efficiency. This takes place through the mutual development of projects and via regular visits by CODE officials to partners and project sites. CODE's partners also appreciate the organization's recipient-led planning and management style. The participation of recipients is further enhanced by representation of individuals from developing countries on its Board. Partnership with CODE has enabled Southern organizations to develop good relationships with beneficiary schools, the government and other NGOs through the distribution of quality learning materials.

While most organizations reported satisfaction with their partnership with CODE, a small but concerned minority suggested that they occasionally felt that projects were being pushed on them. A few partners expressed disappointment at the fact that their descriptions of local situations sometimes were disregarded and that results were demanded within time frames irreconcilable to the situations at hand. CODE was cited by one organization as having impeded that partner from delegating power to beneficiaries and, for example, preventing community projects to be run by those in the rural rather than urban areas. According to these partners, CODE needs to be more available, to have more faith, to listen to their partner's point of view with a greater spirit of acceptance and not to depend on the misinformation and hearsay provided by other sources.

**Finding 38: There are mixed views on the appropriateness of local advisory committees.**

At present CODE involves two types of local advisors: 1) Local Advisory Committees (LAC's) – a group of relevant experts coordinated at the national level to guide CODE's programming decisions; and 2) Library Management Committees (LMC's) – local community members responsible for the overseeing and management of certain CODE libraries at the community level.

In general, Southern partners tended to be critical of relationships with their corresponding LACs. Partners in different countries stated that the LACs did not appear to be very active. LACs were criticized for existing in name only and not visiting project sites as promised or planned. In some cases, partners stated that they had never met any member and that members of the LAC were inaccessible. This might be due to the fact that LAC's are recruited at the national level and may therefore not have relevant experience of the actual geographic concentration in which CODE's programs are operating. It was noted that, since members were well-qualified individuals active in the field, they often had to juggle volunteer work with the LAC with other, more pressing commitments. Dialogue, in certain cases, was seen as the route to improving relations. LAC members themselves noted that the efficacy of the LAC depended ultimately on the sincerity and dedication of members which varied from individual to individual.

The majority of LAC members interviewed stated that working with CODE has been a satisfactory experience. CODE is noted to be generally willing to listen to the LAC's proposals and other input, to act accordingly and guide capacity development. CODE has been effective in building capacity and strengthening the LAC. CODE has provided technical advice and funding for LAC activities. Response and advice is generally exchanged efficiently on urgent issues. The weakest aspect of the relationship consisted of a lack of coordination between CODE and LACs in terms of both time and priorities. Suggestions for improving CODE's effectiveness and efficiency include the need for CODE to open access to other literacy training projects and to explore book sources other than CODE, with emphasis on funding sustainable local publishing.

LAC members generally perceive their committees to be strong, time-efficient and increasingly willing and able to address the issues of financial stability and feasibility as it pertains to CODE's local partner organizations. LACs report their commitment to



acting according to CODE's priorities, in helping provide infrastructure and books to local organizations. The majority of LAC members also stated that the participatory manner in which they have worked with CODE has contributed greatly to the sustainability of the LAC membership.

Suggestions for improving the LAC include eradicating irresponsible LAC members by limiting memberships to two years. The dearth of incentives for LAC members to work responsibly could be changed by allowing participation in CODE's Annual General Meeting to rotate among LAC members. Some members noted that transportation allowance given for transport to meetings would encourage and facilitate attendance. Opportunities for direct communication with the LAC chair by other members was also noted to be useful and in need of support.

It appears, however, that Library Management Committees (LMC's) play a more direct role in guiding CODE's programs at the community level given their immediate relevant expertise and vested interest in supporting their local literacy initiatives. CODE might therefore consider the LMC as a more appropriate model for soliciting community support and control over achieving program results. In any event, CODE needs to spend time reconceptualizing the model and roles of its advisory partnerships, based on how these models best link to their strategy.

**Finding 39: CIDA's presence as a partner is not always known to beneficiaries.**

In both case study countries, beneficiaries often did not know that Canada, CIDA, or CODE were involved:

*The recipient institutions, though grateful to KBF for the book distribution program, has little or no knowledge of the Canadian connection. Until June last year, neither CODE nor CIDA were publicly acknowledged by KBF as the sponsoring agencies. This has changed now with the book stamps at least mentioning CODE/CIDA as the supporting organizations. However, books stamped before June 1997, and yet to be distributed, continue to bear the older stamp. (Wamahiu, 1998, p.64-65 )*

The issue is whether the CODE contract matters. It may matter to CIDA and the Canadian taxpayer, but insisting on prominent labels on every donation may not necessarily be the most effective approach to ensuring CIDA's presence as a partner.

### **3.6 Leverage**

Leverage determines whether the partnerships established by CODE are capable of multiplying results and increasing overall investments through leverage of resources other than CIDA's.

**Finding 40: Donations and other grants provide leveraging of CIDA's investment. However, when compared to CIDA's current 4:1 funding ratio for NGO matching funds, this leveraging is much less substantial.**

CODE receives donations from individual and corporate sponsors, from other governments, CODE affiliates and foundations. In the period 1991-1997 these have totaled \$4.4 million. This is about 22%<sup>1</sup> of the total amount of CIDA funding received by CODE during the period. CODE has attempted to increase leveraging in recent years by cutting costs and increasing donations.

In addition, CODE contributes donated books which are valued by IBB at \$12 per unit. One can argue about the monetary value of a book, but the fact remains that even at the cost of production, their value is considerable.

**Finding 41: Some CODE-funded libraries have been successful in attaining support from other sources in addition to CIDA.**

There is some evidence that certain CODE supported community libraries were able to attain additional resources from other sources. For example, the Charity Community Library in Guyana has received publications from other sources than CODE, namely casual gifts of magazines from Voluntary Services Overseas, from teachers, and publications distributed by the Baha'i Faith. The Pikine community library also attained publications from other sources, with donations provided by the French Cultural Centre, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and Islamic institutes. However, we must note the lack of good data on leveraging in partner countries and organizations. This is an area where simplified baseline data and monitoring would be helpful (See section 4.3).

### **3.7 Conclusions**

Analysis of the various development factors leads to these conclusions:

1. CODE's program is relevant to its beneficiaries and consistent with CIDA's priorities as it addresses basic human needs, focuses on the poorest of the poor, and attempts to include the special needs of women in development. While CODE, like other NGOs, struggles constantly to be faithful in its actions to its development philosophy, the program overall is highly relevant.
2. While CODE's program is generally appropriate, it could be more appropriate with a strategy that provides tighter coupling between the type of programming provided and clearly articulated results with specified units for change. CODE deals with dynamic community systems involving not only libraries and their books, but also the people and committees that govern and manage them. It is not always easy to ensure that all aspects of the system move forward in tandem.
3. CODE has taken appropriate measures to involve partners which helps to ensure that its program is responding to local needs and requirements. However, the focus on

<sup>1</sup> These figures are derived from the 1998-2001 Program Submission and differ from other sources. For example, they were reported as 13% in 1993, and 17% in 1994 by Deloitte & Touche; 15% in 1996/97 and 20% in 1997/98 in internal CIDA documents.

North American books is an implicit constraint on appropriateness in certain development contexts. The priority need may be for books in languages other than those that CODE supplies, or on topics that relate more clearly to the context receiving them. Of course, CODE does shift its support to indigenous publishing in such contexts, but its overall program is reliant on North American books for sustainability – there simply would not be sufficient cash donations to support local publishing to the exclusion of book donations.

4. Sustainability has been achieved in a few instances, but typically partner organizations at both national and local levels continue their dependence on CODE. Southern partners at the national level receive the overwhelming majority of their book donations through CODE, and without this steady supply, they would at best need major structural adjustment, and at worst, they would cease to exist. At the community level, libraries tend to be fragile organizations in highly troubled environments. In the face of natural and human disasters the library is not a high priority. Furthermore, it takes many years before a library can reach the stage of its own development where it can sustain itself. Clearer programming focus on organizations as opposed to individuals may be helpful in supporting sustainable development in such contexts.
5. CODE is viewed as a supportive partner that allows Southern organizations to develop programs that they deem appropriate for the target communities involved. Some Southern partners want more support, especially from LACs, but organizational development is of necessity a process that cannot be forced. In general, CODE has a sound and improving approach to partnership that is well-suited to the goal of creating sustainable local organizations through mutually beneficial relationships.
6. In some cases, the beneficiaries of CODE's support did not know of its connections to CODE, to CIDA, or to Canada. While this is a requirement in CIDA funding, it would be useful for CODE to explore the ways of doing so that are most appropriate in the various program countries.
7. CODE has leveraged CIDA's investment through donations of cash and books; however, while the situation is improving, it falls short of CIDA's expectations of 3:1 matching. The extent of leveraging in developing countries is not clear.

## **4. Management Factors**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores CODE's program results as they relate to CIDA's key results areas. CIDA's management factors refer to effective and appropriate use of resources for results. We have not discussed prudence and probity as a financial analysis was deemed to be beyond the scope of this evaluation.

### **4.2 Cost Effectiveness**

Cost-effectiveness is a construct which in this case asks whether donors are receiving good value for their money. It refers to assessing the relationship between costs and results to see if it is reasonable. Costs can be compared with relevant benchmarks and, where feasible, against results achieved. (e.g.: program overhead costs, partner overhead costs, percentage of investments reaching the beneficiaries). Cost-effectiveness must also be assessed in terms of whether cost sharing is delivered as planned.

**Finding 42: CODE's programs have responded to significant CIDA cutbacks by downsizing human resources and further decentralizing program planning and implementation. This reflects a move towards a more cost-effective development approach.**

At a time when governments of both the North and South are engaged in a process of downsizing there is considerably more emphasis on cost effective development approaches, with an increasing demand for technologies and tools that can be accessed by more people in cost-effective ways. CODE, historically, received eight dollars from CIDA for every one dollar that it has been able to raise independently. This 8:1 funding ratio established CODE as somewhat of an anomaly in the NGO landscape, as it was well beyond the average 3:1 ratio of cost-sharing maintained by other CIDA-sponsored organizations.

In order to close this gap, significant cutbacks were made to CODE's funding, creating considerable financial strain and resulting in a down-sizing of its program. Overseas offices run by Canadians were closed. The International Book Bank (IBB) similarly closed offices and re-located to cheaper accommodations. Complicating the issue of cost-sharing has been the difficulty in placing an agreed dollar value on the books that CODE receives. One of the major non-financial inputs to the CODE program is reading and reference material donated from the publishing and educational communities in Canada and the United States. Revenue Canada has determined guidelines as to the worth of books which CODE is attempting to use in gaining recognition of the monetary value and equivalence of the thousand of books it solicits to send overseas.

**Finding 43: CODE's methods of planning and managing for results make it difficult to assess overall cost effectiveness.**

CODE's diffuse focus geographically and strategically makes it difficult to separate effects or costs, confounding a simple analysis. How effective and costly is the development of Southern partners? How much does CODE invest to establish one

community library? How much is spent to provide access to one book? CODE now offers a table d'hôte menu in which it is difficult to separate the various courses or options. A tighter coupling between the program strategy and resources, such as is done in a work breakdown linked to results would make this feasible in the future. The following finding illustrates inherent difficulty and also the potential.

**Finding 44: Across all programs and countries, over the past seven years, through CODE, CIDA has invested less than \$3 per North American book delivered to a library in a developing country.**

A valid estimate of how much it costs the Canadian taxpayer to send each CODE book to a developing area is a useful statistic. It has been difficult, however, to separate the costs associated with this element of the program, given that CODE does many other things. Based on the total CIDA contribution, we know that it is at most \$5, but probably considerably less. Given the 63% portion spent on education, North American books are probably of the order of 50% of the total CIDA investment. This would represent less than \$3 per book. As CODE considers its future program, it would be useful to develop the necessary assumptions for a more accurate estimate of cost and to monitor this cost as it serves as a good efficiency measure for CODE.

**Finding 45: CODE's management costs have been high as a result of multi-levels of management, but steps have been taken to reduce them.**

While this is not an organizational evaluation, management costs reflect on program delivery and will be noted in general terms. CODE management costs include the costs of management in Ottawa, costs for Southern partners and LACs, and costs associated with administration of projects of partners. In the past, this has been as much as 43% of the total budget, but these costs have been cut substantially with the closure of CODE's overseas offices. CODE's recent program submission (1998-2001) has reduced its management costs to 25% of the total budget. CODE's strategy should therefore continue to ensure that the balance is on program rather than management and administration.

## **4.3 Management Systems**

### **4.3.1 Planning**

Planning is the process through which programs are defined to deliver proposed development activities and achieve anticipated results with stated resources. Sound planning is participatory, with projects/programs jointly developed by Canadian and overseas partners. It takes place at different levels of the organization to ensure that issues are dealt with appropriately at the Board, partner and local community levels.

**Finding 46: CODE has responded to CIDA's results based management approach earlier than most other Canadian NGO's, but the multiplicity of development targets and beneficiary units for change make it difficult for CODE to plan for results.**

Since CODE began strategic planning over a decade ago, it has prepared a total of four three-year plans. These three-year plans are developed through a consultative and collaborative process that involves CODE Board, staff, Southern partners and LMC's. CODE's three year plans have employed such planning aids as logical framework analyses and results chains that present the CODE program within a framework of expected program results and their related performance indicators. The draft program submission for 1998 - 2001 demonstrates a commitment to further understand and implement the RBM concept. However, we have found the development frameworks to be overly complex and in need of additional conceptual clarification.

The main challenge that remains for CODE is a need to clearly define results and their interconnections and agree on, and target, units of change. For example, the draft program submission lists these targeted units: children; youth; families; teachers; librarians; communities; Canadian children and youth; community residents; the literacy support sector; volunteers; reading sites; number of books; reading promotion activities; Canadian teachers. All of them are essentially collections of individuals perhaps reflecting CODE's history of dealing with numbers of books and people rather than with organizational units.

To be fair, CODE does a good job in its program submission of articulating its strategy for libraries and communities, but the whole approach to literacy support appears to us to focus on the individual reader who is provided with access. The result is ultimately increasing the number of readers which will always fall far short of the need. CODE appears to view libraries as a means to literacy; we view them as providing a sustainable basis for literacy support, or as an end. In this regard however, CODE should be praised for experimenting with different models that support strengthening libraries to provide a basis for literacy support. For example, CRC, CODE's partner in Tanzania, has developed a standard-based matrix to monitor the development of its library centres. This matrix helps CRC plan the construction, procurement of furniture, books and training for each of its library centres, allocating budgets to each output. Once outputs have been reached, they are checked off the matrix, indicating to CRC that standards have been met and new centres can start to be developed.

This type of tool lends strength to our view that CODE and CIDA would be better served if results were conceived in terms of the number of adequately equipped sustainable libraries performing at some standard. This would enable a clear targeting for development support and ultimately have greater benefits in the long term.

**Finding 47: CODE's program plans are developed using a variety of units of change. These units are not always congruent with CODE's development strategy, making it difficult to manage for results.**

The geographic units of change used in CODE's program plans, range from country level units (macro) to community-level units (micro), is very diverse, making it difficult

to define results clearly and manage for them. In countries like Kenya, CODE has partnerships at the national level and at the local level. If the geographic unit is national, then CODE should attend to national level results and monitor national level change. This is very difficult in change terms because CODE's contribution represents such a small fraction of the total books in a country. It would be much easier to do so at the level of targeted communities.

Programs that aim to produce results among a wide range of individuals also make it difficult for CODE to manage by results. As reflected in both the 1994-97 and 1998-2001 program plans, incremental steps have, and will be taken by CODE to target resources geographically to a focused population with sound rationale. In the 1994-97 plan, a geographic focus was outlined based on 12 core countries, and programs were targeted to children aged up to 15 years and adults with six or fewer years of education. The 1998-2001 program submission has two new criteria that further target CODE's geographical scope: 1) UNDP's Human development Index (HDI) indicators, and 2) the Adult Literacy Rate. CODE will allocate resources to those countries classified by the HDI as having "low human development" and as being in the mid-range of adult literacy based on the adult literacy rate (Program submission, 1998-2001, p.3). Their modified individual target group will now focus on a wider population which includes "children, youth and their families." (1998-2001 program submission).

In our view, this is a good improvement, but still too general to maximize impact with scarce resources. Other indicators might help at sub-national levels: gender equity, ethnic diversity, local poverty, to name possibilities.

CODE has identified some of the current limitations in information systems and the need to address them, particularly in how they "have resulted in detailed information for each partner but have not facilitated a country based approach to systems' design" (1998-2000 program submission). We support a movement towards more clearly defined country program approaches with corresponding planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

*Though the network of KBF member schools appear to be large, when considered against the total number of primary and secondary schools in the country, they are really a drop in the ocean: the number of primary schools to which KBF donated books during the three years under consideration are less than 2 percent of the 16,115 primary schools and between 7 and 9 percent of the 2,354 secondary schools in the country. (Wamahiu, 1998, p. 45)*

#### **4.3.2 Implementation**

Implementation refers to how the program is carried out to achieve results. Successful program implementation relies on clear connections between results at various levels (activities, outputs, outcomes.) To be realistic, program implementation plans must be able to anticipate risk and problems and to take appropriate action when necessary.

**Finding 48: Implementation of CODE programs is being successfully managed to produce agreed outputs but not necessarily outcomes and impacts.**

CODE has shipped approximately 3.8 million books to 15 developing countries in the last eight years, considerably increasing the availability of books and other printed materials overseas during the period 1990-1998. CODE has also enhanced the capacity of libraries and Southern partners. However, perhaps because CODE's origins have been in supplying books, the program emphasis has been at this level of supplying inputs that translate into capacity outputs. The outcome level relates to performance which requires other program strategies such as institutional strengthening which CODE also does, but with less emphasis. This is a more difficult area of programming which entails perhaps greater investments per library, but it is needed if higher level results are to be achieved.

**Finding 49: CODE's strategy of implementing programs around key local partners is working effectively.**

CODE's Southern partners are key to positive program results. As the key focal point for development, these partners enable CODE to maximize results with available resources. According to our interviews, CODE has managed partners appropriately and has continually adjusted its partnerships in a responsive and dynamic way. Some partners have left either because they have not been effective or because they had become self-sufficient and chose to move out independently. This aspect of program management has been handled strategically. CODE must remain aware, however, that their partners' resources and capacities are varied. Each of CODE's partners must therefore be equipped to develop customized implementation plans that respond directly to the immediate needs and characteristics of their target communities. Providing partners with these planning skills will ensure that their local staff receive the specific training that they need and that CODE resources are properly targeted and used.

**Finding 50: The CODE impact assessments and this evaluation suggest that CODE would enhance results if it allocated more program resources to support strengthening of library management and service performance.**

For the most part, the CODE-funded community libraries appear to lack strong management that maximizes use of existing library facilities to provide services for clients. For example, in the impact assessments, only two libraries studied, the Ejura Community Library (Ghana) and the Charity Community Library (Guyana), have established library management committees to help them with their day-to-day operations – though the situation was better in our case studies. In addition, limited or no staff training in library management has in some cases contributed to only limited library services being offered (e.g. the community libraries in Mbinga District, Tanzania). Some librarians with limited or no training in library studies lack the expertise to administer activities outside of basic circulation and reference services such as cataloguing of books, establishing and maintaining card catalogues for library client use, and implementing special programs (e.g. programs for women, adult reading



sessions, story telling, community outreach programs). The focus on improving management would help to stretch scarce resources fully.

It should be noted that CODE's current program submission acknowledges and addresses this issue by targeting not only the library, but also the community context such as the library management committee, teachers and so forth.

#### **4.3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation refers to the ability of the organization to define, monitor and report on program results at the output, outcome and impact level. Regular, well-planned monitoring and evaluation activities must take place at all levels of the organization to be most effective. Findings should also be disseminated at all levels of the organization so that staff and partners can build on knowledge gained.

#### **Finding 51: Unclear conceptualizations of CODE's units of change greatly limits the monitoring and evaluation process.**

As noted earlier, ambiguities exist around important concepts and definitions. For example, CODE does not have a standard definition of a library user. "Users" refer in some instances to those people who enter the library, and in other instances to those who borrow books. Other units of analysis which lack clear definitions are: book, borrower and member. Until such ambiguities around units of analysis and their definitions are addressed, the validity of CODE's program monitoring and evaluation is in question. A more fundamental issue concerns the organizational units for change and how they are defined and programmed for. Does CODE think of Southern partners as part of its results? Community libraries? Resource Centres? School libraries? Schools?

#### **Finding 52: Current approaches to monitoring do not adequately reflect important qualitative dimensions of CODE's work.**

CODE has developed detailed information systems on its libraries and their usage. However, many important dimensions of human development are not picked up in such systems. There is no systematic way to learn about the adult who learned to read in a CODE-supported library, or the youth who excelled in a national examination, or the farmer who increased his crop yield because of what he read. Narrative reports, awards, book-use diaries and such methods might be used to capture such information which is vital for all parts of CODE's program.

CODE could also invite local partners and staff to share their ideas around developing new qualitative evaluation methods, based on the type of changes they have observed in their target communities and with individuals. Developing new qualitative measures could help CODE move away from conceiving literacy as a narrow technical task and allow evaluations to capture some of the outcomes that increased literacy may have on the human development of individuals and communities.

**Finding 53: While CODE has been a leader in conducting baseline studies on literacy environments, the studies have not been particularly helpful in subsequent evaluation of results.**

CODE leads most NGOs in gathering baseline data related to its programs. Between 1995 and May 1997 a total of 11 studies were conducted in order to obtain baseline data in communities. Our own work was hindered by not being able to use these because of our inability to access the Marsabit region where one baseline study was conducted and the technical limitations of the other relevant baseline. In reviewing these studies, our observation is that one of their limitations was the lack of clear and consistent frameworks for this work linked to targeted units of change. It is particularly difficult to do a meaningful baseline on a community, especially when it involves nomadic people, and so forth. It is far easier, and in our view more helpful to integrate such studies with programming and to focus on clearer targeted units such as libraries. A simple quick assessment of the capacity of each library would serve both as a baseline and as a means of diagnosing needs for capacity development.

**Finding 54: CODE has pioneered the conducting of locally-produced impact studies on community libraries but could improve the utility of studies by employing common frameworks that enable aggregation of results and lessons learned.**

As with the baseline studies, CODE has been a leader among Canadian NGOs in attempting to analyze impact at community level. As part of its efforts to look at its programming through an RBM prism, CODE undertook a series of studies to better understand the impact of its support to community libraries. The studies were completed between 1995 and 1997 in 15 community libraries in seven countries. They contain rich information that is useful in understanding results, but would be more useful if they all related to a common framework and were rolled-up. Appendix II has attempted this for the community libraries in Mbinga District of Ruvumu Region in Tanzania. We have gone through the report and extracted the results chain indicators as reported and include summary observations. Details of activities undertaken by CODE and others include: the number of publications supplied to the libraries, the hours a library operates per week, training undertaken by library staff (provided by CODE and by others), and so on. Outputs show that CODE has, for example, made available library resources (e.g. books in various languages, periodicals) to library users, has trained library staff working in libraries to assist clients, and has data that has been tallied to determine the number of library users, classified by CODE target groups and by gender. The studies also provide information on activities and outputs that have not been successfully achieved. This information provides an understanding of activities and subsequent outputs that demonstrates that community libraries are receiving essential support from CODE that permits the libraries to operate in a basic way, and a partial understanding of CODE's contribution to the overall objective of its programming.

The tables reveal that little was reported in the impact studies on outcomes and impacts which might have been better accommodated had a results-based framework been used. We have done similar tables for the other studies which we will be pleased to share with CODE.

#### **4.4 Appropriate Human Resource Utilization**

Appropriate human resource utilization refers to whether or not there is an effective match between program needs and the knowledge, expertise and personal skills of Canadian and Southern partners. For human resources to be used appropriately, there must be effective governance of an organization. This refers to the structure and function of the Board, the relationship between the board and executive and target group representation, including gender equity.

**Finding 55: CODE's governance structure appropriately guides effective program implementation.**

Consisting of the Board, secretariat, Southern partners and LAC's, CODE has successfully developed a governance system which supports program development and implementation. CODE's Board includes an illustrious group of highly committed individuals who are involved in challenging and developing CODE's mission and vision. The Board has evolved suitably in response to changing conditions. The size has been reduced from 24 to 15 members, and the Executive Committee has been reduced from seven to five. Re-structuring has been viewed as effective and board members report that effective preparation of information by the executive has significantly increased their participation in CODE's organizational functioning and future development recently.

In order to guide effective program implementation by Southern partners, CODE has created Local Advisory Committees (LAC's) in all core countries that have greatly increased CODE's access to advice, objectivity, expertise and community support. Involving an inclusive range of stakeholders in CODE's overall decision-making process has also created a better understanding of the needs of the target population and therefore how to implement programs.

**Finding 56: Changes in staffing patterns in response to financial constraints have enhanced the appropriateness of CODE's human resource utilization.**

The streamlining of staffing, especially the closing of Canadian-staffed offices abroad, has led to a more appropriate staffing pattern. It has transferred responsibility and accountability to Southern partners which is consistent with contemporary development thinking. It is also more cost-effective. Of course, these changes require additional change. In order to achieve intended results and maximize program impact, CODE must ensure that local program staff have the expertise, orientation and relevant skills to effectively implement, monitor, evaluate and eventually help sustain programs.

The most significant change has been the recent appointment of a new president to replace the former president who has guided CODE for over 20 years. CODE has succeeded in the important first step of finding a suitable replacement. It now needs to manage the transition in all its other dimensions.

## 4.5 *Innovation and Creativity*

Determining whether a program has been innovative and creative refers to whether the program has experimented with new project design and procedures and whether calculated risks and new partnerships have been effected to achieve results. Equally important to experimentation with new ideas is that lessons learned from the innovation have been recorded and disseminated among relevant partners.

### **Finding 57: CODE has demonstrated a continuing commitment to innovation and creativity in its programming.**

CODE has used literacy awareness campaigns, reading days and mobile libraries to increase access to literacy. For example, in Gore, Ethiopia a mini-media project was developed by library volunteers who used a speaker system to publicize the Yayu Community Reading Room and to attract increased community participation and input. Local author contests and support for indigenous printing have been used to generate relevant materials. The proposed 1998-2001 program plan, moreover, demonstrates CODE's commitment to developing new initiatives that respond to the growth of information and the rapid development of new technology. As CODE mentions, the success of introducing information technology into programs "will be based on the availability of equipment and skills in communities where CODE works, and on the availability of electricity. (1998-2001 program submission, p.20).

The current program submission is strong on innovation and creativity. It expresses (pp. 10 - 11) what has been learned in the past program and it outlines a series of new initiatives (pp. 20-21) in information technology, the use of local languages, and network development.

Seen through the prism of these standards, CODE has been a pioneer in many of its partner countries and its program is innovative and creative according to many measures. LAC members reported that CODE's program's uniqueness lay in its ability to consider a spectrum of development efforts, and holistically integrate these aspects towards the creation of a literacy environment. CODE has also been praised for its efforts, in many regions, to encourage total participation by locals in the running of projects. CODE's Board has pointed out that CODE has been a pioneer since its inception, encouraging education in the name of human development rather than for proselytizing purposes.

### **Finding 58: Despite CODE's creative efforts, the equitable involvement of girls and women is yet to be achieved.**

Practically all of the data indicate less than equal involvement of women and girls as beneficiaries. CODE should continue to undertake creative initiatives to address the lower participation of women accessing and using literacy support services. The 1998-2001 program submission demonstrates a commitment to increasing women's participation through the implementation of some of the following initiatives: in Ghana a program that provides teachers and parents with ways to encourage girls' reading development will be implemented; in Guyana three local publications will focus on the achievement of Guyanese women in history as role models for reading skills; and in

Mozambique a contest was held for poetry and short stories written by women. Educational research clearly indicates that increased maternal literacy contributes strongly to decreased malnutrition, infant mortality rates and higher levels of education attainment by children. These links also demonstrate the importance of developing practical, relevant and creative literacy programs for women so that they can be adapted to their demanding lifestyles. Further emphasis on program innovations that increase women and girls participation can be explored and the results monitored.

**Finding 59: CODE has been successful in encouraging partners to create new and innovative approaches and models in their literacy programming.**

CODE's partners have demonstrated great success in approaching their programming with creativity and innovation. The challenging environments that partners work in has forced them to continuously approach their programs with new ideas to ensure that books are distributed and communities are participating in literacy activities. Supporting indigenous and children's literature publishing has met a great need in some local communities where commercial publishing does not exist. Community participation activities to encourage library-use have also been a success. For example, the Reading Days hosted by libraries in Ethiopia in partnership with the local education offices, help to promote the values and importance of reading and writing through dramas, writing contests, educational songs. They also help forge new partnership with relevant government offices.

Approximately half of CODE's Southern partners interviewed stated their belief that they have engaged, with CODE's support, in the creation of new approaches and models. Partners noted that CODE's mandate for doing literacy work with disadvantaged groups in remote and rural areas and establishing community libraries and book distribution points in those parts has itself been innovative given the state of basic education in their countries. Library support and training given to librarians has also been singled out as innovative features of CODE's programs. Supporting indigenous and children's literature publishing are also unique attributes of CODE's program, particularly in countries where nothing in these areas is published by commercial publishers. CODE has also played an instrumental role in helping partners develop new analyses of literacy issues, implement new changes accordingly and develop indicators to measure results.

**Finding 60: *Project Love* is a creative development education program that raises awareness by involving Canadian school children in a hands-on learning experience.**

The launching of CODE's Project Love initiative in 1988 has effectively involved over 150 communities and over 450 schools in hands-on development education activities. Designing innovative development education programs to encourage the Canadian public's participation is a challenge that many NGO's fail to effectively meet. CODE has not only designed a project that is rooted at the community level but one that facilitates both development education learning and hands-on participation. Project Love has also succeeded in promoting itself through radio, print and television media at the national and provincial level and in establishing committed and competent local

partners and a strong volunteer base to ensure the sustainability of the initiative for the future. CODE has also made significant innovative changes by linking Project Love through School Net..

## 4.6 *Conclusions*

Analysis of the various management factors indicates these main conclusions:

1. Cost effectiveness is not easy to assess because costs are not captured in ways that couples them tightly to the various objectives of the program. The matter is confounded by ambiguities in the conception of the various types and levels of results.
2. Planning systems have involved all levels of the organization, but they have tended to be input-driven rather than results-based. The lack of agreed units for change, organizationally and geographically, has made it difficult to plan for results in an accountable way.
3. Implementation has benefited from supportive partnerships; however, it has tended to manage at the output level of results to the exclusion of outcome and impact level results. That is, the systems tend to support capacity development but pay much less attention to enhancing performance of partner organizations.
4. Monitoring and evaluation systems have been exemplary in intent, but they could be improved through the adoption of clear conceptual frameworks and definitions of terms. These systems could also increase their use of qualitative methods to help better assess the significance of CODE's outcomes.
5. Following a downsizing of staff, CODE makes effective use of its human resources. CODE has successfully developed a new and more appropriate governance structure which helps support the organization's effective use of human resources and has created a better understanding of the needs of the target population and therefore how to best implement programs.
6. CODE has continually demonstrated its willingness to support and engage in highly creative and innovative programming. CODE is committed to further exploring innovative and appropriate approaches to increasing the involvement of girls and women in their literacy programming.

## **5. Conclusion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

We realize that the evaluation report thus far has attempted to address many disparate issues which may leave the reader at sea, asking, what are the most important conclusions the evaluators have made. At the risk of unfairly trying to simplify extremely complex concepts, we will attempt a synthesis of major conclusions.

### **5.2 CODE's Development Paradigm**

CODE is currently doing a wide range of activities. CODE continues to deliver North American books and has branched into support for local publishing. Recognizing that this had limitations, CODE has extended its program to incorporate other supports for literacy. At this point in time CODE needs to ask itself how these various activities are linked to its core mission. The context is changing both in Canada and in developing countries and CODE would be advised to reflect on how its program now needs to evolve to continue to be relevant and appropriate for the 21st century.

CODE has the opportunity to do many things and head in many different directions. We feel that CODE should engage in debate about its desired direction and map a corresponding strategy. While this may be the considerable challenge, this is an opportune moment in the history of CODE. There is new leadership and a committed and energetic board. We believe that the results of this evaluation can help inform the debate resulting in a more effective program in the future.

#### ***Recommendation***

**CODE should clarify its development strategy, especially whether it sees itself continuing in the business of program delivery as opposed to the more difficult approaches of capacity development.**

### **5.3 Results Chains**

As elaborated throughout the report, there are three identifiable units of change that CODE could target and use to bring about better management of results. These are 1) Partner literacy organizations; 2) Literacy Environments and; 3) Individual Beneficiaries.

CODE needs to clarify its intentions for each unit of change and then consider how the various inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts relate. Once these chains have been clarified and owned within the organization, CODE will need to reflect on whether it is realistic to attempt to affect every change unit in every location.

#### ***Recommendation***

**CODE should conceptualize its results chains more clearly and define program inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts that are linked to identified units of change.**

## 5.4 *Literacy Partner Organizations*

CODE works with two distinct types of partners in the implementation of its programs overseas. Some of CODE's partners are national institutions in their own right such as the Malawi Library Service and Progresso. They have a mandate and programming beyond CODE, and so are able to extend their own work with CODE's support. The other type of partner organization CODE works with are like-minded national or local NGO's who act primarily as CODE's implementing agents. CODE Ethiopia is an example of such a partner. To maximize the role of each of its different types of partners, CODE must clearly set out their roles and responsibilities linked to CODE's strategy. This will ensure that partners understand what is expected of them, and what they can in turn expect from CODE in the long term.

### *Recommendation*

**CODE should become more strategic in its choice of partner organizations and in so doing, clarify the degree to which the intent of involvement is to develop the partner organization as a means of supporting literacy in a sustainable way, or to implement CODE's program in targeted literacy environments.**

## 5.5 *Literacy Environment*

It is important to acknowledge that CODE is conscientious in delivering its program for the support of literacy and in improving it with experience. However, CODE's program strategy may not be achieving what it could, because resources are concentrated and targeted towards a range of beneficiaries at different geographical levels. At the country level, by becoming involved in 12 or more countries, CODE's books may be spread so thinly that their impact is minimized. Evidence of impact at the community level is also limited in both the Ethiopia and Kenya case studies, though additional research (i.e. Marsabit) is certainly needed to ascertain the optimal depth-breadth mix. Although CODE has targeted youth and adults with less than six years of education as its key beneficiaries, evidence suggests that these groups are not necessarily benefiting from CODE's programs. CODE has recognized the need to address these issues and proposes to reduce the number of countries and further target its beneficiaries in its next three-year program.

### *Resource Concentration*

CODE must target its resources appropriately so that they are allocated appropriately to meet specific conditions and sets of community needs. CODE should ask itself whether the country level is generally an appropriate level for them to target at all. It might make sense in a small country, but perhaps not in one with tens of millions of people. CODE has recognized the potential for impact in working in a defined region of a country and has done so successfully in many places. At this level, programming can be appropriately targeted to more specific sets of needs, and CODE can be more intimately involved with the ultimate beneficiaries to ensure that programming is appropriate. We would add that the regional or community level should permit CODE to assess the whole literacy ecosystem and to design and monitor its programming to respond



optimally to the dynamic systemic needs. We suggest this in the belief that CODE will not be successful at the outcome and impact levels of the results chain with an approach that tends to spread specific resources thinly.

### ***Capacity Standards***

Once resources have been appropriately concentrated, CODE must debate and adopt capacity standards that convey the organization's values and that can be used in managing performance. These standards can be adopted at both the school or community level, depending on which unit of change CODE decides to focus its future resources. The type of capacity standards we suggest include:

- number of books per capita in a community library
- number of appropriate books for a small primary school
- number of appropriate books for a large primary school
- number of appropriate books for a small secondary school
- number of appropriate books for a large secondary school
- number of hours of weekly access to a community library
- number of hours of weekly access for the average student in a school library

By adopting capacity standards, CODE would focus on libraries (school or community) as the unit of change and would be able to consider its job as developing capacities of libraries as organizational units. Once a library achieved the standard, CODE could consider moving its support elsewhere. Without standards, the job is never done.

In considering standards, we would also suggest that CODE move beyond the individual library, and at least in certain cases, consider the community as the unit of change. In that case the standards might look like this:

- an agreed number of community libraries at or beyond the standard (depending on size of community)
- all school libraries in the community at or beyond the standard

### ***Performance Standards***

Linked to standards are indicators of performance. We suggest that CODE stresses performance indicators over capacity indicators, which is to say the emphasis is on maximizing usage rather than maximizing the books and facilities available for use. This may appear to be subtle, but the difference is profound. CODE's whole concept of "access", meaning books available for use, is called into question. Rather, the emphasis is on the actions of users in literacy-seeking behaviour, and CODE's work is seen as supporting ways of increasing usage which might range from supplying books to improving management of the library, or arranging for it to open longer hours or have more chairs. Performance indicators might include these:

- number of library members (those who subscribe and provide some form of support)

- number of different users per year
- number of books borrowed
- number of books used on site

This is a short list that is reasonable to manage, but it cuts to the chase and focuses on performance. All the capacity dimensions become means to achieve the stated results. Ultimately, CODE could suggest that once a library has achieved standards of capacity, it would be expected to perform at a specified level. If the level involved high performance, this might suggest how CODE can decide when to withdraw. Theoretically, if a library has sufficient members, and is using its books, it should have the means for self-reliance.

### ***Recommendation***

**CODE's support for literacy environments should be based on clearly defined geographic areas and a concentration of resources that would enable each area to achieve defined standards of literacy infrastructure within a specified number of years.**

## ***5.6 Individual Beneficiaries***

Although there are some examples of how CODE has significantly impacted targeted beneficiaries (i.e. Project Love has greatly increased awareness of development issues among Canadian students and teachers), for the most part CODE's program interventions are not reaching the identified target groups or having the anticipated impact. The report has noted the thin spreading of CODE resources. We encourage CODE to collect the missing data for Marsabit in order to see if the situation there is having more impact. The debate on strategic direction needs to consider which, if any, defined groups CODE will target.

### ***Recommendation***

**CODE should continue to research the impact of its programs on individuals and manage programs to target defined groups of relevant disadvantaged people.**

## ***5.7 Developmental Lessons***

**Partnership with NGOs needs to be seen as both a means and as an end for development cooperation.**

Southern partners are an essential conduit for development assistance. Because they are rooted in the local context and know how to work within the indigenous culture, they are an essential link in aid delivery. However, if viewed only as part of the delivery system they will remain only that. They will not easily become sustainable organizations in their own right with their own mission and vision for development. Thus, development programming needs to support them as partners and as a fundamental part of the planning implementation process. In so doing, local NGOs with compatible missions will have a chance to emerge as vital indigenous forces for development.

**Literacy is much more than access to books and print materials; literacy cannot be nurtured or sustained without the involvement of concerned organizations and institutions.**

The most successful literacy programs are those which involve communities in the identification of literacy needs and subsequent planning of activities. In order to support a literate environment, programs must engage communities in a critical process which helps them to understand their social, political and economic environment, identify their literacy needs and then come up with relevant ways to meet these needs. Farmers in rural Ethiopia may not see the relevance of using a community library, regardless of the fact that it may have a stock of books on agriculture. Instead, writing down lessons learned from their farming in a forum shared by other farmers might better meet their identified needs. Customized, community-driven literacy programs must continue to strengthen CODE's book and library-oriented approach to creating literate environments.

**Marginalized groups and geographic areas will not be served equitably unless their inclusion is a managed priority.**

It is too easy to overlook the fact that systems that appear to be equitable may in fact discriminate against people who lack education, power and resources. Women and girls form a large constituency in this regard.

*The poorer and remote member school/institutional libraries do not receive information on new consignments consistently and on time. This has negative implications for them, as schools with better access to information (and with resources such as telephone and transportation) have better chances of selecting the best books for themselves. (Wamahiu, 1998, p. 64)*

Thus, compensatory systems are needed to ensure that such people are in fact served equitably by the programs established to serve them.

## **5.8 Operational Lessons**

**NGOs interested in managing for results require clarity in their intended results at all levels and in their corresponding targeted units of change.**

Most of CODE's development programs define outputs clearly; however, outcomes and impacts become less tangible. CIDA's RBM approach has the advantage of defined results at various levels of the "chain" making it clearer to know whether results have been achieved. Furthermore, by "mapping results", one can organize them into chains that relate to different units of change, helping to avoid the confusion that occurs when change units are scrambled. Organizations cannot expect to have serious developmental impact unless they identify and target clear units of change. A unit of change might be an organization, some classification of people such as "the rural poor", or even a country. Failure to identify the unit of change bears the risk of a program with poor development logic, and a results chain with no validity. We feel that the "results chains" proposed in Chapter 2 are helpful to people interested in thinking about and managing for results. They convey an implicit development logic and help to order and separate results according to different units of change.

**Monitoring and evaluation across diverse contexts requires clear and consistent frameworks with those involved, oriented and trained in their application.**

Most development managers find it exceedingly difficult to compare development progress across diverse settings. What does an embryonic community reading room in Metu have in common with a long-established community library in the heart of Addis Ababa? The application of conceptual frameworks that transcend particular types of organizations can be very helpful in understanding such comparisons. The framework for institutional and organizational assessment used in this evaluation has helped our efforts to cut through the diversity that exists. Our experience here, and in other such work, shows what can be done when organizations are oriented and trained in the application of such frameworks.

**Effective program management is facilitated when the data used for management can be reduced to a small number of critical performance variables.**

The challenge for managers is to manage with data, but not spend all their time and resources managing the data itself! One can easily generate scores of variables that would be interesting and informative to have data on. Skilled managers are able to cut to the essence of their programs and monitor a very small number of critical variables. The variables that are important are those that capture key dimensions of performance: quality, quantity, timeliness, and so forth. It typically takes intensive debate for organizations to identify such a simplified list, but in so doing they clarify their development goals and their vision.



## ***Appendix I - List of Findings***

- Finding 1: CODE's program has made direct and tangible contributions to the capacity of its Southern partners.
- Finding 2: CODE has had positive results in enhancing the effectiveness of its Southern Partners.
- Finding 3: Several of CODE's Southern Partners that are independent literacy development organizations have become sustainable organizations for literacy development, but other current partners are either extremely fragile or merely CODE's delivery agents both of which are highly dependent on CODE's continuing support.
- Finding 4: The environmental context is a significant determinant of the extent to which CODE's Southern partners are able to perform.
- Finding 5: Through the provision of donated books, CODE has appreciably increased the availability of books and other print materials in 15 countries during the period 1991-1998.
- Finding 6: Through support for indigenous publishing, CODE has increased the availability of a more diversified supply of books and other print materials in local languages in five countries during the period 1995-1998.
- Finding 7: While CODE appears to have achieved its output targets, the nature of program plans make it difficult to compare planned and actual results.
- Finding 8: Southern partners feel that CODE has been successful in increasing access to books in their countries.
- Finding 9: Despite the overall increases in literacy materials, most of the involved libraries/ communities continue to be far below international standards in the number of books per capita, raising questions about the effectiveness of the resource base.
- Finding 10: CODE programs reflect a real imbalance in their depth-breadth coverage, affecting the way they successfully implement their overall strategy for results.
- Finding 11: Results in producing a sustainable and expanding resource base are mixed: in conducive contexts impact level results have been achieved; whereas in many problematic environments, there is still a long way to go.
- Finding 12: While CODE has established many community libraries where none had previously existed, and strengthened many that were in existence, many of the facilities face capacity constraints of all sorts.
- Finding 13: CODE's program has made significant contributions to the effectiveness of some community libraries.
- Finding 14: The appropriateness of community libraries varies by the type of material available and the setting and user's language, occupation, age and gender.
- Finding 15: Although many community libraries have been established and supported by CODE, there are no indications that these libraries are benchmarked to a set of standards, making it difficult to manage for results.
- Finding 16: There are various ways to consider the efficiency of a library which might be useful to CODE in monitoring future community library performance.
- Finding 17: CODE's assistance provides important motivational support to local partners; however, it is a big additional step for partners to sustain their resource base and take full ownership of their programs.
- Finding 18: By increasing access to books, CODE's program is enriching the learning environments of a wide variety of schools in targeted countries.
- Finding 19: Many school libraries lack management capacity.

- Finding 20: With respect to effectiveness, CODE books have provided significant support for the education of children and youth in Kenya and Ethiopia; however, the large number of intervening contextual factors prevent establishment of clear relationships between access to CODE books and increased pupil learning.
- Finding 21: The efficiency aspect of performance related to school libraries varies by context and the capacity of the school library.
- Finding 22: School libraries are relevant to CODE's target group of youth in schools, particularly in settings where books of any kind are in short supply, though they may not be the most appropriate response to the need for educational materials.
- Finding 23: Financial sustainability of school libraries varies according to the setting, ranging from settings where CODE books are a useful supplement to existing libraries to those where CODE has provided a base for a sustainable library, to those where dependence on CODE will be required for many years.
- Finding 24: CODE has increased the quantity and quality of literacy workers in partner communities, though not all training supports positive reading behaviours and it is of uneven standard. Attrition of trained personnel is a continuing challenge.
- Finding 25: The number of school kits assembled and distributed has been on the increase since the inception of Project Love, providing growing numbers of Canadian school children with opportunities to participate in and benefit from Project Love.
- Finding 26: While CODE has targeted women, with a few notable exceptions, results in increasing women's involvement have been modest.
- Finding 27: CODE donated books are not reaching identified target groups efficiently.
- Finding 28: Project Love provides a means to "personalise" donations to the developing world for Canadian school children, and contributes to increasing their awareness of literacy issues of developing countries.
- Finding 29: The available data demonstrates little evidence of impact on individuals as proposed in CODE's program strategy.
- Finding 30: The development approach used by CODE in programming for enhanced literacy is relevant to both CIDA priorities and for the most part to the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries.
- Finding 31: CODE's program results have been conceptualized using three different and loosely coupled results-chains. This has made the appropriateness of CODE's programming questionable.
- Finding 32: The appropriateness of development programming centered on donated North American books has been questioned by some, defended by others.
- Finding 33: The mechanism of developing partnerships and establishing priorities with partners contributes to ensuring the appropriateness of CODE's inputs to local needs.
- Finding 34: CODE's programs continue to be dependent on CIDA's financial support.
- Finding 35: Southern partner organizations vary in their prospects for sustainability; however, for the most part they continue to be fragile organizations dependent on the support of external donors.
- Finding 36: Due to the difficult country and local contexts in which CODE operates, coupled with relatively minimal investments per setting, in most cases the prospects for sustainability of local libraries are not strong in the short term.
- Finding 37: CODE's association with Southern organizations has in many cases led to successful partnerships with shared responsibility and accountability for program results.
- Finding 38: There are mixed views on the appropriateness of local advisory committees.

- Finding 39: CIDA's presence as a partner is not always known to beneficiaries.
- Finding 40: Donations and other grants provide leveraging of CIDA's investment. However, when compared to CIDA's current 4:1 funding ratio for NGO matching funds, this leveraging is much less substantial.
- Finding 41: Some CODE-funded libraries have been successful in attaining support from other sources in addition to CIDA.
- Finding 42: CODE's programs have responded to significant CIDA cutbacks by downsizing human resources and further decentralizing program planning and implementation. This reflects a move towards a more cost-effective development approach.
- Finding 43: CODE's methods of planning and managing for results make it difficult to assess overall cost effectiveness.
- Finding 44: Across all programs and countries, over the past seven years, through CODE, CIDA has invested less than \$3 per North American book delivered to a library in a developing country.
- Finding 45: CODE's management costs have been high as a result of multi-levels of management, but steps have been taken to reduce them.
- Finding 46: CODE has responded to CIDA's results based management approach earlier than most other Canadian NGO's, but the multiplicity of development targets and beneficiary units for change make it difficult for CODE to plan for results.
- Finding 47: CODE's program plans are developed using a variety of units of change. These units are not always congruent with CODE's development strategy, making it difficult to manage for results.
- Finding 48: Implementation of CODE programs is being successfully managed to produce agreed outputs but not necessarily outcomes and impacts.
- Finding 49: CODE's strategy of implementing programs around key local partners is working effectively.
- Finding 50: The CODE impact assessments and this evaluation suggest that CODE would enhance results if it allocated more program resources to support strengthening of library management and service performance.
- Finding 51: Unclear conceptualizations of CODE's units of change greatly limits the monitoring and evaluation process.
- Finding 52: Current approaches to monitoring do not adequately reflect important qualitative dimensions of CODE's work.
- Finding 53: While CODE has been a leader in conducting baseline studies on literacy environments, the studies have not been particularly helpful in subsequent evaluation of results.
- Finding 54: CODE has pioneered the conducting of locally-produced impact studies on community libraries but could improve the utility of studies by employing common frameworks that enable aggregation of results and lessons learned.
- Finding 55: CODE's governance structure appropriately guides effective program implementation.
- Finding 56: Changes in staffing patterns in response to financial constraints have enhanced the appropriateness of CODE's human resource utilization.
- Finding 57: CODE has demonstrated a continuing commitment to innovation and creativity in its programming.
- Finding 58: Despite CODE's creative efforts, the equitable involvement of girls and women is yet to be achieved.



Finding 59: CODE has been successful in encouraging partners to create new and innovative approaches and models in their literacy programming.

Finding 60: *Project Love* is a creative development education program that raises awareness by involving Canadian school children in a hands-on learning experience.

## ***Appendix II - Terms of Reference***

### **EVALUATION OF THE CANADIAN ORGANIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EDUCATION (CODE) PROGRAM**

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE) began supplying books to developing countries in 1959 as the Overseas Book Centre. Over the last thirty-eight years, the organization has built a highly focused development program to promote self-sufficiency through literacy in the developing world. CODE received approximately \$19,600,000 CIDA funding over the last seven years for its international development program overseas and in Canada from the Non-Governmental Organizations Division of Canadian Partnership Branch. An Institutional Evaluation completed by the Hickling Corporation in 1990 found, "a well managed organization which is both efficient and effective".

CODE is currently in the final year of a three year Contribution Agreement with the NGO Division of Canadian Partnership Branch. They will be submitting a new 3 year program submission this year. The current Program is designed to support sustainable, literate environments in 12 developing countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Mali Senegal, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Belize and Guyana). The Program targets children to age 15 and adults with six or less years of education through library support, development of reading and learning materials and capacity building. The Development Education component of the Program focuses on Canadian school children and their teachers by addressing the need for learning materials by students in developing countries.

The objectives of the Program are:

- 1) the target group will be able to use printed materials more independently for education, informational and recreational purposes;
- 2) a sustainable, effective and expanding resource base will be developed to support the promotion of a literate environment in the developing countries;
- 3) More Canadians will become aware of development with particular emphasis on literacy; and
- 4) CODE is able to manage effectively with existing resources.

CODE operates within a larger family of related companies and organizations, including the International Book Bank which has direct involvement in collecting, storing, annotating and donating books to their Program.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The Canadian Partnership Branch wishes to undertake an evaluation of the Program to determine the results that have been achieved to date and identify any outstanding successes or issues that need to be resolved.

The objectives of the evaluation are to document the achievements, constraints and lessons learned from the last six years of CODE's international Program supported by Canadian Partnership Branch and to provide a basis for informed decisions regarding funding of the upcoming program proposal. A secondary objective will be to assist CODE and its partners to strengthen their results-based management for the next program submission. The evaluation will concentrate on the Program in Kenya and Ethiopia but will also review Program documentation which is concerned with issues relevant to the general Program in Canada and all 12 developing countries of current focus.

The evaluation should be as participatory as possible (given the time and resource limitations) to enhance the validity of the information received and conclusions reached and so that the results will be owned and used by CODE and its partners. It is expected that the evaluation will be conducted by a team led by a Canada-based consultant with locally based participants identified by CODE or by the Canadian Embassy/High Commission.

## SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will undertake an assessment of the 1991/2 - 1994/5 and the 1995/96 - 1997/98 Programs. The coverage will encompass the following:

☐ **ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS** What progress is being made toward achievement of results at the output, outcome and impact levels?

◆ Actual vs. intended results in the partner country. Specifically:

- a) Have target groups accessed an increased and more diversified supply of literacy-promoting/supporting materials?
- b) Has there been an increased use by target groups of the materials available in CODE-supported libraries?
- c) Is there improved institutional capacity of institutions in developing countries for administering and managing activities that support a literate environment?
- d) Are a larger percentage of children to age 15 and adults with 6 or fewer years of education in the target areas able to use printed materials more independently for educational, informational and recreational purposes?
- e) To what extent has the program leveraged or conserved resources for the purpose of improved education in partner countries?
- f) What have been the other (positive and/or negative) effects of the Program?

◆ Actual vs. intended benefits to Canada.

- g) Have more Canadian elementary school children and teachers become aware of development and literacy issues?

- h) To what extent are CODE and its partners able to generate increased Canadian engagement, donations, "in kind" goods and services and resources from other agencies?
- i) Is there adequate recognition of CIDA's contribution in CODE's program overseas and in Canada?

☐ **RELEVANCE** Does the Program continue to make sense in terms of the conditions, needs or problems to which it is intended to respond?

- ◆ Is the Program consistent with needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries/country/region based on a sound understanding demonstrated by CODE of the development issues, needs and constraints facing their partners?
- ◆ Is the Program Consistent with CIDA policy, priorities and programs?
  - a) Are the Program's objectives consistent with CIDA policy (e.g. are gender issues integrated) and priorities? Do they compliment or support relevant Geographic Program Framework objectives?
  - b) Is the Program in compliance with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act?

☐ **APPROPRIATENESS** Are the Program's resources, capacities and selected strategies sensible and sufficient to achieve intended results?

- ◆ What is CODE's capacity to deliver the proposed goods and services and achieve the anticipated results through a jointly developed program with their overseas partners?
- ◆ To what extent are CODE and their overseas partners satisfied with and committed to intended results and methods chosen to achieve them?
- ◆ Are resources and services designed and delivered in a manner that effectively responds to conditions (including overseas partner's capacity), needs or problems identified?

☐ **COST-EFFECTIVENESS** Is the relationship between costs and results reasonable?

- ◆ Comparison of costs with relevant benchmarks, where feasible, taking into consideration results achieved (e.g. program overhead costs, partner overhead costs, percentage of resources reaching the beneficiaries).

☐ **SUSTAINABILITY** Will Program benefits continue after completion of Program activities?

- ◆ Do overseas partners commit sufficient human and financial resources to maintain program benefits where applicable?
- ◆ To what extent are community and national environments conducive to maintenance of Program benefits?
- ◆ To what extent do the overseas partners have increased institutional capacity to set their own objectives and meet local needs?

- ◆ Do overseas partners/beneficiaries take charge of project activities appropriate to continued level of need?
- **PARTNERSHIP** Is there shared responsibility and accountability for Program results?
- ◆ What is the level of participation of partners and beneficiaries in Program design, implementation and monitoring/evaluation?
- ◆ Is there appropriate evolution of CODE's role in relation to the capacity of the overseas partner and local needs?
- ◆ Is there clear definition, understanding and acceptance of roles and responsibilities of Program participants?
- ◆ Do all the partners in the process receive adequate information to perform their role?
- ◆ How is CODE's relationship with southern partners reflected in their governance structures?
- **INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY** Does the Program explore new ideas and approaches to achieve its results?
- ◆ To what extent do CODE and their partners, develop new development approaches and models and replicate them when proven effective?
- ◆ To what extent does a continual process of collaborative learning within and between CODE and their overseas partners exist? Are lessons learned from innovations and development experience recorded, reported disseminated and applied?
- **MANAGING FOR RESULTS**
- ◆ Are expected results defined with clearly identified assumptions and risk analysis?
- ◆ How effective are the indicators and self-assessment measures that CODE and its partners use to measure and monitor their organizational and Program results?
- ◆ Are there effective monitoring and reporting systems and appropriate and timely response to opportunities and problems?
- ◆ Assess reporting requirements and reports received by CIDA. Analyse the reporting system instituted for the Program, e.g. determine if the reporting to CIDA accurately reflects the progress and outcomes of the Program.
- **LESSONS** : What are the major challenges and lessons learned for the Program. For example:
- ◆ Outline the developmental and operational lessons learned that might guide CODE and CIDA's future investments.
- ◆ What were the factors that helped or hindered the achievement of the intended results?

## CONDUCT OF THE EVALUATION

The NGO Division will be responsible for the evaluation. The evaluation will be conducted by a team led by Dr. Gary Anderson, President of Universalialia and will include a local consultant from

Kenya and a local consultant from Ethiopia. The Canadian evaluation team leader shall prepare an evaluation workplan and submit it to the CIDA Project Team Leader for approval by the Evaluation Steering Committee. In the course of the evaluation, any significant change in the workplan and/or TORs must be approved by the Steering Committee. The Evaluation Workplan will outline, *inter alia*, the indicators and data to be used to address the issues identified in the TORs; the proposed methodologies and framework for collecting and analysing the data; the Terms of Reference for each member on the evaluation team; and a proposed timetable for the completion of the evaluation. CIDA, CODE and the evaluator(s) will meet to discuss the evaluation methodology, indicators of results, the data-gathering process and how to ensure the usefulness of the evaluation findings, observations and recommendations.

The Team Leader's work is expected to include, though not necessarily be limited to, the following tasks in order to complete the project:

1. Meet with CIDA and CODE personnel directly involved in the Program for a briefing.
2. Review documentation on the Program in preparation for the mission.
3. Review and document any assessments already completed by CODE and provide a descriptive listing of Program achievements, particular implementation problems or successes that should be noted, and generally lessons learned.
4. Sub-contract the other team members (Steering Committee approval required).
5. Upon receiving the Steering Committee's approval of the workplan and sub-contracts, the Team Leader will travel to Ethiopia and Kenya and jointly conduct the evaluation with his/her Ethiopian and Kenyan counterparts.
6. Meet with key contacts, including Program personnel, CIDA officials in the field, government officials, and donors active in the sector to gain an in-depth understanding of the Program and acquire and review local project documentation.
7. Visit selected libraries or facilities where the Program's projects are being implemented and report on the nature and scope of their activities in relation to Program objectives.
8. Prepare a draft evaluation report in the field prior to the end of mission.

## DELIVERABLES

- ♦ Self-contained summary reports on each of the two countries providing an overview of projects/initiatives, duration, dollar value, objectives, achievements (including quantitative data on the beneficiaries, the extent to which the local partners have carried out what they proposed to do and the outcomes and impact of the Program), and an elaboration on the successes and the unique challenges for each country.
- ♦ A Draft Evaluation Report (for CIDA and CODE comments) with an executive summary which provides a synthesis addressing the issues outlined in the TORs, along with relevant annexes such as:

- i) A series of one-page descriptions of any success stories in the Program, one for each success story, summarizing project activities, beneficiaries, progress, achievements, challenges and lessons learned.
- ii) A compilation of Program-related documents available in the field (but not available to CIDA).
- iii) Other materials as deemed appropriate.
- ♦ The Final Evaluation Report with an executive summary and relevant annexes which incorporates necessary revisions following comments from the Steering Committee. Four bound copies of the final report must be provided by the consultant to CODE and four more to the NGO Division of CIDA. In addition, an electronic copy and an unbound original are required by CIDA.
- ♦ The final report is to be accompanied by an abstract for CIDA's corporate memory according to standards in force.

### Evaluation Follow-up

CODE agrees to inform NGO Division as to whether it accepts or rejects each of the recommendations found in the evaluation report. In the course of the evaluation or soon after its completion, CODE will use the products of the evaluation to develop an action plan aimed at improving or upgrading program effectiveness as well as management and financial systems as required. It will share the action plan with CIDA and will report its progress on the plan in its periodic narrative reports.

### Evaluation Steering Committee

The evaluation will be guided collaboratively by a Steering Committee which meets at important milestones in the evaluation process. The responsibilities of the Steering Committee are:

- ♦ to review and approve the Terms of Reference
- ♦ to make recommendations on the selection of evaluators
- ♦ to review and approve the evaluation work plan
- ♦ to review and approve Terms of Reference for the local consultants
- ♦ to monitor progress of the evaluation; and
- ♦ to review and approve the draft and final reports.

The committee will include:

- ☐ the NGO Division Program Manager who is in charge of CIDA's relations with CODE and who will chair the Steering Committee
- ☐ an officer from CODE
- ☐ the Deputy Director of CODE

- ☐ the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of CODE, or designate
- ☐ the CPB Analyst responsible for RBM
- ☐ the Senior Program Review Officer of CIDA's Performance Review Division
- ☐ the Education Advisor to NGO Division
- ☐ CIDA's Financial Management Analyst on an as needed basis

Dr. Gary Anderson and Terry Smutylo will attend Steering Committee meetings.

### **The Evaluation Schedule**

The evaluation team is expected to carry out its evaluation responsibilities between *November 30, 1997* and *May 31, 1998*. The draft evaluation report will be submitted by March 31, 1998.

The evaluation workplan will include a schedule with expected dates of the following activities:

- ☐ Preparation of the Evaluation workplan
- ☐ Approval of the workplan by the Steering Committee
- ☐ Data collection, including overseas travel
- ☐ Preparation of preliminary report
- ☐ Presentation of the preliminary report to the Steering Committee
- ☐ Revision of the preliminary report
- ☐ Presentation of the final report

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## ***Appendix III - CODE Impact Assessment Results Chains***

### ***Results Chains: Community Libraries in Mbinga District in Ruvumu Region, Tanzania***

#### ***In Support of Literacy Environment***

<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mbinga library supplied with 530 local books and 728 North American books by CODE</li> <li>• Mbangamao community library supplied with 300 local books by CODE and 800 North American books supplied by CODE</li> <li>• Department of Education selected library staff: Mbunga District = 7 staff members; Nyoni, Mbangumao, Malindindo = one staff member each</li> <li>• limited library training provided: a maximum of three months librarianship education and are paid token 400 shillings               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– all except one have attended short courses between one and three months</li> </ul> </li> <li>• all have attended courses at the Songea Regional library and one at the Tanganyika Library Services for basic librarianship course.</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mbinga District library is accessible to anyone who wants to use it; book borrowing is restricted to members</li> <li>• limited number and assortment of reading materials available</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• libraries serve as crucial organs of information dissemination to the communities</li> <li>• centres of knowledge and skills acquisition in various disciplines (e.g. languages, history, geography, arts, technical education)</li> <li>• others in addition to CODE's target groups utilise libraries (i.e. extension workers, primary school teachers, and officials in the local communities)</li> <li>• due to elementary level of publications available, difficult to advance reading levels</li> </ul>

#### ***Impacts***

##### ***Observations***

- books are few in number and in addition are mainly meant for low level readers
- newspapers and magazines not available
- some from target group were ignorant of existence of libraries
- library staff perceptions of readership not well understood (e.g. levels of library usage considered high when in reality #s are lower than anticipated; library staff think men have higher reading rates than women where minor differences do not justify putting men in a higher rank than women; staff think that target group do not find North American books difficult to comprehend)

### *In Support of Literacy Organisations*

<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limited furniture available in reading rooms</li> <li>• limited library training provided: a maximum of three months librarianship education and are paid token 400 shillings               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– all except one have attended short courses between one and three months</li> <li>– all have attended courses at the Songea Regional library and one at the Tanganyika Library Services for basic librarianship course.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• physical resources provided by CODE: Mbinga library has a building supplied with a small solar energy power supply equipment</li> <li>• District Education Office overseas overall admin. and supervision of libraries</li> <li>• Mbinga District library open 10 hours/day; Nyoni open 5.5 hours Friday Saturday and Sunday; Malindindo open 7 hours Monday, Wednesday, Friday; Mbangamno open 3 times a week 6.5 hours</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all community libraries are mainly circulation, reference and enquiring services facilities (basic services)</li> <li>• discussion groups available at Mbinga library</li> <li>• a single room for Malindindo and Mbangamao serves both as reading rooms and other uses;; lack of light forces readers to use libraries only during daytime</li> <li>• reference services and discussion groups available in Mbinga library</li> <li>• in Mbinga library, solar lighting allows library services to be available longer hours</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• marginalisation of libraries, since no budget allocated to library activities</li> </ul>
<b>Impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

### *Observations*

- **no internal budget provided for community libraries**
- 100% of Mbinga library staff are primary school leavers
- no other services offered (i.e. story telling for children, reading sessions for adults, repackaging information, and discussion groups)
- since none of the library staff in the four libraries have not finished secondary education and have not spent long periods in librarianship colleges, they are not knowledgeable enough to offer some of the services mentioned
- Malindindo and Mbangamao have no rooms special for reading; Nyoni library room cannot be used as a reading room due to lack of furniture
- low qualifications of library staff

## ***In Support of Individuals***

### **Activities**

#### **Outputs**

- library usage is more or less limited to those who live in villages with libraries
- library use:
  - adults who have not yet achieved 6 years education (male users 51.9%; female users 10.5%)
  - children up to 15 years of age (male users 51.6%; female users 63.2%)
  - extension workers and officials (users 90%)
- estimated # of library readers by category by library per week:
  - Mbinga = 33 adults, 34 children
  - Mbangamae = 10 adults, 20 children
  - Nyoni = 20 adults, 6 children
  - Malindindo = 25 adults, 15 children
- of adults with below 6 years of formal education, 46.2% use the libraries
  - 16.1% use very frequently
  - 10.4% used it once; 8.2% twice and 10.4% less than five times in three months
- children up to 15 years who use reading rooms, 50% of those interviewed use reading rooms
  - 39% use the libraries between 1 and 4 times in three months
  - 4% use more frequently
  - 5% read in the libraries; 30% read in school
- children up to 15 years of age:
  - 4% use library frequently
  - 39% use between 1 to 4 times in three months
- Mbinga District Library: those with membership borrow books

#### **Outcomes**

- 68% of children have the habit of reading often

### **Impacts**

### ***Observations***

- survey covered 4 community libraries out of 11 receiving CODE assistance (i.e. Mbinga Urban, Mbangamao, Nyoni and Mikalanga)
- people feel that the libraries are far from their homesteads, hence do not use library services (26.7%)
- degree of usage of library facilities depends on:
  - proximity of the library (26.7% for adults; 25% for children)
  - availability of time (39% for adults; 20% for children)

- knowledge of existence (4% for children)
  - nature of the facilities
  - availability of alternate services of information
  - availability of newspapers and books
- libraries are generally underutilised

## ***Appendix IV - Project Love Results Chains***

### ***Results Chains for Project Love for 1992-1993***

<b>Level of Result</b>	<b>In Canada</b>	<b>In Developing Country</b>
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$28,000 raised</li> <li>• donation of 7,000 kits by Lawton's Drug Store</li> <li>• Shopper's Drug Mart supplies kits at \$1/kit</li> <li>• donation of \$7,000 by schools</li> <li>• 60,445 kits produced by schoolchildren from 67 communities</li> <li>• 7 boxes of teachers' supplies assembled and distributed</li> <li>• 55,000 kits distributed to Zimbabwe, Guyana, Belize, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, Mali</li> </ul>	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased awareness of Canadian children of other cultures, of development issues, educational issues reflected in teacher's letter: "helps to share their culture through the information the students write about their culture"</li> <li>• Canadian school children use PL resource material</li> <li>• PL activities promoted through the media (i.e. in 38 media outlets)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• response from 6 recipient countries to letters included in kits</li> <li>• 7,000-8,000 letters received from Zimbabwe</li> <li>• teacher reported that pen pal relationships formed due to previous PL involvement</li> </ul>
Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• influence on career paths of students</li> <li>• increased development education volunteerism at CODE and other NGOs</li> <li>• increased public support for NGOs and ODA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children stay in school longer</li> <li>• teaching/learning more effective</li> </ul>

(Source: Project Love Annual Report, 1992/93)

shaded areas refer to results not stated in Annual Reports



## ***Appendix V - Response to the Terms of Reference***

The terms of reference for the evaluation pose specific questions as indicated in the following section. We have tried to provide a brief response to each question.

### **What progress is being made towards achievement of results at the output, outcome and impact levels?**

In general terms, in partner countries, CODE has delivered the outputs indicated in its three year plans. CODE has delivered the books that were promised, supported indigenous publishing, and developed the capacity of libraries. At the outcome level, results are less clear or consistent, and have been diluted by the tendency to spread resources across many libraries, involve diverse types of users many of whom do not represent the targeted groups, and an attempt to cover vast geographic areas. Within the problematic environments in which CODE works, impacts are more difficult to capture and attribute to CODE's program. Leveraging exists, but is relatively small in comparison to CODE's contributions.

In Canada, CODE's Project Love has increased involvement and exposure of Canadians to development, and has been acknowledged as an exemplary development education initiative. Though not specifically reviewed, CODE's publications and fundraising activities have also raised Canadian awareness about literacy and development. CODE has fulfilled the terms of its agreement with CIDA on acknowledgment of CIDA's contribution; however, this has not always been communicated by CODE's partners to the ultimate beneficiaries.

### **Does the program continue to make sense in terms of the conditions, needs or problems to which it is intended to respond?**

CODE has a sound understanding of development and the needs of targeted beneficiaries. CODE has worked hard to clearly define how best to support literate environments in the developing world. Furthermore, CODE's program is consistent with CIDA's major priorities. It addresses CIDA's commitment to the poor and their basic human needs and is attempting to respond to the gender in development priority. It does not relate directly to the environment issue.

### **Are the program's resources, capacities, and selected strategies sensible and sufficient to achieve intended results?**

As noted earlier, the program may be spreading its resources too thinly – attempting to do too much with the resources available. Furthermore, CODE focuses on access of individuals to books, when, in our view, a more strategic direction would be to allocate a greater proportion of resources to the development of indigenous organizations such as Southern partner NGOs or community and school libraries. The proposed program strategy moves in appropriate directions, but might go farther in developing country strategies that take these elements into consideration.

### **Is the relationship between costs and results reasonable?**

CIDA is receiving considerable value for its investment within a donated books paradigm. Also, support for capacity development of local publishing centres, libraries



and literacy NGOs has been reasonable and has contributed to long-term program sustainability. Cost-effectiveness has improved with reduction of CODE staff in Canada and overseas. However, CODE still has high management costs which are a continuing concern to both CODE and CIDA.

**Will program benefits continue after completion of program activities?**

In the best of circumstances, partner organizations have become sustainable following termination of CODE's former counterpart support; however, that is the exception. More typically, Southern partners are highly dependent on the supply of donated books, and most have few alternative sources to CODE. At the local level, community and school libraries are embryonic and fragile, requiring years of nurturing before they develop the foundation for becoming sustainable. This is not surprising given the difficult environments in which they are situated.

**Is there shared responsibility and accountability for program results?**

The Southern partners visited demonstrated high levels of commitment and shared responsibility for the mission they share with CODE. Their performance could be better, however, if CODE clarified its intended results and involved partners in targeting resources and managing towards their achievement.

**Does the program explore new ideas and approaches to achieve its results?**

CODE and its Southern partners are exemplary in the innovation and creativity used to achieve CODE's mission.

**Does CODE manage for results?**

CODE is efficient and effective in the way it manages program inputs and the delivery of outputs, however could improve and simplify its information management systems to this end. It could also manage more directly for higher level results.

## ***Appendix VI - Partial List of Documents Consulted***

- African Relief and Development Consultancy Association, *The Functional Utility of Community Libraries in Lindi and Mtwara* (July 1995).
- Africa Relief and Development Consultancy Association, *A Report on the Assessment of the Functional Utility of the Community Libraries in Mbinga District - Tanzania*, Dar Es Salaam, March 1995.
- CODE Annual Reviews, 1994/95, 1995/96.
- CODE Program Submissions to CIDA, 1995/96-1997/98, 1998-2001.
- CODE, Project Love Annual Reports 1992-93 to 1996-97.
- CODE Three-Year Strategy, 1994-1997.
- DAC Report 1996.
- Diack, Amadou, *Bibliothèque du Centre Départemental d'Éducation Populaire et Sportive de Pikine (C.D.E.P.S.): Étude sur la Bibliothèque Communautaire en vue de la mise à jour de la banque de données de CODE* (May 1997).
- Executive Summary of Evaluation of the Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE)*. Prepared by the Hickling Corporation. (1990).
- Granger, David, *Consultancy on the Charity Community Library*, Georgetown, Guyana, March 1995.
- Hanson, Gifty, *Goaso Community Library Survey - Ghana: impact assessment on the formation and retention of reading habits among children to age 15 and adults with six or fewer years of education* (October 1996).
- Insaidoo, A.W.K., *Impact Assessment Study of Ejura Community Library* (December 1996).
- Jackson, Janice M., *Evaluation of the Charity Community Library*, (May 1997, revised June 1997).
- Jackson, Janice M., *Evaluation of the Sand Creek Community Library* (April 1997).
- Kidanu, Aklilu, *The Evaluation of CODE Country Program in Ethiopia: A Case Study of Gore, Illubabor, Community Reading Room*. (March 1998).
- Literacy in Action: World Conference on Literacy*, (1996).
- Lusthaus, Anderson and Murphy. *Institutional Assessment: A Framework for Strengthening Organizational Capacity for IDRC's Research Partners*. (1995).
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- Mbodj, Yero, Aissatou Ndiaye, et al., *Bibliothèque du Centre Départemental d'Éducation Populaire et Sportive de Pikine (C.D.E.P.S.): Étude sur son niveau d'Utilisation et son impact sur les populations de Pikine*, April 1995.
- A Report on the Assessment of the Functional Utilization of the Community Library in Mocimboa da Praia in the Province of Cabo Delgado - Mozambique* (July 1995)



*Report on the Evaluation of the Overseas Book Centre to the OBC Board of Directors.* (June 1979).

Somboro, Djibril, *Enquête sur le Développement de l'habitude de la lecture à Dioro - Mali*, (février 1997).

Wamahiu, Sheila Parvyn, *Code Evaluation: Kenya Country Report* (April 1998).

Warner, J. & Fitch, L. (1997). *Dividends: The value of public libraries in Canada*. Toronto: Book and Periodical Council.