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SOCIAL INNOVATION : KEY TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

THROUGH THE LAST THREE DECADES, IDRC HAS SUPPORTED INNOVATION IN THE SOUTH. ALL OVER THE WORLD, THE RESEARCHERS WITH WHOM WE WORK FIND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS. THEIR IDEAS FREQUENTLY LEAD TO CHANGED POLICIES, NEW PERSPECTIVES ON ISSUES, AND STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PEOPLE WORKING FOR CHANGE. IN SHORT, THEY CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL INNOVATION.


Projects conducted by IDRC-supported researchers in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East have demonstrated how social innovations can advance sustainable and equitable development. IDRC tries to create opportunities for this impressive global network of Southern researchers and decision-makers to share their successful ideas. During the G8 Summit in Kananaskis in June, I was particularly pleased to see Canadian media rely so extensively on the knowledge of IDRC's staff and partners on the development challenges facing Africa.

The Government of Canada recognized the strength of IDRC's African partners at the G8 Summit. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien announced that Canada will contribute CA \$15 million over three years to create

a centre for connectivity in Africa to help bridge the digital divide. The federal government chose IDRC to support this significant initiative in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The new centre will be "twinning" with IDRC's longstanding Acacia program, which helps communities in sub-Saharan Africa use information and communication technologies (ICTs) for their own development. African researchers work with these communities to document the changes ICTs help bring about.

Inspired by the G8's Action Plan for Africa, IDRC governors proposed and approved a CA \$2.5 million special fund for activities in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), more precisely to strengthen the dialogue between civil society and governments and to fund research needed for the design of policies based on peoples needs in Africa.

I am convinced that if Canada continues to support innovation in Africa, communities throughout the continent will build a healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous society.



Maureen O'Neil
President



July 2002

MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE DENIS PARADIS

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR LATIN AMERICA,
AFRICA, AND FRANCOPHONIE



While accompanying Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chrétien on his recent tour of Africa, I had the pleasure of visiting the offices of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Dakar, Senegal. IDRC is a valued partner of the Department of Foreign Affairs, a partner with 30 years service to African research and communities.

I traveled with the Prime Minister to Morocco, Algeria, Nigeria, South Africa,

Ethiopia, and Senegal last April to discuss the Action Plan for Africa, later unveiled at the G8 Summit held in Kananaskis, Alberta, in June 2002. We met African Heads of State and representatives of civil society – including young people working for development – as well as representatives of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

WATER: LOCAL-LEVEL MANAGEMENT

TODAY, MORE THAN 1 BILLION PEOPLE LACK ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER. WITHIN THE NEXT 25 YEARS, FULLY ONE-THIRD OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION WILL EXPERIENCE SEVERE WATER SCARCITY. IN THE SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS TO THE WORSENING WATER CRISIS, FORMER IDRC NATURAL RESOURCES SPECIALIST, DAVID BROOKS, BELIEVES THAT ONE PROMISING OPTION IS BEING OVERLOOKED: WATER MANAGEMENT AT THE LOCAL OR COMMUNITY LEVEL.

"Local management will certainly be essential in managing the world's water problems," says Brooks. "In fact, it was highlighted in the Ministerial Declaration from the International Conference on Fresh Water that took place in Bonn, Germany, last year. But it is not a panacea. Local strategies can complement wider-reaching water management approaches. This is why successful local water management requires close collaboration between communities and their 'senior' governments. The challenge is to find the appropriate balance between senior, intermediate, and local levels of management."

The challenge of finding that balance generated a great deal of discussion among participants in a policy workshop on local water

IDRC's staff in Dakar and African partners showed their experience and enthusiasm in describing IDRC-supported work in West Africa. I congratulate IDRC and its partners for their dedication to research, which is so important for Africa's development.

Together with several Members of Parliament, I crossed Canada to talk about the African agenda in preparation of the G8 Summit. The Canadians we met are deeply interested in Africa. We can be proud that Prime Minister Chrétien kept Africa squarely on the agenda for this Summit and that Canada has made a clear commitment to increase its support.



The Honourable Denis Paradis



management, held at IDRC's Ottawa headquarters in March 2002. Presenters from Nepal (Dipak Gyawali), Senegal (Malik Gaye), South Africa (Ruth Beukman), Peru (Juan Carlos Alurralde), and Canada (Mark Winfield) provided regional perspectives on the state of fresh water resources and their experience with local water management. In smaller groups, participants developed strategies to accelerate progress in the science and practice of local water management. These can serve as the basis for future research and advocacy efforts at national and international levels.

The workshop also served as a focal point for other IDRC dissemination initiatives around local water management. These included a thematic Web site (www.idrc.ca/water) and a book authored by David Brooks. *Water: Local-level Management* draws on three decades of IDRC-supported research. The book (available in print and on the thematic Web site) is replete with examples and presents a series of clear and pointed recommendations for policy design and future research efforts. It concludes with an eye to the future of water supply. Some of the key resources in the field are also listed.

Water: Local-level Management is the first volume in a new series – *In_Focus: from Research to Policy* – published by IDRC. Each publication distills IDRC's research experience and draws out important lessons, observations, and recommendations for decision-makers and policy analysts.

THE FACE OF RESEARCH

DR CHUSA GINÉS



IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR COLLEAGUE, DR. CHUSA GINÉS, WHO DIED IN A PLANE CRASH ON JANUARY 28, 2002, IN THE ANDES MOUNTAINS.

The common element that emerges when people describe Chusa is light — reflected in her smile, her elegance, her generosity, her intellect, her commitment, her ideas, her passion.

Dr Chusa Ginés (María Jesús Ginés) grew up in Madrid, Spain, and came to Canada to study. She received a PhD in biology from Carleton University in 1987, specializing in molecular genetics and biotechnology. And although she adopted this country as her home, she maintained close ties with her family. Her happiest recollections of her childhood revolved around a family summer home in rural Spain with few amenities, where she lived close to the farmers and the natural environment. She was intensely curious and a challenger of the status quo. As a young woman she embarked upon a backpack tour of Africa and Asia that established her connection to the needs and aspirations of people in developing countries.

Chusa combined her love of nature, her inquisitiveness, and her drive for equity into a very promising career in research for development. In 1991 she joined IDRC in Ottawa, where she was instrumental in the development of the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SUB) Program Initiative, a program that addresses the problem of the loss of critical food and medicinal plants that millions of poor people rely on for their survival. Chusa was a firm believer that modern science could be blended with traditional ingenuity to find local and long-lasting solutions for the world's impoverished. She practiced this daily, traveling extensively and maintaining close contacts with researchers, farmers, and practitioners in the developing world with whom she nurtured relationships of mutual challenge and learning.

As team leader for SUB, Chusa guided a multiregional and multidisciplinary group of professionals through the increasingly political issues related to access to genetic resources and intellectual property rights. Early on she recognized the importance of providing research support to indigenous peoples and communities at the local level, both to further the understanding of what works and what are the constraints "on the ground," the policy environment required to enable the potential there, and to build capacity for indigenous and local peoples to define their own research agenda, conduct research, and participate effectively in international fora with an informed position. As a member of the Crucible Group, she was instrumental in initiating the second round of discussions, which led to the publication of two volumes of *Seeding Solutions*.

Although Chusa was fiercely committed to her work, she lived the other side of her life with equal fervour. She and her partner, Patrik Hunt, lived in an idyllic log house in the Gatineau Hills, near Ottawa. She enjoyed sharing meals with friends, the seasonal pursuits of skiing or going to the beach, dancing to the latest musical offering at the local pub, and organizing events to commemorate International Women's Day. Chusa and Patrik's son, Dario, was born in May 1995. After his birth she faced the challenge of balancing motherhood and career with characteristic determination.

In December 2000, Chusa undertook a two-year secondment to the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), based in Cali, Colombia. Her task: to coordinate a network that conducts research on ways to incorporate poor farmers' needs into the application of biotechnology to cassava, a root crop that is a staple for much of the developing world. She and her family moved to Quito, Ecuador.

On the morning of January 28, Chusa boarded a 727 airliner in Quito destined for Cali, where she was to give a presentation at CIAT headquarters. As the plane prepared to land at a stopover destination, it slammed into a volcano obscured by the fog of the Andes Mountains. The next day, at the time of her presentation, two institutions — IDRC in Ottawa and CIAT in Cali — and many other people around the world whose lives she touched, paused to collectively mourn the loss of this radiant and courageous woman. Her ashes have been interred in the garden of the wonderful summer house in Spain. A fellowship to support advanced studies for women in developing countries is being developed in her name, so that her contribution may continue in a way she would have wholeheartedly embraced, by enabling the potential of others.

This testimonial was written by Erin O'Manique, friend and colleague of Chusa.



PUTTING A HUMAN FACE ON POVERTY

The fight against poverty is fraught with uncertainties. Even the very definition of poverty is elusive: its manifestations and causes vary from country to country, its magnitude fluctuates according to the social and economic context. How to explain why in India, for instance, poverty is high and unemployment is low while the inverse is true in Morocco – or at least, poverty there is not as blatant?

These are some of the fundamental questions a network of researchers from 12 Asian and African countries have been grappling with. Members of the poverty monitoring network of IDRC's Micro Impacts of Macroeconomic and Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) program met for the first time in Rabat, Morocco, in late January 2002, to share insights gained through their studies.

GIVING THE POOR A VOICE

Properly diagnosing poverty is more than a mere academic exercise. As Dr Touhami Abdelkhalek of Morocco's Institut national de statistique et d'économie appliquée and coordinator of the MIMAP-Morocco team explains, it matters because the determinants identified will dictate what poverty-reduction strategies should be put in place.

Effective policies and strategies also depend on timely, accurate information. That is what the teams are providing through projects that seek to determine how the poor themselves define and measure poverty. The conventional measure, explains Dr Abdelkhalek, is based on households' earnings and spending power, determined by means of surveys. While this makes it easy to measure and compare over time, it does not necessarily accurately reflect people's well-being. Quality of life also depends on a host of qualitative factors – the type of lighting in the home and availability of drinking water, for example.



Complicating matters further is that poverty is fundamentally an individual condition. And so, says Dr Abdelkhalek, the way the information is collected also has to be. This is the type of poverty-monitoring system MIMAP researchers are helping to develop – one that measures poverty at the household and community levels, using factors that local people themselves identify as

important. In Burkina Faso, for example, the researchers developed and tested a system using both quantitative and qualitative indicators, such as participation in community organizations. And when they discovered that households were reluctant to share information on their finances and the durable goods they owned, they recommended monitoring other factors such as nutritional status, level of education, and cereal stocks.

SETTING AN EXAMPLE

The MIMAP program in the Philippines – launched 10 years ago – has already succeeded in giving the poor this voice in some areas of the country. A community-based poverty monitoring system (CBMS) was introduced in the province of Palawan in 1999. After pilot testing in two villages, it was formally implemented in the entire province.

An important aspect of the Palawan study, says Dr Celia M. Reyes, MIMAP-Philippines Team Leader, was combining the data gathered from the different *barangays* (villages) and municipalities with spatial analysis to produce maps that allow planners to compare *barangays*. Using the data gathered through the CBMS and spatial analysis of indicators through a geographic information system, the Provincial Planning and Development Office published Palawan's first *Human Development Report* in 2001.

There are already some tangible results. As Dave Ponce de Leon, Vice-Governor of Palawan, points out, the recent provincial budget accords highest priority to education, health, and infrastructure development – priorities identified in the *Human Development Report*. Already the provincial government has started building schools in regions where a lack of facilities is limiting attendance.

Palawan has now adopted CBMS as part of its annual planning exercise. The next challenge for MIMAP-Philippines is to share this

experience with other provinces. That process appears to be gathering momentum: Celia Reyes is now assisting the National Anti-Poverty Commission and the Department of Interior and Local Government to adapt and replicate CBMS throughout the country.

Community-based poverty monitoring is

also making inroads in other countries. To date, it has been implemented in all Village Development Committees in five districts of Nepal and 34 communes in Viet Nam, as well as in Palawan. It is also being pilot tested in Bangladesh and will soon be tested in Burkina Faso, India, Senegal, and Sri Lanka.

VITAL EVIDENCE FOR HEALTH POLICY

Collecting data in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya can be a dangerous job. Household enumerators who work with the Nairobi Urban Demographic Surveillance System (DSS) regularly risk being mugged and robbed by pickpockets. Yet they persist, for the information they gather on births, deaths, and migrations is critical to efforts to improve peoples' health in these poor communities.

The Nairobi DSS is part of the International Network for the Continuous Demographic Evaluation of Populations and their Health in Developing Countries (INDEPTH). The INDEPTH Network aims to overcome a major constraint to formulating health policies and programs in the South – a lack of accurate information. The registration of births and deaths is virtually nonexistent in most developing countries; a recent UNICEF report estimates that 50 million births go unregistered every year. "These children have no birth certificate, the 'membership card' for society that should open the door to a whole range of rights including education and health care, participation and protection," says the report.

The 29 research sites that make up the INDEPTH Network document vital events using a demographic surveillance system. Enumerators visit households within a defined geographic area on a regular basis to monitor births, deaths, and migrations of local populations.

"The only way to find out the true burden of disease is to go into people's homes," says Dr Don de Savigny, from IDRC's Tanzania Essential Health Interventions Project, one of the field sites.

The rich DSS data, extrapolated to larger populations, can help track health threats and guide the selection of appropriate interventions by governments and donors. Resources can thus be more effectively directed to areas of greatest need.

Good data is now readily available in a new book published by IDRC: *Population and Health in Developing Countries: Vol 1. Population, Health, and Survival at INDEPTH Sites*. It summarizes mortality data and trends from INDEPTH sites in 16 countries and reports on mortality patterns for Africa. The book is the first of a series.

For more information on the INDEPTH book, you can visit the health section of the IDRC Booktique: www.idrc.ca/booktique.



IDRC photo: Peter Bennett

TEHIP OUTREACH WORKERS
SURVEY THE HEALTH OF
VILLAGERS.

GOVERNORS VISIT IDRC PROJECTS IN WEST AFRICA

To learn more about IDRC's field research activities, I took part in an official visit to Senegal and Gambia, last February, led by IDRC President Maureen O'Neil. The other members of the delegation were Gilles Forget (IDRC Regional Director for West and Central Africa), Federico Burone (IDRC Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean), and fellow governors Norah Olemba from Kenya, and Jean-Guy Paquet and Rodger Schwass from Canada.

This West African visit was particularly rewarding. It was interesting to meet and exchange with local scientists, academics, technical experts, NGO workers, and particularly with women farmers in the region of Kaolack in central Senegal. These women have formed organizations that are campaigning against soil salinization. They shared with us specific experiments to rehabilitate these lands and return them to crop production.



In the Gambia, we also visited a collective farm operated by a group of women on the outskirts of Banjul. Through hard work and cooperation, they have achieved year-round vegetable production, succeeding resoundingly where the men from their own community had previously failed. An IDRC-supported project is now introducing dairy farming into this operation, thereby significantly increasing the women's income and the well-being of their families.

We saw first-hand how IDRC's work in the area of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for development in Dakar is positively influencing the lives of marginalized people. For instance, students from one of the poorer districts of Dakar demonstrated through theatrical skits, exhibitions, and the use of the Internet how ICTs reinforced their knowledge and learning in many areas.

Development and people from developing countries lie at the heart of IDRC's *raison d'être*. As I complete my first term, I feel privileged to be part of such a vibrant, effective organization. I am very proud that Canada supports this type of unique partnership for change.

Beryl Gaffney
IDRC Governor

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Beryl Gaffney".

IDRC PRESIDENT'S VIEWS ON RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

"The new research environment in Canada offers the opportunity to consider research for development, not as charity, but as essential to the creation of critical knowledge to benefit Canadians and those struggling with economic, health, and environmental impediments to development." (extract from a commentary entitled "We may need a new definition of research excellence," signed by Maureen O'Neil in the April 2002 issue of *University Affairs*, published by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada). You can read the full commentary at

http://www.idrc.ca/media/research_excellence_e.html

APPOINTMENTS TO IDRC'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham has announced the appointment of Mr **Gerald (Ged) R. Davis** and Ms **Chee Yoke Ling** to the IDRC Board of Governors.

Mr Davis, of the United Kingdom, is Vice President (Global Business Environment) at Shell International Limited, and head of Shell's Scenarios Team. For more than 20 years he has been engaged in developing scenarios to improve Shell's future energy plans for the future at industry, national, and global levels. In 1996-97 Mr. Davis was Director of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development's Global Scenarios 2000-2050.

Ms Chee Yoke Ling, of Malaysia, is a legal adviser to Third World Network, an international research and advocacy organization with its secretariat in Penang, Malaysia. She has worked on biosafety issues since 1990, actively participating in the negotiations of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. She also works with officials and nongovernmental organizations from a number of developing countries on issues with respect to national biosafety policies and laws.

STAFF NEWS

IDRC welcomes **Ralph Tait** as the Centre's new Vice President, Resources, and Chief Financial Officer. Previously, Ralph was a senior financial executive at Xela Enterprises Limited, a privately owned holding company for enterprises that conduct businesses primarily in Latin America. He is a graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada and a chartered accountant.

LET US HEAR FROM YOU



Send us comments, questions and news, care of:

Line Caouette
Public Affairs, IDRC
PO Box 8500
Ottawa, ON
Canada K1G 3H9

Fax: (613) 563-2476

Email: lcaouette@idrc.ca

www.idrc.ca

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