Infrastructure Services

Performance Review:

Executive Report

Canada

CIDA

information

technology

energy

communication
technology

water

transportation

**INFRASTRUCTURE
SERVICES
PERFORMANCE
REVIEW**

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REVIEW
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Executive Report

Infrastructure Services Performance Review

"… help developing countries to deliver environmentally sound infrastructure services, with an emphasis on poorer groups and on capacity building."

"Canada in the World"
(1995)

October 2001

The Review was
initiated to assess
how a sample of
CIDA's infrastructure
investments have
performed in
contributing to
the Agency's
developmental
objectives.

This Executive Report
summarizes what
was learned from
the evaluations
and studies
carried out.

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Management Response

We would like to
acknowledge the
work of the many
individuals who
contributed to the
Infrastructure Services
Performance Review.

Their efforts helped
to enhance our
learning about
supporting sustainable
development
through international
assistance.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

On 5 September 2001, CIDA's Audit and Evaluation Committee reviewed the *Executive Report* of the Infrastructure Services Performance Review. The management response of the Committee is as follows:

1. Recommendation #1 concerning the need for an Infrastructure Services Policy was accepted by the Committee. The changing understanding of the need for and role of infrastructure by donor and recipient governments alike means that a thorough review and rethinking of the approach CIDA takes to infrastructure will be required. Any paper would need to discuss the relationship of infrastructure to other development priorities – social and economic. CIDA's intention would be to consult on a draft prior to finalization. This would be undertaken by Policy Branch in collaboration with others with completion foreseen early in 2002/2003.

2. In addition, members of Audit and Evaluation Committee acknowledged the conclusions of the Report. The Committee noted the advisory nature of the other four recommendations which suggest ways of improving Agency programming in infrastructure services. Program branch Vice-Presidents have undertaken to relay this advice to their staff, and to encourage them to incorporate these suggestions in infrastructure services programming.

1   INTRODUCTION

> "…lack of infrastructure, roads, transport,
> and water emerged as a characteristic
> that distinguishes the poor from the rich."
>
> *Can Anyone Hear Us?*
> *World Bank, Washington, 1999*

CIDA's investments in Infrastructure Services (IS) in developing countries and countries–in–transition have amounted to an estimated $6.5 billion over the past three decades. From 1995/96 to 1999/00, CIDA invested some $732 million in over 1,100 infrastructure programs/projects that were carried out in more than 120 developing countries or countries–in–transition. In total, 500 different executing agencies were involved in these activities, with over 40 percent of the investments being delivered by twelve key organizations.

The Infrastructure Services Performance Review (ISPR) provides an indication of how a sample of the Agency's IS investments have performed in delivering infrastructure services. This executive report summarizes what was learned from the evaluations and studies that comprised this Review.

Essential and Fundamental

Economic growth is typically accompanied by an expansion of investments in infrastructure and fundamental access to infrastructure services is considered vital for social development. Canada's Foreign Policy Statement "Canada in the World" (1995) reinforced the need for developing infrastructure services as one of six Official Development Assistance (ODA) programming priorities with a goal to helping: "… developing countries to deliver environmentally sound infrastructure services, with an emphasis on poorer groups and on capacity building."

Infrastructure is built to establish a flow of services. IS investments are linked to clean and accessible water, efficient transport systems, reliable and affordable energy, and accessible information and communication services.

The development of infrastructure services broadens economic potential and empowers communities to improve living standards. To effectively advance sustainable development and reduce poverty, infrastructure services must be economically viable and equitably accessed by all levels of society (particularly the poor and women). The World Bank's recent report "Engendering Development: Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice" found that "…investments in basic water, energy and transportation infrastructure help reduce gender disparities in workloads" and recommended fostering "…economic development to strengthen

incentives for more equal resources and participation." Progressive IS development implies an integral respect for the environment.

Recent Agency initiatives confirm the importance of equitable access to IS in the strengthening of aid effectiveness:

➢ CIDA's emerging IS Policy casts equity and access to sustainable services by the poor as a priority at all levels of programming.

➢ "CIDA's Sustainable Development Strategy 2001–2003" links the finalization of the Agency's IS Policy initiative with the need to strengthen our poverty–reduction focus and the building of capacities by addressing "…poverty and inequity in an environmentally sustainable manner".

➢ In launching "CIDA's Social Development Priorities: A Framework for Action" on September 5, 2000, the Minister for International Cooperation emphasized the importance of carrying out the Agency's five-year plan to strengthen social development programming without diminishing "…the valuable work that we are doing in other areas such as the environment, infrastructure, and good governance".

Likewise, the international development community is turning towards more holistic approaches to achieve aid effectiveness that embody comprehensive frameworks for development. Such new programming initiatives include the World Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs); the United Nations' Development Assistance Framework; and Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAps).

Key Issues

The ISPR focused on four guiding issues set out by CIDA's Executive Committee:

➢ What results were achieved, how did we verify them, and what factors or themes led to success?

➢ How have the poor benefited from CIDA's past infrastructure investments?

➢ How successful were the Agency's policy dialogue interventions related to the infrastructure sectors, and what lessons can we draw for the future?

➢ How does CIDA's infrastructure programming benefit women and men, and how do we incorporate the lessons about these differential benefits into future programming?

Approach

This Review was designed to promote a larger understanding of:

➢ How CIDA's IS investments have performed, and

➢ How IS programming is essential to economic and social development.

In consultation with CIDA's branches, a non–random sampling of CIDA's traditional IS portfolio mix was selected that met corporate, geographical and historical coverage criteria. The 21 main evaluations and studies carried out assessed a combined CIDA investment of $660 million, with programming dating back to the early 1950s (a ten percent sampling). These main ISPR initiatives comprised six project evaluations, six geographic impact evaluations and nine desk studies. In combination, they provided an indication of what was achieved in all four IS economic sectors: 1) energy, 2) transportation, 3) information and communication technology, and 4 water and sanitation.

In addition, poverty impact assessments were carried out on four Industrial Cooperation Program (INC) projects, and six background studies contributed to strategic planning. Together the ISPR evaluations assessed the performance of 43 infrastructure projects in 14 countries, and the desk studies addressed ten projects in nine countries.

This Report

This report provides:

➢ A profile of the Agency's IS programming

➢ An indication of the results achieved through CIDA contributions

➢ An assessment of how these investments have been linked to poverty reduction, equity and access

➢ A description of the role played by policy dialogue in furthering IS objectives, and

➢ Observations on how IS programming has advanced gender equality in recipient countries.

The report concludes with findings and a series of recommendations put forward for acceptance by the Agency's Audit and Evaluation Committee.

Note: The ISPR was designed to assist in the ongoing development of CIDA's IS Policy. However, this Review offers a retrospective of Agency programming, and results attributed to earlier initiatives can only be fairly assessed if measured against what was expected at that time. What we have learned from this Review should respect this context.

2   A LOOK AT INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMMING

> Shifting from building physical assets
> to the delivery of equitable and
> accessible infrastructure services

During the course of the Review, various observations were brought forward that reflected on CIDA IS programming over the years. The information set out below largely comprises a series of random facts about programming priorities, levels of investment and funding concentrations. Our ability to present a more comprehensive historical perspective on Agency's IS programming was limited by the availability of homogenous information fields that were developed on a consistent basis for this period.

2.1   Shifting Emphasis

The 1950s and early 1960s were witness to a clear bias towards capital formation, and projects dedicated to establishing or improving physical infrastructure. While this focus began to shift as human and social development elements increasingly became more emphasized by the donor community, infrastructure provision maintained a high disbursement profile in the 1970s.

The 1980s saw CIDA focusing on more equitable access to economic benefits for the entire populations of recipient countries, while directly addressing the problems of the poor. Assistance was linked to sound macro–economic policies, market orientations, restrained government spending and well–functioning markets. From 1982 on, infrastructure disbursements declined due to: 1) changes in the Agency's development priorities, 2) globalization impacting international capital markets and geopolitical strategies, and 3) reductions in public sector expenditures.

In the 1990s, sustainability and poverty reduction became overarching themes, with CIDA's development thinking centering on fiscal prudence; open, well–functioning markets; and the importance of institutions. Programming shifted from the delivery of physical products (roads, railways, etc.) to a greater concentration on assisting developing countries with service–oriented approaches to infrastructure development. With this, IS programming became aligned with: 1) improving enabling environments, 2) building institutional and human capacities, 3) enhancing access to services, and/or 4) enhancing physical capital stock.

2.2   Funding Allocations

IS Funding in Decline

While infrastructure programming has traditionally played a significant role in CIDA's investment profile, funding allocations have steadily declined in recent years:

➢   For the period 1972–to–1996, 30 percent of all bilateral disbursements related to investments in the four IS sectors, with funding for capital stock accounting for 84 percent of this outlay.

➢   In 1996/97, the Agency's IS disbursements amounted to $245 million, representing 15 percent of the total value of all CIDA programming (excluding Multilateral Branch).

➢   CIDA's IS funding for 1999/00 had declined to about 11 percent of ODA disbursements.

From 1995/96 to 1999/00, Canada's ratio of IS–to–ODA funding of approximately 11 percent was the lowest of the eight major OECD donors assessed. Japan's comparable ratio was 52 percent. Canada spends less than two percent of what Japan spends on IS programming.

Recipient Country Concentrations

The following observations were made:

➢   From 1972–to–1996, 48 percent of the Agency's IS investments were concentrated in eight recipient countries, namely: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Indonesia, Egypt, Kenya and Cameroon.

➢   From 1992–to–1996, 63 percent of the Agency's IS investments were delivered to eight recipients: Pakistan, Peru, Bolivia, Egypt, China, Haiti, SADC (Southern African Development Community comprising Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe), and Senegal.

➢   Financial data for the period 1995/96 to 1999/00 showed that China, Bangladesh and India ranked as the highest value IS recipients. Geographically, Asia received 44 percent of CIDA's infrastructure investments during this period, followed by Africa with 36 percent, and the Americas with 12 percent.

Predominant Sectors

From 1995/96 to 1999/00, energy was identified as being the predominant sector and the Agency's combined investments in energy and transportation were found to have accounted for slightly more than 50 percent of total CIDA's IS investments. Hydroelectric and power generation projects comprised most of the energy expenditures, whilst railway projects were predominant in transportation. Towards the end of the 1972–to–1996 period, information and communication technology replaced transportation as the second most predominant sector.

Branch Disbursements

The Agency's disbursements for infrastructure investments for the period 1995/96 to 1999/00 were calculated to be $732.2 million (excluding an amount for Multilateral Branch spending which could not be identified with an acceptable degree of accuracy).

Of this total:

➢ Asia Branch accounted for $275.2 million in spending (37.6 percent)

➢ Africa and the Middle East Branch for $209.6 million (28.6 percent)

➢ Canadian Partnership Branch for $177.0 million (24.2 percent)

➢ Americas Branch for $64.2 million (8.8 percent), and

➢ Central and Eastern Europe for $6.2 million (0.8 percent).

3　　RESULTS ACHIEVED

> Contributing to physical installations and human/institutional capacity development

The Review found that:

➢ All of the projects evaluated delivered tangible short–term results

➢ *Significant* or *notable* results were reported in the evaluations of geographic programming initiatives, and

➢ 60 percent of the geographic evaluations identified some longer–term impact results.

3.1　　Energy

CIDA's investments in electrical capacity enhancements were linked to better access to electricity, health, education services and employment opportunities. Canadian technical assistance contributed to the upgrading of planning/management capacities in national and regional energy organizations. IS investments were a factor in the installation of management information systems for electrical energy planning and management. Engineers, technicians, managers, operations and maintenance staff received extensive training (often with a *notable* percentage of women). While some opportunities were missed for building local context and partnerships into design and execution, such deficiencies generally applied to older projects.

Policy interventions were most relevant at the organizational level. Canadian technology transfers, capital stock and capacity development tools to reform/manage structural adjustments were critical to the results attained. Partnerships worked well with good matches between the capacities/interests of key stakeholders. Effective stakeholder relationships were instrumental in achieving results. A sound understanding of local context allowed managers to identify and harness local talent and capabilities.

Results included:

➢ The Warsak Hydroelectric Dam project in Pakistan contributed to the expansion of electrical capacity, resulting in better access to electricity, health, education services and employment opportunities. Training was provided to 250 engineers, 2,000 technicians, 250 operations and maintenance staff.

➢ Impact results realized from INC's participation in a mini–hydroelectric joint venture in the Philippines and the automation of electricity distribution in Egypt were considered modest given the level of investment.

➢ Canadian technical assistance contributed to the upgrading of the planning and management capacities of national and regional energy organizations (e.g. Ligne d'interconnexion très haute tension Bamako–Ségou in Mali, Volgograd Gas Utilities Training Project in Russia).

➢ The Honduras energy project benefited from the installation of management information systems for electrical energy planning and management. Training was provided to 14 employees, including four women.

3.2   Transport

Capital investments comprised the single largest programming component for most of the projects evaluated, with Canadian technical assistance accompanying the equipment/material investments in the rail and civil aviation projects. Canadian private sector firms (as Canadian Executing Agencies) were found to have exhibited good management techniques, and functioned with the flexibility to make responsive management decisions. Beneficiaries were not involved in planning, design and/or implementation of some the older projects. All eleven projects reviewed achieved expectations for short–term results.

Observations included:

➢ The survival of Mali and Senegal rail in the 1990s depended, in good part, on Canada's investments. Privatization of rail operations has now begun in both countries. The investment in Mali provided seaport access at Dakar through improvements to the Bamako–to–Dakar rail linkage.

➢ Overall, results from the Nepalgunj Hangar and Twin Otter Projects in Nepal were rated as *significant* (e.g. refurbishment of five DHC–6 aircraft, technical and maintenance upgrades, improved remote access to goods and services). However, the sustainability of Royal Nepal Airlines is a concern, with privatization hindered by Nepal's political instability and the airline's financial difficulties.

➢ Through the Bangladesh Rural Maintenance Program, 72,000 kilometers of earthen roads were maintained annually in a cost–effective way. Approximately 36,000 women/year were employed, most of whom benefited from life skills training. The future institutional home for this program is currently under consideration and its sustainability remains a challenge.

➢ There are indications that partnerships worked well at the institutional or donor coordination level in the transport programs evaluated or studied in Mali, Senegal, Nepal and Bangladesh.

3.3   Information and Communication Technology

The review found that CIDA's interventions were relevant, had addressed real needs and contributed to the balanced development of institutional, human and infrastructure capacity, while adapting well to the rapidly changing dynamics of the ICT sector (which often outpace the regulatory capacities of governments and the courts). There were indications that investments in infrastructure enhancements, management information systems and technical assistance contributed to economic and sectoral reforms necessary to help liberalize competition, trade and investments. These reforms, coupled with the strengthening of institutions, contributed to improved equity and access to services, and improved sector planning and policy development.

Success was linked to the development of strong partnerships and a strategic mix of interventions to build enabling environments (e.g. technology transfers and institutional/human capacity development). It was noted that the ability of Canadian ICT companies to function and compete in developing countries was enhanced.

Results included:

➢   CIDA contributed to the installation of telecommunications networks and management information systems; and the setting up of 2,129 public calling offices in 19 provinces in the Philippines.

➢   The PANAFTEL project in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal resulted in the construction of a 3,500 km. analog radio–relay network (with 55 stations and 960 telephone channels). This expansion in telecommunications brought social, education, economic and employment benefits to rural communities.

➢   The ICT project in Cuba provided training for 12 individuals in Canada; who, in turn, trained 545 staff in applications, database software use and design, and data quality and survey techniques.

But shortcomings were also noted. Evaluators pointed out that partnering with local bureaucracies during the Philippines ICT project had not proven effective, lessons learned from other donor experiences had not been applied, and missed opportunities were evident. Numerous shortcomings were attributed to the PANAFTEL project (e.g. sustainability measures not being adequately addressed, unrealistic expectations linked to poor research, lack of understanding of local context/conditions). In some cases, unstable enabling environments and/or the absence of a reliable national telecommunications infrastructure provided additional challenges.

3.4 Water

The foci of the water projects assessed were found to be strategically congruent with the directions currently being put forward in CIDA's draft IS Policy: 1) working at community level and drawing on the strengths of local resources to increase access of the poor to clean water, 2) increasing institutional capacity, and 3) focusing on the macro level to create sector reform.

All the water projects evaluated were directly relevant to the recipient country's needs. In Benin, IS programming resulted in reduced downtimes with the introduction of productivity bonuses, a decline in accidents with improved safety measures, and productivity gains through better communications. The installation of water meters in the Ukraine increased public awareness of water use and decreased water consumption.

CIDA's investments in Ghana resulted in some 2,000 boreholes being redeveloped in the 1990s; and contributed to clean water accessibility for some 1.1 million rural residents and the virtual eradication of Guinea worm. One unintended result linked to the Agency's long–term involvement in Ghana was the building of trust and the according of special status to Canada for demonstrating leadership in the sector. The Peruvian project contributed to a significant decrease in diarrhea.

The projects in Peru, Ghana and Benin were considered sustainable, although the joint venture in Benin depends on international sector financing. In the Ukraine where there is a tendency not to share information, lessons learned were widely published in journals, booklets and manuals leading to new practices, technologies and structures being implemented. In Peru, a unique leveraging strategy attracted the financial participation of other donors and local communities in sub–projects. A blended model of community management and district subsidies is still being tested in Ghana, with the potential for broader applicability to sub–Saharan Africa. In Honduras, local participation was a key to success. The water project in Indonesia was extended into the year 2000 to focus on institutional strengthening to establish a sustainable organization.

Evaluators noted that:

➢ The Honduras and Nicaragua projects were: 1) hampered by unstable national environments, and 2) the poorest people were unable to afford the new water fees.

➢ In the Ukraine, there are questions about shortage of finances among participating institutions (leading to concerns about financial sustainability).

➢ Partnering strategies were not adequately addressed in the Indonesia, Nicaraguan and Ukrainian projects.

4   POVERTY REDUCTION, EQUITY AND ACCESS

> Lives of the poor being improved,
> but full extent of benefits
> largely unknown

On balance, the evidence is supportive of the linkage between CIDA's IS programming and improvements being generated in the lives of the poor through greater equity and access.

CIDA's investments contributed to the following results:

➢ Over one million rural residents in Ghana were provided with access to clean water.

➢ The rural maintenance project in Bangladesh employed some 36,000 destitute women annually.

➢ The energy project in Guinea increased access of the poor to electricity, health and education services.

➢ Poorer population segments in the PANAFTEL countries benefited from enhanced access to telecommunications services.

Other IS programming, however, provided less impressive results. In Nicaragua where water rationing was reduced from one million recipients to 220,000 in six years, it was found that some poor families who previously enjoyed free access to water are now unable to pay for access. Investments in air transportation in Nepal produced IS benefits that did not improve equity and access for poorer segments of the population.

Targeting Poverty

Often CIDA's programming was found to have neither implicit nor explicit poverty objectives. Many projects preceded the Agency's current focus on poverty reduction by decades and targeted objectives that were consistent with the policy environment of their respective eras.

For some projects, a straightforward relationship between economic growth and poverty reduction was assumed. More holistic models are now available to explain what constitutes poverty and how to reduce it.

Exceptions that included a poverty reduction component were the energy project in Guinea and the rural road maintenance project in Bangladesh. As well, bilateral water projects were more often directly aligned with poverty reduction.

Enabling Environments

CIDA's emerging IS Policy emphasizes the importance of building enabling environments to improve and expand IS delivery. The following examples identify the contributions made in this regard by the Agency's interventions:

➢   PANAFTEL and the Cuban Informatics for Economic Management Project helped to improve national sector development planning

➢   The telecommunications projects in the Philippines created institutional capacity and strengthened policy–making bodies

➢   The provision of technical assistance to the Honduras Power Systems Master Plan was linked to the upgrading of planning and management capacities in national and regional energy organizations.

➢   The foci of the bilateral water projects in Peru, Honduras and Nicaragua moved from micro–level capacity to the building of institutional capacity and an enabling environment

➢   The Ukrainian Environmental Management Development Project made significant contributions to the development of the enabling environment for environmental management

Assessing Benefits

The evaluators pointed out that: 1) there is insufficient information available to fully quantify the extent of the poverty reduction benefits from CIDA's IS programming, and that 2) this challenge was exacerbated when trying to verify contributions at the national level. The Review confirmed that more field–based research is needed to better understand how IS programming can directly benefit the poor.

The provision of equitable access to services remains a major challenge. A greater emphasis on participatory approaches, the collection of sex–disaggregated data, and the measurement of capacity development results is required to gain a better understanding of what poverty reduction benefits are being realized.

Strengthening IS Policy

The draft IS Policy states that services should be "equitably accessed by all levels of society, particularly the poor and women", but offers no explicit description of a best practice for service delivery that promotes economic development and reduces poverty. Country–specific contexts should clarify strategic choices. The approaches put forward in the World Bank's CDF and PRSPs and the United Nations' Development Assistance Framework will be helpful in this regard. The value of the IS Policy would likely increase if the complex relationship that draws together enabling environments, institutional capacity development and enhancement of physical stock was viewed pragmatically and in context from a balanced perspective.

5   POLICY DIALOGUE

> Policy dialogue needs
> structuring to remedy planning,
> monitoring, documentation and
> communications deficiencies

ISPR concluded that policy dialogue initiatives were reasonably successful at the bilateral and multilateral level but were generally carried out somewhat randomly and without a formal planning structure. Senior management needs to be kept fully informed about how specific initiatives are meeting objectives, and what cost and risks are being incurred. Often initiatives are not documented or monitored, and results go unrecognized within the Agency without lessons learned being applied or shared.

The Review found that sufficient time is needed to build personal trust and political connections. In numerous projects, the combination of a longer–term presence and major contributions have provided Canada with access to high–level decision makers. Policy dialogue successes often hinged on the performance and strengths of experienced CIDA individuals who consistently demonstrated resolve, tact, diplomacy and commitment.

In some cases, policy dialogue ceased with CIDA's departure from the sector, leading to lost opportunities for building on partnerships and retaining interest in Canadian goods. Without sound transition and communication strategies, the Agency's credibility is at risk and any future involvements will be exposed to a difficult rebuilding process leading to higher costs.

Other observations included:

➢   Policy dialogue sometimes included donor–issued ultimatums, conditionality, and/or the announcement of pre–agreed decisions. However, new understandings of partnerships have been emerging in the past five years.

➢   CIDA should develop a strategy for transferring policy dialogue expertise to less experienced staff to maintain capacities for the future.

➢   The Agency should explicitly define how global organizations link with the realization of its goals and objectives, and develop strategies for partnering with them.

Nile Basin Initiative (1990–1999)

Overall achievements are attributed to the combined efforts of the ten riparian states, the World Bank, UNDP and CIDA. Between 1992 and 1999, CIDA organized eight major conferences and played a pivotal role in orchestrating discussions and in supporting projects aimed at institutional capacity building. CIDA brought technical and political representatives together using funds allocated to the Technical Cooperation Committee for the Promotion of the Development and Environmental Protection. The Nile River Basin Action Plan was drafted with CIDA involvement.

World Water Council (1977–1999)

CIDA set out to ensure that developmental issues were reflected in the Council's overall mission and objectives. This resulted in the implicit incorporation of poverty reduction objectives in the Council's main goals. Canada has secured a permanent seat on the Council. CIDA contributed to the Vision Project (vision for 21st century). The Council functions without a gender equality (GE) strategy, and without an adequate representation of women. GE needs to be championed within this organization.

Global Knowledge Conference (1997)

The World Bank implemented a focus on learning, rejecting Canada's efforts to provide for more structured, results–oriented proceedings. However, participants were able to promote the importance of poverty reduction, and knowledge for good governance. One outcome was the Global Knowledge Partnership, representing 40 development agencies. Agreements were signed by CIDA with the World Bank and the International Telecommunication Union to focus on access in rural areas in developing countries. As a learning event, GK97 was seen as a lost opportunity (e.g. implications of ICT revolution not adequately addressed).

Prior to commencement of the Global Knowledge Conference II (2000) held in Malaysia in March, 2000, CIDA established a $1.3 million fund dedicated to Knowledge for Development to support Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) activities. The GKP Action Plan was a major output of this Conference. Canada played a strategic role in the development of this plan, and the Agency is coordinating the track on governance and monitoring the progress of other tracks.

International Telecommunication Union (1992–1999)

CIDA's initiatives helped identify ICT needs and benefits in development sectors, and led to the creation of the Task Force on Gender Issues. The Agency's efforts contributed to greater participation in the Union by development agencies and ministries. Gender equality results show promise but require further support from CIDA to ensure sustainability.

The UN Development Fund for Women, International Telecommunication Union and UN Development Programme signed an agreement in July 2000 to help ensure that ICT impact on women is acknowledged and incorporated in future policy dialogue and decision–making.

6   GENDER EQUALITY

> Greater emphasis, more work
> and dedication will help to
> improve shortcomings

The integration of gender equality in development activities remains a challenge for CIDA, a task that is likely more formidable for IS programming. More emphasis is clearly required in the targeting of GE to achieve sustainable development. Better results are seen as being linked to focused strategies, capable partners and longer–term programming perspectives. The World Bank's report "Engendering Development found that the "…development of economic infrastructure significantly reduces females' time on domestic chores, with potential benefits for their health, their participation in income–generating activities, and for girls in schooling." Applied diligence will help ensure that Agency programming doesn't widen disparities between poor and poorer women.

The ISPR found that CIDA's partners generally lacked the capacities to design and implement GE activities (exception: water projects assessed in the Americas). A greater emphasis needs to be applied to the realization of longer–term results and impacts for women (not just number of women trained). Distribution of costs and benefits of IS programming cannot be assumed to be 'gender neutral'. Investments in the analysis of differential use and benefits for women are not adequately addressed in project design. Where GE is not linked to intended results at the design stage, issues tend to be marginalized. There is evidence that gender strategies were insufficient to effect substantive, meaningful results.

Examples of GE results attributed to CIDA's investments included:

➢   The Philippines ICT project provided for increased communication between overseas workers (mainly women) and family members left behind, and greater access to social services.

➢   The rural maintenance program in Bangladesh contributed to women having improved household nutrition, and a greater ability to generate income and social empowerment.

Examples of unintended results follow:

➢   There is qualitative evidence of the improved status of women due to access to telephones (PANAFTEL – Mali). The Mali energy project provided refrigerators and freezers for women vendors selling ice and yogurt.

➢   In Pakistan, women's lives were improved by village electrification that reduced domestic workloads (e.g. washing clothes), increased their comfort levels (air

cooling), and improved their information/entertainment access to televisions and radio.

The Review found that women typically had equal access to training, albeit sometimes as a result of the nature of the labour force. Women were well represented in senior positions in the Volgogradgas project and participated in key decision–making, including the selection of all training candidates.

Other observations included:

➢ Generally, CIDA did not attach high priority to GE issues in the four policy dialogue activities or in its bilateral dialogue. The exceptions noted were the International Telecommunication Union activities and at the Global Knowledge Conference (1997).

➢ Where CIDA has affected policy changes, more resources will be required to meet expectations or commitments made (e.g. International Telecommunication Union).

7   CONCLUSION

> CIDA needs to define a role for
> IS programming that focuses primarily
> on sustainable development and
> poverty reduction results

Results Achieved

On balance, the record indicates that CIDA has made major contributions to the building of physical installations, while working in partnership with recipient countries and other donors. The projects assessed were usually found to be relevant and appropriate to the needs of the Agency's country partners. Most were well–managed, with many illustrating an "engineering approach" that was consistent for construction projects at the time of their implementation. Generally, the building of sound, sustainable infrastructure has continued to generate benefits long after CIDA's involvements have terminated

Both public and private sector capacity building was frequently a sustainable benefit of IS programming, with contributions identified at community, organizational and/or national levels. Sustainable results in capacity building were typically linked to Canadian technical assistance. Technical and capital infrastructure projects often provided significant capacity building results.

Poverty Reduction, Gender Equality

The Review concluded that the delivery of IS to the poor (particularly women) remains a challenge, and our efforts in the field generally have not provided a very useful learning experience. Often projects in the ISPR sample had neither implicit nor explicit poverty objectives. More dated projects simply were not designed to reduce poverty, but rather to establish or improve physical infrastructure. It is not reasonable, therefore, to assess their results in this context. More recent investments indicated instances of contributions to poverty reduction, with evidence that women's lives have been improved in some cases (although typically these latter results were unintended).

What should be done?

Recent qualitative studies revealed that poor people perceive their lack of access to basic infrastructure, rural roads, transportation and water is key to what distinguishes them from the rich. However, the Review found that CIDA funding for IS programming has steadily been declining, with emphasis shifting to institutional and national level reforms (and not contributing directly to basic infrastructure).

Additional guidance is required to identify a role for IS programming for bringing accessible services to the poor while defining a comprehensive mix for CIDA programming. The Agency's new IS Policy is expected to perform a vital role in bringing a larger focus to the equitable access to IS by the poorest segments of the populations of recipient countries.

The provision and measurement of equitable access to services remains a major challenge. The Review confirmed that the development community needs to undertake more field–based research to gain an accurate and more complete understanding of how IS programming leads to benefits to the poor. Also, we have to deepen our understanding of how infrastructure affects women and men differently, and to incorporate that understanding into our IS programming.

To understand results, this will require participatory approaches and the collection and analysis of data disaggregated by sex, as well as by age, race and socio-economic and ethnic groups. A greater focus on defining and measuring capacity development results is needed to improve initiatives that focus on sector reforms and the building of enabling environments.

Policy Dialogue

Our studies indicated that CIDA has been reasonably successful in pursuing policy dialogue initiatives and has demonstrated an ability to influence others that often has exceeded expectations. Results have included: 1) the creation and strengthening of global and multilateral organizations, 2) the establishment of coalitions dedicated to water conservation and peace–building, and 3) major contributions to international conferences. Results demonstrate CIDA's effectiveness in applying expertise and diplomatic skills.

Successful policy dialogue is linked to good management practices, beginning with a formal work plan that articulates goals and objectives, expected results, performance indicators and resources estimates. The Review identified deficiencies related to the formal structuring of initiatives. Often senior management was not kept informed of developments.

Achievements that were noted often depended on the commitment and competence of experienced senior Agency staff. The aging of CIDA has implications for the future as the Agency's capacities to carry out effective policy dialogue activities will be challenged.

8   RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   CIDA should finalize and disseminate its "Infrastructure Services Policy" to support its "Social Development Priorities", "Sustainable Development Strategy" and other planning initiatives. The IS Policy should set out clear, concise results statements and address how to effectively balance the contributions made by building enabling environments, institutional capacity development and enhancement of physical stock. A diagnostic tool kit and guidelines should be prepared to ensure consistent application of CIDA's IS Policy and to guide CIDA staff and its partners in the delivery of IS services. The guidelines should inform CIDA staff about making strategic choices among programming categories and help them to establish links between economic development and poverty reduction. Best practices should be distributed, either as policy annex or with the tool kit.

2.   CIDA should be more realistic when describing expected results and preparing results statements to better determine to what extent and in what time frame the infrastructure investments will reduce poverty. Focusing on the poor often requires participatory approaches and longer implementation periods to ensure that local capacity is built for sustainability.

3.   CIDA should place a greater emphasis on how to measure: 1) capacity development results, and 2) equitable service delivery (e.g. to the poor). Baseline data should be established on a practical and realistic basis. Performance measurement data should be collected regularly, using participatory approaches. The Agency should ensure the collection of baseline data and performance measurement information disaggregated by sex (and by age, socio–economic group, race and ethnicity as required) to confirm the different benefits and results for women and men (and for other targeted segments) that flow from CIDA's infrastructure investments.

4.   CIDA should ensure that staff has the necessary tools, guidelines, and training in policy dialogue to guide their activities and assist in the learning process. Guidelines should describe a management process for policy dialogue activities (e.g. approvals, documentation, monitoring, resource allocations). Training should take advantage of the experience and knowledge of the Agency's senior Scientific and Technical personnel. Mentoring should be considered to realize a wider corporate benefit (and continuity of capacity) through knowledge transfers from experienced individuals in–house who have demonstrated passion, expertise, resourcefulness and dedication in the performance of policy dialogue activities.

5.   CIDA should emphasize the importance of involving women in the design, implementation and assessment of IS programming to ensure a proper reflection of women's needs, realities and priorities.