



# ACGC

ALBERTA COUNCIL FOR  
GLOBAL COOPERATION

**Alberta Council for Global Cooperation  
International Assistance Review Submission**



**July 2016**

## Introduction and Context

On May 18, 2016, the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, launched a public review and consultation of Canada's international assistance policy and funding framework. The first of such consultations in over a decade, the IAR is a critical moment for the Government of Canada to gather, hear, and learn from the expertise and ideas of Canada's civil society organizations (CSO). The International Assistance Review (IAR) will inform how Canada can best refocus its international assistance on the poorest and most vulnerable people and support fragile states. IAR is based on six thematic pillars, with a feminist lens running throughout:

- Health and rights of women and children;
- Clean economic growth and climate change;
- Governance, pluralism, diversity and human rights;
- Peace and security;
- Responding to humanitarian crises and the needs of displaced populations; and
- Delivering results, with a focus on improving effectiveness and transparency, innovation and partnerships.<sup>1</sup>

The IAR comes at time of renewed engagement and energy around international development both nationally and internationally. Internationally, the past year has seen the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) following unprecedented global consultations, and the historic Paris Agreement on climate change. Nationally, the IAR asks Canadians what they want Canada's role in the world to look like. The IAR ran concurrently to a number of other GoC consultations including the Department of National Defense's Defense Policy Review Public Consultation Paper, and Environment and Climate Change Canada's formal review process on the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. In this context, the IAR presents a timely opportunity for Canada to re-examine its role in the world and how it can best contribute to sustainable development at home and abroad.

## ACGC Consultation Process

The Alberta Council for Global Cooperation (ACGC) is a coalition of over 60 voluntary sector organizations located in Alberta, working locally and globally to achieve sustainable human development. We are committed to international cooperation that is people-centred, democratic, just, inclusive, and respectful of the environment and indigenous cultures. We work towards ending poverty and achieving a peaceful and healthy world, with dignity and full participation for all.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/development-developpement/iar-consultations-eai/document.aspx?lang=eng>

We represent a diverse membership of organization of all sizes, based throughout Alberta and working in diverse regions around the world. Our members represent secular and religiously affiliated organizations, educational institutions, from primary to post-secondary, grassroots, diaspora and Indigenous groups as well as multimillion dollar humanitarian response groups, organizations funded by private industry, government grants, and public donations. The diversity of our membership is united in pursuit of these goals and work to achieve them through supporting global citizenship programs and participatory projects with international partners.

The Alberta Council for Global Cooperation enthusiastically welcomed the IAR. It was a critical moment for ACGC to gather, hear, and learn from the expertise and ideas of Albertan civil society organizations (CSO). ACGC implemented a comprehensive strategy to engage our members in the IAR in-person, online, and, through partnership with Global Affairs Canada (GAC), at two of the official high-level consultations. Digitally, ACGC engaged members and Albertan in two key ways. First, ACGC raised awareness of the IAR to all of our online followers through our various online mediums including our website, our Facebook and Twitter accounts, our ebullition, and a special addition Connect Newsletter targeting our members. Overall, we estimate that we reached 3, 128 people encouraging them to participate in the IAR consultation and directing them to the official GAC IAR website through our online campaign. Additionally, ACGC set up an online survey to collect member feedback on the IAR. It contained all of the IAR questions and ACGC received 10 many meaningful responses from our members. In-Person, ACGC engaged our members via two round table consultations on June 16 and June 25 in Edmonton and Calgary with opportunities for remote, northern, and rural participants to join via distance technology. Finally, ACGC appreciated the opportunity to partner and join Global Affairs Canada in engaging communities across Canada through its support of official and unofficial consultations. ACGC worked closely with Global Affairs Canada to host an official consultation in Calgary on June 25 focusing on the topic responding to humanitarian crisis and the needs of displaced populations. Additionally, ACGC identified youth to participate in an official Global Affairs Canada youth consultation on June 28. ACGC's consultation reached a diverse range of people including nonprofit organizations, global education groups, youth, Indigenous and Diaspora groups, secular and faith-based organizations, and small to large organizations based in rural and urban Albertan communities. In total, the ACGC IAR Report represents the thoughts, ideas, and expertise of 53 actively engaged individual Albertans associated with our membership.

This report is organized into seven sections. First, the report outlines 5 overarching recommendations for Canada's approach to international cooperation. The remainder of the report is structured around the six IAR pillars with specific recommendations under each pillar that respond to the questions outlined in the IAR discussion paper.

**Overarching Recommendation:** Canada should be a domestic and international leader in the realization of the SDGs. All of Canada's international development work should be underpinned by the SDG framework and integrate all the economic, social, and environmental pillars of the 2030 Agenda.

Canada is well positioned to be an international leader in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Canada's history of providing humanitarian aid and peacekeepers as well as embracing multiculturalism and diversity domestically have provided the country with the international reputation, expertise, and support from Canadians that will be crucial to reach the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The universal nature of Agenda 2030 mean Canada's current work towards reconciliation with our Indigenous peoples, growing respect for indigenous knowledge, budding environmental protection and climate change mitigation work, are important to the realization of the SDGs at a global level.

**Overarching Recommendation:** Canada should work to towards sustainable development based in long-term relationships with local communities.

All of Canada's development priorities must be sustainable both in terms of project sustainability and aligning with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Canada's development work needs to move away from simply providing temporary solutions, to long-term partnerships, as is already modeled by many SMOs. These long-term partnerships focus on building capacity, resiliency, autonomy, and sustainability for communities in need. To increase the sustainability of projects, GAC should enhance transition funding so Canadian organizations can withdraw slowly when communities have the capacity to take over a project. Further, to enable and support Canadian CSOs to establish long-term relationship with partner organizations or grassroots communities in developing country, the Government of Canada should encourage multi-term projects and programs with the same partner, same focus and same community or region via updated funding mechanisms.

**Overarching Recommendation:** Partnership, rights, and solidarity-based development: Updating language

Canada's development work must be based in human rights and South-North and North-South partnerships and solidarity. There was a strong call from ACGC members to see a move away from what has sometimes been a historically paternalistic approach to development work. They called for Canada to

move towards a model where we work with diverse people around the world, all with recognized knowledge and skills, collaboratively towards a better future for us all. The very title of this review, International Assistance Review annotates problematic power dynamics in which the 'developed North helps', via a charity-based model, developing countries progress. Instead, ACGC recommends using language that reflects the partnerships espoused in the SDGs. Specifically, ACGC recommends the use of language such as international cooperation or development in place of international assistance.

**Overarching Recommendation:** Increased and diversified development funding that is decoupled from trade goals.

While, the IAR Discussion Paper stresses the importance of innovation, efficiencies, and effectiveness, there is a limit to what can be done with limited funding. Excluding exceptional payments, there has not been substantial growth in Canada's official development assistance (ODA) since 2010-11. The ODA funding target of 0.7% Gross National Income (GNI), championed by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson should be reached and Canada should serve as a leader encouraging other nations to do the same.

Additionally, as expanded on more in the delivering results section, there is a need for diverse, long-term, predictable, and flexible funding for CSOs. This means providing a diversity of funding options and criteria to allow SMOs access to Canadian Government funding. This also means prioritizing local community needs and perspectives when providing funding and ensuring flexibility is available when circumstances change in country.

Finally, Canada's ODA funding should not be tied to trade priorities but instead should be determined by our development priorities and reaching the poorest and most vulnerable.

**Overarching Recommendation:** Whole-of-Government and whole-of-Canada collaborations for sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for an increase and revitalization of partnerships and collaboration. As such, Canada must move from what has sometimes been a siloed approach to international development towards an integrated, collaborative, whole-of-government approach. All Government ministries have a role to play in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. No single ministry or government department can effectively address any of the goals on its own. The types of cross-ministerial, cross-governmental, and cross-sectoral collaboration and partnerships necessary to effectively implementing the SDGs will require substantive changes in governmental processes.

Whole-of-Canada collaborations will also be necessary to reach the ambitious goals set out by Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement. The Government of Canada and the international development sector must engage with diverse partners more than ever before. The Canadian public must be engaged on development issues from a young age, the private sector must be pushed to accept corporate social and environmental responsibility and move towards becoming an ally and partner on development projects, and all levels of government including provincial, municipal, and Indigenous, should be engaged on the role they play in implementing the SDGs in their communities.

## Health and rights of women and children

**Recommendation:** A crosscutting feminist approach integrated into all of Canada's development work, which recognizes the intersectionality of discrimination.

ACGC was pleased to see the Government of Canada's adoption of a feminist approach to both its domestic and international assistance policies. Indeed as one of our members eloquently said,

“there is a growing body of evidence that empowering women, including providing appropriate maternal health care to women and ending gender based violence, is one of the most direct and influential ways to foster economic development. Gender equality enhances economic efficiency and improves other development outcomes in three key ways: 1) increasing productivity when women's skills are more fully used; 2) Changed spending patterns (to the benefit of children and countries' growth prospects) when women have greater control of household resources, and 3) Policy choices and institutions that are more representative of a range of voices when women are empowered as economic, political, and social actors" (ACGC member).

In adopting a feminist approach, we need to ensure that it means we are working towards transformative change. Given that women and girls are among the poorest and most vulnerable in the world, Canada's programs must work towards transformative change in education, financial empowerment, health, human rights and ending gender-based violence. To ensure a feminist approach is integrated into all of Canada's development work, gender-based analysis analyzing the power dynamics present in international development initiatives should be implemented to ensure women are a meaningful part of decision making

at all levels. Women and girls should be a key metric in measuring Canada's progress towards the SDGs. Such metrics must not only measure how many women and girls a program reaches but how many women and girls are meaningfully empowered as a result.

Further, the feminist approach integrated into Canadian development work needs to recognize the intersectionality of discrimination and give particular attention to women and girls who face compounding barriers and discrimination on the basis of disability, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity. This should include a move away from seeing women and girls as vulnerable populations towards seeing them as a whole, diverse people. In the context of recognizing diversity, we can work with women to ensure they have the tools for empowerment discussed above.

**Recommendation:** A holistic approach to supporting the well-being and empowerment of women, and girls that addresses the root causes of poverty, conflict, and gender-based violence.

To ensure meaningful advancements are made in the well-being and empowerment of women and girls around the world, Canada must adopt a holistic approach that addresses the root causes of gender-based inequality. This means addressing the concurrent factors contributing to inequality like poor educational outcomes for girls by doing a holistic analysis of the factors surrounding girls education including health, social, and geographic factors. This also means including men and boys as an integral part of any strategy to reduce gendered inequality. It means including men and boys on as allies, educating them on issues like gender-based violence and discrimination, and challenging traditional beliefs that prejudice men as the holders of power. Working with local development organizations will increase Canada's effectiveness in this area.

**Recommendation:** Promote, and provide support for, women's rights to make their own sexual and reproductive choices.

Canada is uniquely placed to push forward the reproductive rights of women around the world. Canada's leadership on Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (MNCH), recent adoption to a feminist approach, and commitment to expand Canada's MNCH work to include funding family planning projects which use contraceptives, position Canada to meaningfully support women's sexual and reproductive rights around the world. Canada must implement its previous commitments and ensure that access to reproductive

education and healthcare including emergency contraceptives and safe abortions are available to every woman around the world. Canada should take a leading role in human rights and sex education designed to break down taboos and myths associated with sex and sexuality, invest in women and girls rights through local development initiatives, and work to improve health care facilities and training, as part of its work to meet the SDGs.

## Clean Economic Growth and Climate Change

**Recommendation:** Make environmental sustainability and climate change action a key priority in Canada's international cooperation and a cross-cutting theme.

Similarly to how a feminist approach and gender equality have been presented as both a stand-alone priority and a cross-cutting theme in GAC's IAR Discussion Paper, environmental protection and climate change action should similarly be a stand-alone priority and cross-cutting theme. Climate change is one of the single greatest threats we face today and has the potential to undo many of the recent gains made in development. As such, environmental protection and climate change should be a stand-alone priority in Canada's international cooperation agenda, decoupled from economic growth, which often has different and competing priorities. Further, all development projects should be evaluated under an environmental lens and increased funding should be awarded to projects that incorporate environmental protection or climate change mitigation.

**Recommendation:** Recognize domestic climate action as a key development strategy.

The universality of the SDGs requires us to look at domestic action with a sustainable development lens and recognize that our domestic policies have clear implications for international development. In climate change, the link between the domestic and the international is most clear: the most effective action Canada can take to mitigate the effects of climate change in developing countries around the world, is to meet the objectives set out in the Paris Agreement, domestically. At 0.5% of the world's population, Canada is the 8th largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and uses more energy than all the 760 million inhabitants of Africa combined<sup>2</sup>. Canadian companies are at the forefront of environmental destruction and land degradation including through Canadian mining companies operations in Latin America<sup>3</sup>. Without meaningful action towards minimizing our contributions to climate change and environmental degradation, any international assistance work to mitigate the effects of climate change in the developing world are band aid solutions that fail to address the root issue. Given this interconnectedness between

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<sup>2</sup> See [Canadian Emissions](#) from the David Suzuki Foundation

<sup>3</sup> See [McGill Research Group Investigating Canadian Mining in Latin America](#)



our domestic and international policy, there needs to be a more integrated approach with Environment and Climate Change Canada, including their review of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

**Recommendation:** Work with local communities to find locally suitable and environmentally sensitive solutions to clean economic growth and climate change.

Effective and sustainable development partners with local communities to integrate solutions that work within local contexts and strengths. To achieve meaningful economic growth and climate change action, Canada must work with local communities and governments to push forward projects that promote sustainable economic growth and environmental protection including: increasing fair trade policies for products that respect the local environment and pay special attention to advancing women's participation in markets, finding locally suitable and environmentally sensitive alternatives for water harvesting, energy sources, waste disposal and integrated farming systems, and encouraging initiatives that educate local populations (in both schools and workplaces) about ways to mitigate the effects of climate change and increase their resiliency to environmental crises.

**Recommendation:** Ensure particular focus is given to vulnerable populations disproportionately affected by the effects of environmental degradation and climate change.

The effects of climate change will not be equally felt by all. The global south particularly those living in low lying regions who are poor, female, and/or Indigenous will feel the effects of a warming world more acutely. As such, Canada's work to mitigate the effects of climate change should invest resources into identifying and supporting those who will be most affected. For example, Indigenous populations', domestically and internationally, whose close ties to the land leave them particularly exposed to the effects of climate change, must be active collaborators in Canada's climate plan and action. Indigenous women are even more disproportionately affected due to the intersectionality of their gender and Indigenous heritage and should be given particular attention in terms of meaningful voice and supports in adapting to climate change.

## Governance, Pluralism, Diversity and Human Rights

**Recommendation:** Engage Canadian private sector companies in environmental and international cooperation initiatives and hold them accountable for negative actions abroad.

If engaged effectively, the private sector can have an important role in Canada's environmental sustainability and international cooperation work. Under the banner of Corporate Responsibility both social and environmental, the Government of Canada and CSOs should engage Canada's private sector in international cooperation initiatives, particularly in countries and communities in which the company already works. While companies often do community development projects in communities where they are working, there is substantial room for progress in making those projects more effective and aligned with the principles of good development work.

In addition to actively engaging the private sector to find solutions, the Canadian Government must take a stronger role in holding Canadian companies accountable for their actions abroad, particularly in regards to environmental degradation. Canadian companies operating outside of the country must be held accountable to the standards of Canadian laws on human rights, best environmental practices and worker health, safety and benefits. Additionally, these companies should be encouraged and incentivized to hire and train local indigenous (especially female) workers.

**Recommendation:** Build capacity of CSOs in developing nations to establish inclusive, democratic structures and systems and promote gender equity and human rights.

Given Canada's strong domestic mosaic of civil society organizations that advocate for a plethora of governance, diversity, and human rights issues, Canada is well situated to build the capacity of local CSOs around the world working on similar issues. As such, Canada should focus on empowering local CSOs in developing nations to advocate for inclusive, democratic structures and systems, empower women and youth, and end human rights violations.

In order for Canadian CSOs to work with local CSOs to advocate for inclusive, democratic structures and systems, gender equity, and human rights, the Government of Canada must address policy incoherence with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The current CRA policy on charitable status excludes many of our members from advocating for changes to local government policies including those that hinder the advancement of women and girls or human rights. Given that advocacy is critical in developing rights-based development, this must change.

## Peace and Security

**Recommendation:** Establish clear cooperation and coordination between international coordination efforts and peace and security.

The peace and security of fragile and conflict-affected states goes far beyond immediate peacekeeping and security efforts. Peace-building and maintaining is a long process that involves rebuilding of infrastructure and institutions, re-educating and re-employing populations. Canada's expertise in other development areas, if better integrated, could serve to create a more seamless transition from the peacekeeping to peace building stages.

**Recommendation:** Re-engage in global peacekeeping operations and negotiations including ratifying the Arms Trade Treaty.

Canada has historically been a leader in peacekeeping, though our credibility has fallen in recent years. To further our peace and security goals, Canada should re-engage with global negotiations and work together with other countries to champion peace and social justice talks, provide humanitarian aid, and help populations in developing nations achieve a better standard of living. Canada can play a leading role in international negotiations particularly in promoting the recognition of, and action towards, ending sexual violence as a weapon of war. Canada has fallen behind is in failing to halt armament sales to states with records of human rights abuses. Canada should immediately halt such sales and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty.

## Responding to Humanitarian Crises and the Needs of Displaced Populations

**Recommendation:** An integrated humanitarian response policy that streamlines the transition between immediate humanitarian response and long-term re-building, resiliency, and development.

Often in the immediate crisis surrounding humanitarian responses, the transition to long-term re-building, resiliency, and development is lost. While small and medium-sized organizations are not well placed to respond to immediate crisis, they are well placed to build long-standing relationships with vulnerable populations that are key in rebuilding and fostering resilient and sustainable communities. As such, Canada should further invest in SMOs to develop projects and programs that build prevention, preparedness,

capacity, and resilience in developing countries. Development is the preventative work that, by meeting human needs and preventing environmental degradation, builds communities that are better able to adapt to crisis.

**Recommendation:** Listen to marginalized voices in all stages of humanitarian response.

As with many of the IAR themes, responses to humanitarian crisis must ensure that the most difficult to connect with are reached in all stages of humanitarian intervention from prevention through to reconstruction. It means ensuring diverse and marginalized voices are included in the development of disaster response plans and that policies include the voices of women, Indigenous people, and Diaspora groups. It also means taking extra measures to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches the poorest and most vulnerable during a humanitarian crisis response.

**Recommendation:** Canada take a lead role in the resettling of refugees and displaced persons.

Canada has an important role to play as a voice of optimism and world leader in welcoming refugees and displaced persons, particularly as fear of immigrants grows internationally. As such, ACGC members supported the current government's increased resolve to accept refugees to Canada. However, they also stresses that there is more that can and must be done to support displaced persons. Including many improvements that can be made to simplify and relieve stress in the immigration process including restructuring of the immigrant travel loans.

## **Delivering Results**

The Delivery Results section yielded the most input from the Albertans and provided many suggestions for concrete steps that could be undertaken by GAC to better execute the Canada's development work. These suggestions fall mostly into the areas of funding, innovation, and partnerships.

## Funding:

**Recommendation:** A diversity of funding mechanisms that are long term, predictable, responsible and flexible.

A diversity of funding models are required for SMOs. Because they are asking for smaller amounts of funding, the process should be more streamlined with less onerous applications, minimized red tape, and shortened turnaround times compared to larger CSOs requesting larger funds. To aid the funding process and ensure more regional representation and consultation, it was strongly suggested that funding could be done through the provincial councils, many of which have experience dispersing provincial funding.

Further, SMOs need long-term and core funding to take more risks, be innovative, build long-standing relationships, and remain flexible and responsive to changes in the the communities in which they work. Currently, SMOs are caught in a constant struggle to secure project funding. A decrease in the requirements for matching funds, especially for larger projects and grants for SMOs related to aid with auditing, would significantly relieve the administrative burden of SMOs. The Government of Canada could utilize funding to encourage innovation, collaboration, and a feminist approach by making them conditions upon which more favourable matching requirements are granted. Finally, there is also a need to fund diaspora and indigenous organizations who have unique expertise that they can bring to the development table but whom may not have experience writing effective grant proposals.

**Recommendation:** Transparent funding at all levels.

Canadian funding mechanisms need to be more transparent. Similar to how the Alberta Government publicize recipients of their CPI funding, the Government of Canada should publicize where funding dollars go, to which organizations and for what projects, in a timely manner. Additionally, there should be more transparency in the funding decision making process. For example, why are some calls for proposals competitive and some closed, on what merits did a project get funding? Finally, multilateral and bilateral organizations including the World Bank, the United Nations, and the World Health Organization, need to report back to Canadians on where the funding goes. Canada's funding of multilateral and bilateral funding should be transparent both in terms how funding decisions at that level are made, the amount of funding given, and reporting back on how those funds are utilized.

## Innovation:

**Recommendation:** Strategically fund key projects that will be effective and efficient.

While there is a limit to what can be achieved in a tight funding environment, strategically funding key sectors and projects can have profound implications. For example a small amount of funding towards a free press can have a transformational role in holding governments accountable and expanding human rights. Through these types of initiatives that utilize innovative and strategic funding of key areas, the effects of Canadian development dollars can go a long way.

**Recommendation:** Balance the need for evidence-based projects, the desire for innovative, and the possibility of failure in development projects.

The current paradigm of wanting both innovation and evidence-based development projects has been contradictory for CSOs. Funding proposals must be new and innovative in order to get funded but also must have evidence that demonstrates an effective development project. There is a need to find a balance and recognize the importance of both evidence-based and innovative projects. There is value in established, evidence-based projects that are proven to work and new innovative, more experimental projects that have high risk and high reward. While not every project needs to be or can be truly innovative, as GAC seeks to foster innovation, it must be recognize that new, innovative projects, often with fast iterations, cannot provide the same level of quantitative evidence-based support as a well established project. To facilitate greater innovation, GAC should redefine what it considers to be evidence to include things that can measure the difficult to quantify in the fast iterative process of innovation. This would include a greater acknowledgement of qualitative measurements and embracing of local and Indigenous stories and non-traditional evidence.

GAC needs to accept that failure is necessary in the process of innovation. To foster innovation and risk taking, CSOs should not feel like their funding is dependent on their never failing. Failure reports should be encouraged. Core organizational funding – not just project-based funding – alongside "venture capital" or innovation funding would allow CSO to take more risks.

**Recommendation:** Recognize and encourage innovation that goes beyond technical innovation.

Innovation should refer not only to the use of new technology but also other nontechnological innovations that can substantially increase the effectiveness of development work. These would include innovation in program design or implementation, innovative partnerships with new or different actors, and innovation in educational programs.

**Recommendation:** Public engagement funding as a part of all projects and as stand alone funding.

Public engagement of Canadians is absolutely critical in developing a citizenship that is engaged, empathetic, and globally minded. As such, there is a need for public engagement funding both as a part of all funding agreements and as funding for stand-alone public engagement initiatives. It is important that the sector be able to engage people in the work of international development without always asking for money.

Specific suggestions of innovative public engagement and knowledge sharing mechanism are:

- Using social media platforms to engage and educate youth and donors (and the general public) in international development
- Creating a national registry of all CSOs currently operating in a region or engaging in a particular type of aid (human rights, water, education, health, etc.)
- Creating platforms, either online or in person (workshops, conferences, seminars) where Canadian CSOs can exchange expertise and best practices with organizations from other developed countries and from developing countries
- Creating opportunities for Canadian government and CSOs to learn and share best practices with some of the emerging economies (i.e. Brazil, India, South Africa) who have implemented a number of innovative approaches to development, in particular in rural areas
- Increasing support and funding for the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to conduct research in collaboration with universities and colleges in Canada and other developing countries
- Provide platforms for the establishment of networks or communities of practice to encourage the exchange of information and best practices both between developing countries facing similar challenges and between Canadian CSOs working on similar programs

## Partnerships:

**Recommendation:** Increase development efficiency and effectiveness by encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing between CSOs, private sector, and government.

Canada's IA can increase efficiency and effectiveness through collaboration and knowledge sharing between and within civil society, the private sector, and government. GAC can encourage this by specifically encouraging joint proposals, funding and implementation of projects from CSOs and the private sector, as well as reopening dialogue between civil society applicants and GAC during calls for proposals. Additionally, Canada could work to become a leader in knowledge management through the collection and transference of IA knowledge.

**Recommendation:** Re-establish development links in embassies and consulates.

To build coherence between trade, development, and diplomacy efforts, we must recognize the policy incoherence that currently exists between trade, development, and diplomacy groups and work to resolve it. For example, we must address the tensions between trade and development when a Canadian mining company is degrading land in one region while Canadian CSOs are developing sustainable agriculture practices next door. One way to promote greater coherence between development, trade, and diplomacy, is to have development experts in place in Canadian embassies and consulates to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration.

**Recommendation:** Re-establish regional offices across the country or provide regional Councils with additional funding to fulfill the role.

Regional CSOs outside the Ottawa area are not able to engage with GAC in the same way that is possible for organizations based in central Canada. These organizations, particularly SMOs, would greatly benefit from increased guidance, assistance, consultation and face-to-face meetings with GAC. A regional GAC presence would provide a better understanding of current GAC goals/bigger picture as well as how funding decisions are made. In addition to fostering a greater sense of inclusion for the regions and building the capacity of regional organizations, regional development officers working alongside trade officers would encourage partnership between trade and development. Alternatively, the provincial councils can fill more



of the role of engaging with the regions on the SDGs as regional GAC officials had previously done, if provided with more funding.

**Recommendation:** Incentivize private industry to be a partner in Canadian development work.

Private industry should be encouraged and incentivized (possible through tax credits) to engage with international development organizations. Ideally, the relationship would be two fold. First, development organizations could share their expertise on countries in which they work through coaching, advising, and educational programming including sending industry staff members to the developing countries in which they are working with the development organization (billed as a professional development opportunity). This would serve as public engagement and education of a traditionally difficult to reach audience. Second, private industry would serve as a funding partner, providing funding for development projects delivered by Canadian and local CSOs – for example Scotiabank/ CUSO International Employee Fellowship.

**Recommendation:** Partner with local CSOs to find optimal solutions to local problems.

In order to increase capacity and sustainability in developing communities, efforts should be made to partner with local CSOs to share expertise, cost and labour for IA projects. Canadian CSOs are uniquely placed to facilitate these types of grassroots partnerships since many already have long-term partnerships throughout the world<sup>4</sup>. ACGC members strongly believe that "locals have the best solutions to local problems" and local CSOs should be recognized as key development partners and actors.

**Recommendation:** Engage youth, via educators, as the next generation of global citizens.

Public engagement and international development training at all levels of educational institutions is necessary to increase awareness of international development and produce future leaders in the field. The Government of Canada should support CSOs to work with universities to enhance volunteer opportunities abroad as part of degree requirements and encourage for-credit work within CSOs.

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<sup>4</sup> See the ICN's recent report [Small and Medium-Sized Civil Society Organizations as Development Actors: A Review of Evidence](#)

In addition to suggestions on how to reach students through educational facilities and better utilizing the GAC website to encourage and engage youth in international development, some interesting points were raised about the value of engaging with youth:

“Based on our secondary research and focus groups with Millennials, we recommended the Government keeps this in mind:

- Millennials are internationally savvy. Social media has made it so they have friends all over the world, they travel abroad more than any other generation, and they receive instant news from around the globe; don’t underestimate their intelligence.
- Millennials want facts; forget the fluff; they want to see results and read the numbers for themselves; they want to know that their Government is financially responsible.
- Millennials value the social aspect; they don’t just want to make a donation, they want to talk about it, share on social media or, even better, see the difference they are making for themselves.” (Statement from ACGC roundtable on public engagement on June 25<sup>th</sup>)

## Conclusions

ACGC’s submission to the IAR sets out an ambitious set of recommendations to GAC and the Government of Canada. Aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the recommendations contained in this submission outline a path towards a new paradigm of development work in Canada that is universal, people-centric, rights-based, and done in partnership and solidarity with locals in developing countries. We have outlined a paradigm that puts feminism and environmental protection at the forefront of every initiative and that recognizes Canada’s role in the world as a leader in providing homes for refugees and generously (0.7% ODA/ GNI recommended) supporting sustainable development. We have recommended a new paradigm where whole-of-government and whole-of-Canada collaborations are the norm, where funding is transparent and there is a diversity of funding mechanism accessible to SMOs. ACGC thanks the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie and Global Affairs Canada for this opportunity to engage on the future of Canada’s international cooperation efforts. We work forward to working with the Government of Canada, to make this new paradigm a reality.