Cultural Dimensions of Sustainable Development
CIDA's Orientations and Initiatives
Cultural Dimension of Sustainable Development: CIDA’s Orientations and Initiatives

Prepared by Political and Social Policies Division
Policy Branch
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This year, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, we feel that it is important to emphasize the interrelationship between culture and human rights.

“All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated. The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action; World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna 1993.
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Acronyms

ACCT Agence de coopération culturelle et technique
CECI Centre canadien d'éducation et de coopération internationale
CDE Centre for the Comparative Study of Culture, Development and the Environment
CEE Central and Eastern Europe
CESO Canadian Executive Services Organization
CFLI Canadian Funds for Local Initiatives
CFTC The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation
CFSI/CIL Centre for Intercultural Learning of the Canadian Foreign Service Institute
CIDA Canadian International Development Agency
CIDI Inter-American Council for Integral Development
DFAIT Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
DHC Department of Heritage Canada
HSSFC Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada
IDIC International Development Information Centre
IDRC International Development Research Centre
MAI Multilateral Agreement on Investment
NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement
OAS Organization of America States
OAU Organization of African Unity
ODA Official Development Assistance
OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SIETAR Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNRISD United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
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Foreword

CIDA has always considered the cultural dimension of development as an important aspect in ensuring the sustainability of its interventions. In 1991, with the adoption of the "Sustainable Development Framework", the Agency recognized cultural sustainability as one of the five interrelated dimensions of sustainable development, the other dimensions being environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, political sustainability and social sustainability. This commitment is reaffirmed in "Our Commitment to Sustainable Development", the Agency's strategy published in 1997.

CIDA has supported a series of initiatives in order to maintain an approach to development which respects the socio-cultural contexts in which it intervenes. These initiatives aim to encourage participation by civil society, to promote social dimensions of development, to emphasize the importance of local cultures, and to bring awareness to its personnel of issues related to cultural dimensions of development. In collaboration with UNESCO, CIDA also participates in the development of several research studies and tools facilitating the promotion of cultural dimensions.

It is important, however, to emphasize that cultural development at CIDA is not considered to be an intervention in its own rights, but rather a dimension which must be taken into consideration in the development of policies, programs and projects. It is possible to identify a few examples of projects and programs that have integrated cultural dimensions, such as ethnic diversity in Africa, indigenous peoples in the Americas, the influence of the great Asian civilizations, and the multicultural aspects of Central and Eastern societies. Also, the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives, as well as the activities supported by several NGOs, allow for the implementation of small-scale community projects responding effectively to local sociocultural contexts. Finally, CIDA, together with its Canadian and international partners (UNESCO, La Francophonie, the Commonwealth, and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development) has collaborated in several initiatives which have contributed to promoting respect for and recognition of cultural values in the implementation of development programs.

Nevertheless, the context of globalization raises numerous questions. For instance, the new dynamics between global and local phenomena, the cultural mix at the global level, and the new information and communication technologies, represent important challenges in terms of international cooperation. They imply a broader vision of development, based on a better understanding of social and cultural contexts in which our development programs are taking place. It is in light of these multiple challenges that CIDA should be able to formulate new cultural development strategies based on partnerships, as indicated in "Shaping the 21st Century" the OECD Development Aid Committee cooperation strategy.
I. Culture and Development

Stated in very general terms in the 1960s, the importance of the cultural dimension in development has been recognized in principle since the middle of the 1970s. Within the framework of international institutions, the expression was used in 1975 at the Accra Conference on Political Cultures in Africa, organized jointly by UNESCO and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).(1)

Over the course of the three first decades of development, the cultural dimension was relatively absent from development strategies, which focussed instead on setting up a technical and industrial base in developing countries and on clearing up the debt crisis.

In 1985, however, the World Conference on Cultural Policy (Mexico, 1985) sounded an alert, stressing the need to take into account the cultural dimensions of development. The definitions adopted during this conference constitute the recognition in principle by the international community of the need to progress beyond a purely economic vision of development and integrate cultural factors into all the various components of development.

In 1988 UNESCO, within the framework of the United Nations, launched the Decade of Cultural Development, which was expected to bring about a debate on consideration of the cultural dimension as an element of strategy and of development. Although the program saw a relatively slow start-up, a certain number of major activities emerged at the beginning of the 1990s.

The fourth decade of development, the 1990s, appeared more favourable for taking into account cultural aspects of development. On the one hand, post-project evaluations revealed that the failure of many development projects was attributable to a strategy which had long neglected social and cultural aspects. On the other hand, globalization of the economy, a significant feature of the end of the century, creates concerns about standardization at the world level to the detriment of local identities. Thus the cultural dimension is assuming more and more importance in debates on sustainable development.

The Cultural Dimension of Development

By taking the cultural dimension of development into account, we mean the need to conceive development efforts in such a way that actions correspond to the aspirations of the community concerned, that the community's know-how is put to use and that our efforts are not isolated (i.e. not replicable without further external help), but on the contrary can create multiplying effects. In order to conceive development plans or projects that take these factors into account, the population concerned needs to be closely involved in all phases of development.

Definition

The first use that often comes to mind connects culture to the development of the arts, literature, and a society's modes of expression, such as dance, dress, language, etc. Culture is a concept much more global and much more basic, which refers not only to ways of thinking to which the concept of culture is sometimes confined, as if it has to do only with perceptions, but to society's ways of doing things. (2)

Since the World Conference on Cultural Policy (Mexico, 1985), it has been recognized that culture is made up of "a collection of distinctive traits, spiritual and material, intellectual and emotional, which characterize a society or a social group. It includes, besides the arts and letters, ways of life, fundamental human rights, value systems, traditions and beliefs".
Culture and Development: Significant Events in the Context of International Cooperation

1. **World Conference on Cultural Policy (Mexico, 1985):** The Mondiacult Conference in Mexico City sounded an alert, stressing the need to take into account the cultural dimensions of development. Culture was then defined from a double perspective, according to its traditional dimension bound to the arts, literature and forms of expression, and according to an anthropological dimension connected to languages, beliefs and customs.

2. **The World Decade of Cultural Development (1988-1997):** The main objective was to strengthen awareness of the major bonds that exist between culture and development. The initiative, which was organized by UNESCO, had four objectives: (i) to recognize the cultural dimension of development; (ii) to recognize and promote local identities; (iii) to increase participation in cultural life; (iv) to promote culture in international cooperation.

3. **World Commission on Culture and Development (1992-1995):** Created jointly by UNESCO and the United Nations in 1992, the Commission, chaired by Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, had a mandate to draw up a report on the interactions between culture and development and to research solutions to the resulting problems.

4. **Our creative diversity:** report of the World Commission on Culture and Development presented to the United Nations in 1995. Tackling a series of topics, the report expanded the concept of creativity, permitting a new awareness of the multiple cultural issues which are necessarily basic to human development. The International Agenda constitutes the high point of the report. It listed ten recommendations with the aim of influencing the cultural strategies of the 21st century, including protection of cultural rights as human rights; application of a universal ethic in world government; the implementation of policies aimed at facilitating access, diversity and competition in the international media system; an international plan for equality of the sexes; and a world summit on culture and development.

5. **Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural and Media Policies in the Service of Development (Stockholm, 1998):** organized on the initiative of the Swedish government, this conference in April 1998 gathered more than 2,000 participants, including governmental and non-governmental representatives, one hundred member states and seventy five ministers of culture, in order to engage in a debate on subjects such as cultural policies in the face of cultural diversity issues, cultural pluralism in the media, culture and cyberspace, the promotion of artistic creativity, financing of culture and the improvement of international cooperation regarding cultural policy. The conference established a plan of action, translating into policy form the principal recommendations formulated in the report of the World Commission on Culture.
II. CIDA’s Orientations

CIDA will celebrate its thirtieth anniversary in 1998 as the main agency responsible for the administration of Official Development Assistance (ODA) of the Canadian government. Over the course of these years, concerns regarding the cultural dimension of development have always existed at the Agency. Even in the 1970s and 80s, CIDA encouraged an approach respectful of sociocultural realities, particularly within the framework of community or grassroots projects and in terms of raising the awareness of its personnel.

However, it was only in the beginning of the 1990s that CIDA officially integrated the cultural dimension into its strategic policies. The real kick-off was the adoption in 1991 of the framework for sustainable development, which considers cultural viability as one of the five dimensions of sustainable development, the other dimensions being environmental, economic, political, and social sustainability. As stated in the analytical framework, the sustainability of development activities often depends on the extent to which these five dimensions have been taken into account.

The adoption of the framework for sustainable development identified five conditions -- closely bound to cultural aspects -- necessary to ensure that development is sustainable. Thus, development must: (i) be seen from a long-term perspective; (ii) take into account social diversity and pluralism; (iii) promote equity and social justice; (iv) be based on participatory approaches; and (v) propose global solutions to problems and questions, that is, solutions which take account of all factors and their interrelations.

In 1995, the foreign policy statement of the Canadian government emphasized the global nature which culture must now assume in the era of globalization. “Countries are looking for the appropriate balance between openness to international culture and support of their own cultures to protect and enhance local identity and diversity.” (3) At the same time, one of the main objectives of foreign policy is to promote Canadian culture and values “as an important way of advancing our interests in international affairs.” As formulated, this objective confronts to some extent the principle of cultural viability defined in the framework for sustainable development, which encourages taking into account the sociocultural and political realities of the developing countries.

Concerning international cooperation, Canada’s foreign policy statement devotes a brief chapter to effective management of cooperation programs, in which it is recognized that knowledge of the local context, including sociocultural dimensions, and a participatory approach to development will ensure greater effectiveness of development projects and programs.
These various commitments and principles were reiterated by CIDA in its strategy for sustainable development, presented to Cabinet and adopted in 1997. It stipulates that: "sustainable development does not define a particular path for development, but focuses on what would enhance the quality of life. It requires the capacity to adapt to constantly changing conditions, as well as the flexibility to work with uncertainty, and with differences in local conditions and in public expectations shaped by culture, values and experience." (4)

The strategy proposes an action plan the majority of whose elements permit better consideration of development-related cultural aspects in the preparation of our programs. Thus, under the strategy CIDA is committed over the next several years to better equipping its agents and its partners with regard to basic knowledge of the environments in which they intervene. CIDA will also take specific measures to promote participatory approaches more effectively; and finally the Agency will continue to employ iterative project design approaches in order to adapt the projects to different contexts.

CIDA Policies and Cultural Dimensions

During the last few years the major ODA policies put forward by the Government of Canada have placed more and more importance on the cultural dimensions of development:

❖ **A Sustainable Development Framework (1991):** social and cultural sustainability; participation; recognition of values encouraging development; multidisciplinary approach; promotion of social equity.

❖ **Canada in the World (1995):** promoting culture; encouraging the participation of women; enhancing of the effectiveness of aid (knowledge of the local context and participation).

❖ **Women in Development and Gender Equity (1995):** highlights some aspects related to recognition of local cultural contexts. The policy will be updated in early 1999 and this includes culture in relation to gender equality.

❖ **Our Commitment to Sustainable Development (1997):** knowledge of the local context; use of participatory and iterative approaches; promoting the harmonization of policies and programs.
III. Corporate Strategies and Initiatives

Over the past few years, CIDA has undertaken a series of initiatives to promote taking into account the cultural dimension at the corporate level.

1. Emphasizing participatory development

[Translation] “The inclusion of the concept of culture in CIDA’s projects and programs assumes a more participatory approach to development. A correlation between respect for the culture of the developing country and the participation of the populations at the beginning and at the end of the process is understood.” (5)

Recognized in the foreign policy statement of the Canadian government as one of the basic principles for greater effectiveness of development projects and programs, participatory development encourages taking into account the cultural dimension. In fact, it is difficult to imagine being able to respect the culture, social dynamic, institutions and organizations associated with a society without ensuring that the population, and their elected officials, can take part in the decision-making process concerning proposed development strategies.

For a long time now, CIDA has been supporting initiatives aimed at promoting participatory development approaches. Among other things, CIDA has contributed to various projects of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD and of the Inter-Agency Group on Participation, established on the initiative of the World Bank. These efforts have resulted in the publication of various reports and in lessons learned from experience concerning the institutionalization of participatory approaches which constitute an important way of promoting the integration of various social and cultural groups into society. Furthermore, at CIDA an informal network on participatory development facilitates exchanges of information and experiences in this area. This is also the case with the network of OECD social development advisors.
Promoting women's participation

The question of women's participation in development is rather complex since, in the many societies in which CIDA intervenes, women are most often relegated to the role of passive beneficiaries; they do not receive payment for their work; or they do not have access to credit, land, education, etc. These observations on the inequalities between men and women represent both a cultural and a fundamental social dimension, and a specific area of intervention at CIDA.

CIDA recognises that in some instances, religious and cultural values may be invoked or cited to in fact discriminate against women. Canada's international position has been that recourse to cultural particularities that deny women their human rights are unacceptable.

CIDA tries to act on the cultural constraints associated with gender specificity by promoting initiatives centred on making populations more aware of the role women can play in economic, social and political development of communities. For example, CIDA, has supported in Nigeria an initiative aiming at developing a radio program on thematic issues important to human rights. The issues dealt with in the radio program included violence against women, and women's rights under Muslim law. In Egypt, CIDA supports a research to study and analyze the successful experience of the eradication of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in some Egyptian villages in Minya, research that will, in turn, support the eradication of FGM in other villages.

2. Promoting social dimensions of development

The social dimensions of development have always been an ongoing concern of the Agency, given the very nature of its mandate and the need to adapt to diverse sociocultural and political realities existing in the various regions of the world where it intervenes.
Recently, the Political and Social Policies Division of CIDA prepared an assessment of the Agency’s experience concerning the social dimensions of development, including aspects relating to culture. This study is intended as a contribution to putting into place sustainable development strategies. It presents an assessment of significant points aimed at improving cooperation practices and formulates proposals to enhance CIDA’s capabilities to integrate social and cultural dimensions.

3. **Emphasizing local cultures**

“If we can find the way to put people at the centre of the knowledge revolution we will be able to nourish and strengthen local cultures. This factor will be decisive for development to be sustainable in all ways, including culturally.” (excerpt from the opening speech of CIDA’s president, Huguette Labelle, at the Conference on World Knowledge, June 1997)

The technological revolution in the fields of knowledge, information and communications is the significant feature of the end of our century. The new technologies can have positive impacts on development in any region of the world, to the extent that they can be accessible to all, adapted to traditional societies, and respectful of local cultures.

By co-sponsoring with the World Bank a June 1997 conference dealing with knowledge and information in the service of international development, CIDA enabled more than twelve hundred people, including government representatives, heads of companies, and representatives of multilateral and non-governmental organizations from more than one hundred countries to consider how information technologies and knowledge transfers can contribute to sustainable development and reduction of global poverty. Three main topics were addressed: understanding the role of information in development; pooling appropriate resources to make knowledge a development tool; building new partnerships aimed at enhancing the capabilities

**Utilizing Local Knowledge**

Policy Branch in collaboration with the Centre for Traditional Knowledge in Ottawa and Environment Canada, participated in developing guidelines aimed at encouraging collaboration of governments and native organizations and communities to formulate recommendations as to the best way to obtain mutually beneficial results in regions where indigenous people are involved.

Entitled “Guidelines for Environmental Assessment and Traditional Knowledge”, the document is widely used in the training programs of various organizations and institutions. The guidelines were also tested at a Concordia University workshop which brought together members of the government, various industries and native communities.

Twenty or so organizations from around the globe have expressed the desire to test the guidelines in the development of their projects.

CIDA is now in the process of preparing a practical guide specifically centred on the needs of the Agency, in order to help project managers and their partners put local knowledge to use in many types of projects.
of the poor, promoting dialogue and using the resources of developing countries in the area of knowledge and information.

In this debate, CIDA recognizes that it is critical for local communities to have access to relevant information and knowledge. Thus CIDA is now tending to promote an approach which aims more to improve conditions at the heart of disparities in access to knowledge, technology and human potential, thus concentrating its efforts more on such aspects as policy, regulation and institutional strengthening.

4. Collaborating on UNESCO projects

Within the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997), UNESCO undertook the development of a number of tools to promote integration of cultural dimensions into development. CIDA is closely associated with this effort and has even authorized the production and translation of certain recently published documents on this subject.

The Cultural Approach to Development: CIDA-UNESCO Collaboration

The Cultural Dimension of Development: Towards a Practical Approach (UNESCO, 1994): provides an assessment of the situation as regards the cultural dimensions of development. CIDA contributed to the revision and translation of the document.

Involving culture: a field worker’s guide to culturally sensitive development (1996): was prepared within the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development (1987-1997). This guide entirely financed by CIDA provides a methodological framework aimed at including cultural aspects at the basic level of various development projects.

L’approche culturelle du développement, manuel de planification: principes et instruments (Paris, June 1997): the document provides an analytical framework for integrating the cultural dimension of development and offers suggestions for use at the level of policy, programs and development projects. This voluminous document will result in the publication of various individual parts which will be easier for workers to use.
5. Training and sensitizing CIDA personnel

❖ Training

The adoption of a sustainable development framework in which the cultural dimension is one of the five pillars has provoked discussions on this topic within CIDA. As an example, one can cite the seminar on training in sustainable development, which allowed more than 350 CIDA officers to receive three to five days’ training, including a component dealing with the cultural dimension of development. An electronic version on CD-ROM is currently in preparation and will soon be available to CIDA staff and partners.

❖ Guidelines

In 1995, the Canadian government’s foreign policy statement devoted a brief chapter to the effective management of cooperation programs in which five basic principles were recognized, including participatory development and knowledge of the local context. When they are adopted, these principles can contribute to integrating the social, cultural and institutional dimensions of development.

Development Express: Some subjects

❖ Cultural Sustainability: A Prerequisite for Success (Alistair Boulton – June 1993). The aim of this publication is to contribute to appreciation of the importance of respecting culture in development activities and to dispel certain misconceptions which seem to surround this question.

❖ Diversity and Development (Rajkumari Shanker – 1996). This publication examines the concepts of diversity and development.

❖ The Role of Indigenous Knowledge (November 1994). This brief examines the link that exists between sustainable development and traditional knowledge and examines who the indigenous peoples of the world are, the special nature of their knowledge, and the emerging role of indigenous peoples in sustainable development.

❖ Religion and Development (Rajkumari Shanker – 1997). This brief examines the role of the great religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity in the development process.
In this perspective technical notes have been prepared to guide the work of CIDA officers. These notes briefly explain the five basic principles, summarize some lessons learned from experience, give the implications for CIDA and suggest some references and available resources. A series of case studies illustrating best practices associated with effective programs in a variety of sectors has also been prepared.

❖ **Publications**

CIDA’s International Development Information Centre (IDIC), as part of its Development Express series, has published several issues dealing with the cultural dimension of development. The mandate of IDIC is to encourage the acquisition of a culture of knowledge and continuous learning within CIDA.
IV. Contribution of CIDA Programs

In recent years, CIDA has promoted few activities of a typically cultural character. A quick review of projects dealing with culture in the Central database of the Agency confirms that this is the case. Such activities are mainly financed through NGOs or the Canadian Funds for Local Initiatives. However, it is important to emphasize that cultural development is not considered an intervention or programming component as such, but rather a dimension which must be considered in the development of policies, programs and projects.

In addition, the concept of culture plays a role in Agency activities in various areas such as governance, human rights, technology transfers, education, women in development and communications; this makes it difficult to develop data compilation systems to quantify the scope of CIDA interventions. The present study will present examples of projects and programs that have integrated the cultural dimension.

1. Africa and the Middle East

"Behind the air-conditioned headquarters of African ministers, where during the day the power of the state is officially exercised, under the veranda, whole collections of players and centres of power come alive during the night; they are sometimes co-opted or manipulated by official power and operate on the sidelines if they are not squarely in opposition to it". Emmanuel Terray (7)

Africa and the Middle East constitute a vast region of sixty-six countries, home to more than 865 million inhabitants. The range of cultures, languages and experiences is extremely diversified and poses a challenge for anyone involved in international cooperation.

Cultural phenomena and notably ethnicity have long been underestimated by the international community. At most they were relegated to the level of an exotic space perceived as “traditional” as opposed to modern. But these cultural phenomena, in particular ethnicity, as they have manifested themselves since decolonization, are not foreign to modern Africa. Quite the contrary, they are rather the expression of the appropriation ~ although incomplete and conflicting ~ of this modernity by Africans, notably through the establishment and control of the apparatus of the modern state.

It must be remembered, that the state in Africa and modernity have been imposed from outside. Furthermore, these states exercise not only formal and official power but oversee the social players and socio-political dynamics ~ at once plural, complex and often very fluid, even secret ~ most often associated with this space called “traditional”. It is in this
way one speaks of “traditional” in making reference to traditional authorities, village chiefs, marabouts, witch doctors, castes, certain groups of elders or women or various clan, ethnolinguistic or religious groups.

The “ethnic” crises and major conflicts which marked the 1990s in Africa, for example in Rwanda, former Zaire, Burundi and South Africa, have caused CIDA to reflect on the importance of making sufficient efforts to understand the behaviour of social players and identify the stakes and centres of power.

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**Rwanda: The Cost of Looking Away**

Rwanda is a good example of a situation where the international community has had to realize the enormous cost involved in not paying attention to the social and cultural dimensions and political implications of development.

In Rwanda, because insufficient consideration had been given to ethnic, historical and cultural issues the international community saw the results of more than 25 years of international cooperation go up in smoke. Between April and December 1994, humanitarian assistance to Rwanda cost more than $1.4 billion.

Only after the 1993-94 incidents did the international community (specifically, nineteen OECD countries and fifteen or so international organizations) finance a thorough examination aimed at better understanding the origins and structural dimensions of current conflicts. Initially, the study was meant to review only the conditions associated with the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Rwanda; however, the authors had little choice but to assess the historical, ethnic and cultural origins of the crisis, which cost the lives of over 800,000 people.

The final study (in four volumes) addresses the causes of the conflict, taking a historical perspective. It reviews preliminary signs of the conflict and the manner in which the latter was handled, discusses the delivery and effect of humanitarian assistance, and assesses Rwanda’s rebuilding efforts following the war. Leading European and North American research centres (Uppsala, Sussex, OECD, Washington, Toronto) took part in the study. Unfortunately, no African research institution was involved.

We believe that such an effort, conducted by multiple donors, stresses the need to join forces and pool resources in order to promote synergy and have a genuine impact on existing problems in all their complexity.

Excerpt from “The Social Dimensions of Development at CIDA.” 1997
It is in this perspective that the Central Africa and Great Lakes Program has just completed two general studies, one dealing with the nature of civil society in former Zaire, and the second with regional issues for governance. Three further more specific studies will put the emphasis on places and centres of power in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (former Zaire) and Rwanda respectively.

Another cultural reality is also attracting the attention of CIDA: Islam, whose practices can have real impacts on the development process. The Sahel and Ivory Coast Program has also just begun a study dealing with Islam in Niger, one of the most strongly Muslim countries of the sub-region. The study will provide an analytical framework aimed at evaluating the dynamic of Islam in Niger, with special emphasis on the relations of power and religion, composition of civil society, social sectors such as education and health, status of women and foreign relations.

Finally, in Egypt, CIDA has supported since 1994 and with the collaboration of UNICEF and certain Canadian and Egyptian non-governmental organizations, a program of community education aimed at young girls who, for cultural reasons, have problems in gaining access to education.
2. The Americas

“For most indigenous peoples, land is not considered a commodity which can be bought, sold or rented. Rather, it is perceived as endowed with sacred meanings that define the culture’s existence and identity. This link between culture, land and environment is one cultural feature that distinguishes indigenous people from other populations.” (8)

When one speaks of culture and development in the region of the Americas it is difficult to ignore the set of problems surrounding indigenous peoples. Long considered a major obstacle to development, the traditional practices of indigenous peoples have gradually been attracting the interest of international cooperation organizations.

During the 1980s CIDA financed support to Colombian indigenous organizations through CUSO, an NGO. More recently, CIDA’s International Development Information Centre took an interest in this question in a publication that appeared in 1994. Entitled “The Role of Indigenous Knowledge,” this article examines the link between sustainable development and traditional knowledge by looking at who the world’s indigenous people are, at the special nature of their knowledge, and at the emerging role of indigenous peoples in sustainable development.

The strong presence of indigenous peoples in the Americas is a reality which poses a certain challenge to players active in planning and implementation of development programs in this region. In fact, it is estimated that close to 10% of the population of Central and South America are native, totalling more than 20 million persons. (Source Celade: Gaia Atla, UNDP.) The majority of native communities is found in Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Mexico and Guatemala.

Minority groups and indigenous populations are numerous among the most poor. Their living conditions are not much improved from the colonial era, and their members are often excluded from national life. Their world, shattered first by colonization, then by modernization, is today characterized by political exclusion, discrimination and low wages. (9)

Indigenous peoples are beneficiaries of substantial assistance from CIDA, because their socioeconomic position puts them among the main target groups of the Americas program: the rural and suburban poor, and populations victimized on the level of human
rights. As an example one can cite the project supporting the alpaca breeders of the Upper Andes of Puno, Peru, which benefits almost entirely indigenous populations. The project is being carried out by the Centre canadien d’éducation et de coopération internationale (CECI).

The Branch also has a bilateral project with CESO (Canadian Executive Services Organization) in Peru and Bolivia. Within the framework of this project, the Bolivian government has been able to work in collaboration with a Canadian native consultant in developing health and educational reforms which take into account the specific needs of indigenous populations.

Many local funds also support projects which directly benefit natives. The Ecofondo in Colombia, the Fondo Ecuatoriano Canadiense de Desarrollo in Ecuador, and the Peru-Canada fund are some examples.

The Peru-Canada Fund

Created in 1989, the main objective of the Fund is to support community initiatives which promote human development and reduce poverty. The projects mainly support agricultural production and the development of microenterprises (in rural areas) and microcredit (in urban areas). Up to now the funds have been used to finance more than 200 projects which have benefitted about 230,000 families (12% of the country’s poor). Many of the projects have directly benefitted indigenous populations and involved native organizations. As examples one can cite the system of credit for supporting the development of rural microenterprises in Ayacucho through the Asociacion Rasahuilica; support for agroforestry and the recovery of former terraces in Huancavelica; and support for credit and marketing for an association of producers from Quinoa to Juliaca.

A key element of this program is the participation of the communities and local assumption of responsibility. The communities have also been encouraged to use traditional practices, such as Inca and pre-Inca systems of irrigation.

The Canadian Partnership Branch has already collaborated on the start-up of the APIKAN network composed of Canadian native communities, which encourages dialogue between Canadian native communities and those in other continents. CIDA has supported, among others, the creation of the Caribbean Organization for Indigenous People in Belize. This initiative has brought together native communities in Canada and Belize and initiated a dialogue dealing with common problems linked to development.
3. Asia

The Canadian development assistance program in Asia dates back to the beginnings of the Colombo Plan (a Commonwealth aid program for the countries of South and South East Asia) in the 1950s. A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since then. In the 1980s the developing countries of Asia were in the first rank of world economic growth. This rapid progress reduced poverty considerably in a large part of the continent. However, in order for such an expansion to have lasting effects, rapid economic growth is not sufficient. Countries must also satisfy in a concerted way their social, political and environmental needs. They must also take into account cultural realities (10).

These realities, particularly those of the great Asian civilizations (Chinese and Indian for example) have considerable influence on our efforts and approaches in relation to the region, on the level of our development programs.

For example, the influence of the cultural heritage of Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and Communism partly explains how the Chinese conceive democracy and human rights. In China, the place a person occupies in society is usually a function of his relations and the associated duties and obligations, with priority often being given to stability, reciprocal obligations and economic development rather than individual freedom (11).

Women Health Professionals ~ Pakistan

In Pakistan CIDA finances a development program for women health professionals, administered by Aga Khan University of Pakistan in partnership with McMaster University of Hamilton. This project was confronted with an important cultural fact linked to Islamic culture: the necessity of close relations between the care provider and the patient infringes certain cultural requirements. Nurses, in contrast to women doctors, cannot choose their clientele and must often deal with patients of the male sex. The work of a nurse is therefore not valued and, in this area, standards relating to training and employment are inadequate.

The project aims to maintain a sustained dialogue with representatives of governments and to promote the rights of women so as to contribute, to some extent, to a change in attitude towards the profession among the community, the participants and their families.
Promoting understanding of intercultural relations

In 1992, the cooperation program with India undertook a concrete strategy aimed at integrating the cultural dimension into its projects. To this end, training sessions on the impact of cultural values in the work environment were offered to the staff of the India Program. These sessions were managed and financed by CIDA’s intercultural training centre. Furthermore, special intercultural relations advisors were assigned to the India Program and the Embassy in New Delhi. The two advisors (one Canadian, the other Indian) worked together to train and sensitize Canadian and Indian staff to the realities associated with intercultural differences, and their implications for project implementation. The Program has also launched a review of most of its joint projects with Indian institutions, in order to study how problems associated with intercultural differences have affected project completions.

In the Philippines, beginning in the 1990s, the Embassy for the first time integrated into its annual meetings of all its field partners intercultural training sessions mainly aimed at project staff. These sessions were very successful in opening a dialogue between Canadian and Philippine representatives on cultural values and their impact in the work environment.

4. Central and Eastern Europe

CIDA’s program of cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) differs from CIDA’s other programs inasmuch as the region, although very diversified, is at a more advanced level of development. The Branch endeavours above all to encourage the transition of the new democracies, notably by supporting reform of public sector management and decentralization.

The Estonian Language Training Project

Nearly 39% of the 1.5 million residents of Estonia are not of Estonian origin, and the majority have not yet satisfied the requirements for Estonian citizenship or permanent residence. This constitutes an important destabilizing factor in Estonian domestic policy, particularly in the northeastern region in the cities of Narva and Sillamé, where the ethnic Russian community totals 90% of the population.

In the face of the threat of a serious ethnic conflict between the Estonian language and Russian language populations and in the light of accusations of discrimination by the government of Russia, the government of Estonia has identified as a priority the necessity of offering instruction in the Estonian language as a means of integrating the minority into Estonian society. To this end the Minister of Education has asked Canada to help improve the training of teachers responsible for preparing Estonian language teachers. Canadian assistance is aimed mainly at the institutional strengthening of four educational institutions over a period of three years.
One of the realities confronting new local governments established since the disintegration of communism in Central and Eastern Europe is the multiethnic character of communities. One of the dimensions of democratic development concerns the relation between the new local governments and minorities residing in their territories. Local authorities now have the responsibility of developing and implementing policies which must take into account ethnic diversity and the rights of minorities.

The treatment of ethnic minorities is a problem which is proving particularly difficult to resolve in many countries of CEE. In the implementation of programs it is useful for example to consider the cultural factors which may limit or constrain the process of decentralization, such as dominant behaviour of the central power, the heritage of a long communist past, the degree of leaders' openness to change and the taking into account of ethnic diversity.

CIDA supports several initiatives promoting recognition of the multicultural phenomenon. For example, one can cite the Estonian language training project financed by the Agency in collaboration with the Second Language Education Centre of the University of New Brunswick. Over three years the project aims to support the institutional strengthening of educational centres to encourage instruction in this language for minority populations, permitting them not only to better integrate into society, but also to acquire the necessary basis in Estonian to take the mandatory examination to obtain Estonian citizenship.

CIDA is also supporting a community development project in Slovakia aimed at improving living conditions of the Roma (gypsies), an ethnic minority in the region. Through a grass-roots approach, this project will seek to promote recognition of the legal and political status of this minority.

It is also important to emphasize the special nature of the program of cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe, which makes extensive use of the linguistic skills and cultural connections of Canadians with roots in this region.

5. Canadian Funds for Local Initiatives (CFLI)

The majority of CIDA projects of a typically cultural character are financed by Canadian Funds for Local Initiatives, which support small community projects. Initiated in 1973, the CFLI provides greater scope, authority and flexibility for Canadian Missions in the areas of local projects selection and administrative practices. The CFLI enables Canada to become involved with grassroots groups such as farmers, villagers and refugees; and to quickly and effectively respond to their needs.
The Funds observes many principles of cultural viability:

❖ Projects are designed by the local community on the basis of locally established priorities;

❖ Projects use simple technologies and local resources and stress community participation;

❖ Projects are implemented by local organizations.

For example, in Algeria, the fund has made possible the purchase of computing and communication equipment for the revival of a magazine "Vie-Raj" with the aim of emancipation and economic and social independence of women and making Algerians aware of local social and cultural problems. In the Congo, an educational, cultural and social fund has been created to respond to needs in the social, cultural and educational areas. In Sri Lanka, the fund financed a project to promote peace through culture; and the fund in Ecuador supports a craft cooperative run by the women of Chimborazo, an aboriginal community of the Americas.

6. Canadian Partnership

In recognizing partnership in its 1987 ODA charter as the key concept of its approach to cooperation in development, CIDA was preparing the ground for a change of attitude regarding cooperation. It was no longer a case of thinking in terms of donor countries and recipient countries, of those who have and those who have not or who receive, but rather of adopting principles of interdependence and cooperation which better reflect how the world works today (12). By encouraging participation and dialogue with all components of society, including NGOs, which are often closer to the sociocultural realities of populations in development, CIDA was also opening the door to recognition of the cultural fact in its development activities.

To date, Canadian Partnership Branch has undertaken, with its partners, several initiatives which have contributed to promoting respect for and recognition of cultural values in the implementation of development programs.

Promoting Peace Through Culture - Project Financed by the Canadian Local Initiatives Fund in Sri Lanka

The "Centre for Performing Arts of Jaffna" (CPAJ) is a cultural organization under the Sri Lanka ministry of Cultural Affairs. The centre brings together young people from the villages of the Jaffna peninsula and forms a sort of family of artists in which caste barriers no longer exist.

The CPAJ aims to promote peace through cultural activities, by promoting understanding of the multiethnic realities of the region and offering an alternative to young people who would otherwise possibly enlist in armed bands.

So far, the Fund has financed the purchase of musical instruments and made it possible to offer educational activities and produce shows promoting peace and human rights.
As an example one can cite a series of consultations conducted by NGO Division with Christian NGOs between 1991 and 1995, which aimed to respond to a series of questions linked to religious beliefs, traditional values and conditions necessary for development. Since its creation, CIDA has always supported the work of Canadian Christian NGOs in the area of emergency aid and development. However, it was essential to have a dialogue to better understand the impact of the values and religious beliefs of Christian NGOs on populations guided by traditional values. The result of this dialogue was a document entitled “Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles, Understandings and Affirmations,” which provided a framework of cooperation for CIDA, the community of Christian NGOs and their partners in developing countries.

Following these consultations, NGO Division also initiated, in June 1996, a dialogue between the community of Islamic and Christian NGOs working in development, in order to promote mutual understanding of the different perceptions and approaches regarding development and to encourage better collaboration between the Muslim and Christian communities.

Another important initiative of Partnership Branch concerns the creation in 1995 of the NGO Project Facility (NPF). The NPF allows new Canadians to become involved in development activities and to represent the multicultural face of Canada. The program benefits from the linguistic skills and cultural links of a significant number of Canadians whose origins are in regions of the world in which these NGOs work. Among these examples we cite: les Partenaires de l’Association de la Haute-Égypte pour l’éducation et le développement; Fraternité Vietnam; Aide médicale à la Palestine; the Maharashtra Seva Samiti Organization; the Hindu Society of Ottawa-Carleton; etc.

Furthermore, many CIDA partners encourage dialogue and respect for cultural values in the implementation of their programs. For example, Inter-Pares, a Canadian NGO, finances a series of projects to help its partners encourage community dialogue and participation, thus promoting self-determination by communities.
For its part the Centre canadien d’éducation en coopération internationale (CECI), with financing from CIDA’s partnership program, has undertaken a study on culture and development entitled “CECI and the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas”. CECI has developed cooperation programs in the Andean countries to support the development efforts of their large native communities. Priorities for action address three themes: strengthening of institutional capacities of native development organizations, communications and culture as development factors, and increasing family incomes by better marketing of agricultural, agri-industrial and craft products.

**Popular Theatre: A dialogue for Change**

A few years ago, leaders of the hamlet of Buena Vista, an isolated rural community in southern Nicaragua, invited the theatre group Quetzalcoatl to perform at the inauguration of their community centre.

The play presented focussed on the dramatic theme of violence against children. After the performance, a dialogue between the actors and the audience generated a lot of enthusiasm and questions from the children. But for the most part, the adults remained silent.

Later that evening, as the people slowly left the community centre, several groups spontaneously assembled in the streets and an animated debate carried well into the night between the women and men on the subject of family violence. The next morning, the local leaders, mostly men, shared some thoughts with an Inter Pares staff member, confessing that “machismo” was a very serious issue which had never been discussed in the community. They said that “machismo” was deeply ingrained in the culture of their village and that it would take a long time to change this, admitting that the issue of family violence could no longer be ignored.

Quetzalcoatl’s performance had provided the women an opportunity to speak out on the issue of family violence and forced the men to reflect on their behaviour.

7. Multilateral programs

Multilateral programs promote sustainable development on an international scale through various organizations and specific projects.

As far as promoting cultural viability is concerned, CIDA collaborates mainly with international organizations such as UNESCO, la Francophonie and the Commonwealth as well as the Organization of American States (OAS).

❖ UNESCO

Though not intervening in a major way in co-operation programs, UNESCO is concerned with intergovernmental cooperation in the cultural field. UNESCO is the organization in the United Nations system principally responsible for this issue. Over the last several years UNESCO has been the project manager of the World Decade for Cultural Development and the World Commission on Culture and Development.

Over the last five years Canada's ODA contribution to UNESCO has increased from $0.7 million to $4.4 million. This financial aid is allocated mainly to the four major UNESCO programs: education, science, culture and communications.

❖ LA FRANCOPHONIE

La Francophonie is the community of peoples having the French language in common, bringing together about 50 governments, of which 40 are from developing countries. It is one of the instruments for promoting Francophone culture around the globe. Over the years, la Francophonie has established a number of organizations and mechanisms for exchanges, cooperation, and management.

Canada joined la Francophonie very early on and participated actively in the creation and development of its numerous institutions including the Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (ACCT), now known as the Agence de la Francophonie. As the main agency of la Francophonie, its purpose is to bring together peoples of French expression through cooperation in education, culture, science and technology. It aims to create a new North-South solidarity and promote knowledge of the various Francophone cultures.

The members of la Francophonie that are developing countries benefit from Canadian Official Development Assistance (ODA) of which the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is the principal manager in Canada. The program for la Francophonie has been managed by Africa and the Middle East Branch since 1997.
ODA takes different forms including aid to the institutions of la Francophonie. Through its support of the Agence de la Francophonie and other multilateral institutions such as the Conférence des ministres de l’Éducation nationale (CONFÉMEN), the Conférence des ministres de la Jeunesse et des Sports (CONFÉJES) and the Association des universités partiellement ou entièrement de langue française (AUPELF-UREF), CIDA contributes to improving the quality of life and raising the socio-economic level of populations in Africa, the Middle East, Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and the Caribbean.

Projects such as "Accès des communautés à l’inforoute", "Coproduction audio-visuelle Nord-Sud" and "Insertion socio-économique des jeunes des pays de la Francophonie" facilitate exchanges between different cultures, make the member countries aware of the sociocultural realities of the South and promote economic and sustainable development.

❖ THE COMMONWEALTH

The Commonwealth Program is managed by Multilateral Programs Branch. Canada is one of the main participants in development support programs in the Commonwealth which includes 54 member states, of which 49 are developing countries. It is the common heritage shared by all of the members, at the level of systems, values or language, which constitutes the value added of this organization.

CIDA provides a general contribution to three of the six funding mechanisms of the Commonwealth: the Commonwealth of Learning, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, and the Commonwealth Program for the Development of Sports.

❖ INTER-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT (CIDI)

The cooperation program with CIDI is managed by Americas Branch. CIDI was created in 1996 by an amendment to the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS) to respond to the new objectives identified by the OAS in the area of development cooperation. CIDI makes available to member countries a Forum to discuss the challenges which the countries of the western hemisphere must take up. The Council recently created the Special Multilateral Fund, financed by member countries and intended mainly for regional development initiatives but also leaving a place for initiatives of a strictly national character. Since the creation of the Fund, Canada, through CIDA, has made an annual contribution of $2 million. The
activities financed by this Fund are in several priority sectors, including preservation of culture. The other sectors are: education, the environment, strengthening of democratic institutions, improvement of science and technology, social development, job creation and economic diversification, trade liberalization and increased access to markets, and tourism.
IV. Key Resources

❖ CIDA’s Political and Social Policies Division

CIDA’s Political and Social Policies Division (YHR) develops and promotes strategies aimed at taking into account the sociocultural dimensions of development. The major aspects of the Division’s work are public participation in development, democratic development and respect for human rights, social development, and institutional strengthening. The Division participates in international meetings, organizes round tables and publishes a number of documents on social issues. The Division contributed to seminars on sustainable development (1993-94) for CIDA staff and recently coordinated the Agency’s work on guidelines for the development of effective programs.

❖ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade promotes Canadian values in its activities with individual countries and as a member of international organizations such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, the Group of Seven and the organization of American States. DFAIT also provides the Canadian government with advice on how to respond to human rights abuses, conflicts, development needs and other problems abroad in a way that is consistent with the values Canadians cherish. There are eight units, called bureaus, which manage Canada’s overall relationships with specific regions and countries interests(13). For more information, visit the internet site included in box 19.

❖ Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH)

The Department of Canadian Heritage is responsible for policies and programs related to arts and heritage, broadcasting, cultural industries, and Canadian identity. Its mandate is to pass on social values, to strengthen human rights, to favor intercultural and linguistic understanding, and to promote community development. It includes seven departmental agencies, of which the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission and the National Film Board of Canada, and 10 crown corporations, of which the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the National Gallery of Canada(14). The internet site is included in box 19.

❖ UNESCO

UNESCO is the main institution in the United Nations system responsible for culture. It is a centre of resources and expertise in the area of culture and has published a series of circulars in this area. UNESCO has a well-developed web site providing a detailed description of the organization and its programs as well as initiatives and publications for the World Decade for Cultural Development. Box 19 includes UNESCO’s Internet address, which we invite you to visit.
❖ The Canadian Commission for UNESCO

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO advises the government of Canada on its relations with UNESCO and fosters co-operation between Canadian organizations and UNESCO. The Commission’s membership represents a cross-section of Canadian society and currently stands at 191. Members include federal governments, departments and agencies, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, institutions and individuals. Six Sub-commissions exist for the following programme areas: education, the natural sciences, the social and human sciences, culture, communication and the status of women. You will find the internet site in box 19.

❖ United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

This United Nations institution specializes in research on social development, with a particular focus on cultural questions. In recent years UNRISD has organized a number of conferences and published a series of research papers dealing with ethnic diversity, inter-ethnic conflicts and ways to resolve them. UNRISD’s Internet address is included in Box 19.

❖ International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

The mandate of the IDRC is to enhance capacities for research and access to knowledge in developing countries. Research priorities relate to the environment, health and nutrition. In recent years, the IDRC has been interested in problems of culture, religion and development. In collaboration with CIDA, it has also undertaken a series of consultations to open a dialogue between different religious groups. The Centre also supports a social science research network in developing countries. For more information on the IDRC, visit the Internet site included in Box 19.

❖ Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research (SIETAR)

The Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research (SIETAR) is an organization which brings together professionals from different areas of study with the goal of promoting effective communication between populations of various cultures, races and ethnic groups. Its objective is to encourage development and application of knowledge, values and skills to allow effective intercultural, interracial and inter-ethnic initiatives at individual, group, community and organizational levels. SIETAR is affiliated with the United Nations and organizes periodic conventions on themes linked to the challenges of intercultural relations. Its Internet site is included in Box 19.

❖ Centre for the Comparative Study of Culture, Development and the Environment (CDE), Sussex University

The CDE is a research and educational centre particularly concerned with North-South relations in the context of globalization and social, cultural, political, economic and environmental change. Its Internet site, which you will find in Box 19, provides information on the Centre’s research and courses.
❖ **Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada (HSSFC)**

The Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada promotes teaching, research and scholarship in the area of humanities and social sciences as well as a better understanding of the importance of these activities for Canada and the world. It brings together researchers from different areas of interest who carry out research on various topics including culture. Among its members are the Canadian Asian Studies Association, the Canadian Association of African Studies, the Canadian Network of Cultural Research and the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development. For more information, visit the Internet site included in Box 19.

❖ **Centre for Intercultural Learning of the Canadian Foreign Service Institute (CFSI/CIL)**

Managed for 25 years by CIDA, the Centre for Intercultural Learning had a mandate to introduce project officers to the intercultural dimensions met in the field. The Centre was the leader in this area and its tripartite training model (training before departure, training in the field, and a debriefing session upon return) was unique in the world.

In 1996, responsibility for the Centre was transferred to the Department of Foreign Affairs in order to serve the interests of federal and agencies and partners working in the area of international affairs.

The services offered by the Centre are designed for professionals assigned to international activities. The goal is to help organizations and individuals acquire the intercultural abilities and skills they need to attain their objectives.

CIDA collaborates closely with the Centre in the production of material designed to promote understanding of sociocultural aspects of development. For example one can cite the study, undertaken by CIDA’s North Africa and Middle East Division in collaboration with the Centre, of the interpersonal and cultural aspects of Canadian development assistance in Egypt. Discussion round tables have been organized to promote dialogue among CIDA, technical consultants for executing agencies and local partners, whether government or civil society representatives.

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**Internet Sites**

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VI. The Challenges of Globalization

“In a changing world, old distinctions between “North” and “South” as well as between “East” and “West,” are becoming blurred. Issues can no longer be divided into “domestic” and “international.” Risks of social disintegration and exclusion affect all countries, as do opportunities to benefit from participation in a growing economic system. (Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation.)

Globalization, the outstanding phenomenon as our century ends, is the process characterizing the interrelation and interdependence of the world today as much on the economic and political level as on the cultural level. For development, globalization is a phenomenon which brings both promises and risks. It has many advantages and certain drawbacks, but above all it raises numerous questions. For example, how do global phenomena influence the environments and living conditions of populations in developing countries, migrations, transfers of wealth between rich and poor, social and institutional structures, belief systems and the future of our global society? Can certain trends be foreseen? Can we envisage international cooperation strategies that will allow us to cope with the most harmful consequences? In the area of culture here are several challenges of globalization that CIDA must face:

❖ **Scientific and technological challenges**

Since the beginning of the century, and especially since the end of the Second World War, scientific progress has been marked by a revolution in the areas of knowledge, information and communications. These advances, in themselves positive, raise a series of economic, political, cultural, and ethical problems whose consequences and implications have perhaps not yet been fully assessed. For example, the knowledge revolution and new communication tools may have the ultimate effect of reducing diversity and sweeping away local cultures, if these new tools cannot adequately reach local populations. This reality is the basis of the “global paradox,” described by John Naisbitt in a recent work (Global Paradox, 1994). This phenomenon of reaction drives individuals to seek various forms of identity and solidarity at the community level, as observed in Eastern Europe, Africa and elsewhere in the world.

❖ **Demography, multiculturalism and religions**

The world’s demographic evolution, which can be seen in an increase in migrations from the countryside to the towns and from the countries of the South to the North, generates a mix of cultures which, in many countries, may raise social and political tensions.

Similarly, the trend to multiculturalism will place management of intercultural issues at the core of global priorities. In the 21st century the challenge will be to successfully create the conditions under which all peoples of different cultures can live together without conflict.
One can cite also the evolution of the great religions, notably Islam, and the beliefs of sects and cults. In this connection, it is appropriate to examine potential conflicts or the instrumental role beliefs can play in accelerating or hampering development of a sense of community, education, and social and economic change. (16)

The wider and wider use of certain languages, which for reasons connected with international economic and political development are spoken far beyond their cultural area of origin, also presents a certain challenge. This process facilitates communication between diverse populations. At the same time, there is a risk of impoverishing the cultural heritage of humanity, whose very diversity represents one of its deepest values. (17)

❖ 

**Trade and Culture**

In his book *The Global Village*, Marshall McLuhan (1964) spoke of a homogenous global culture. Trade liberalization in cultural products is a definite threat to the preservation of national cultures in the face of global standardization. In Canada, the issue of culture and trade is somewhat sensitive. Since the beginning of the negotiations which led to the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, then to NAFTA and even in the recent negotiations (suspended) with the OECD countries on the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), Canada has sought to exempt its cultural industries from the application of trade liberalization agreements. Other countries, such as France, share this vision.
Conclusion

In conclusion, this study reveals that CIDA has long been concerned with issues regarding cultural dimensions of development. It underscores several initiatives which favour the integration of cultural dimensions. For instance, by encouraging participatory development, promoting social dimensions, emphasizing the importance of local cultures, collaborating with UNESCO, and bringing awareness to its personnel on cultural issues, CIDA facilitates the adoption of an approach that is respectful of the sociocultural contexts in which it intervenes.

Cultural dimensions of development play a role in Agency activities in various areas. However, cultural development at CIDA is not considered to be an intervention in its own right, but rather a cross-cutting theme. It has been possible to illustrate several examples of programs and projects where the cultural dimension of development has been integrated, in particular concerning ethnic diversity in Africa, indigenous peoples in the Americas, the influence of the great Asian civilizations, and the multi-cultural aspects of Central and Eastern Europe societies. The Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives has also proven to be a useful mechanism allowing for the implementation of small-scale community projects adapted to local contexts. NGOs, particularly in the framework of grassroots community projects, are also playing an important role in promoting cultural diversity and participation. Finally, together with its Canadian and international partners, CIDA collaborates in several initiatives which contribute to promoting respect for and recognition of cultural values in the implementation of development programs.
Notes


(2) Cultural Dimensions of Sustainable Development, 1993, p. 3.

(3) Canada in the World, Government Statement, 1995, p.4

(4) Our Commitment to Sustainable Development, CIDA, 1997, p.3


(6) These technical notes are available on Smartext in the “Best Practices” manual and in a printed version from CIDA’s Social and Economic Policy Division (YHR).


(10) Sustainable Development in Asia, CIDA, 1996.


(12) Sharing Our Future, CIDA, 1987, p. 91

(13) Information taken from DFAIT Internet Site.

(14) Information taken from Canadian Heritage Internet Site.

(15) Information taken from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO Internet Site.


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