

This report is presented as received by IDRC from project recipient(s). It has not been subjected to peer review or other review processes.

This work is used with the permission of Theodora Carroll.

IDRC - Lib.

105134

© 1993, Theodora Carroll.

CHAPTER 37

National Mechanisms and International Cooperation for Capacity-Building

-- Theodora Carroll-Foster and Tim Dottridge --

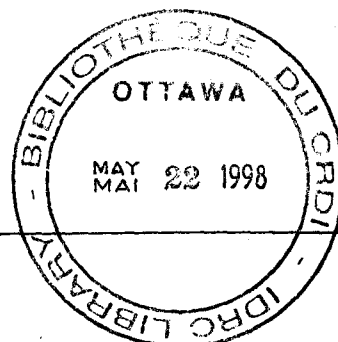
THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The ability of a country to follow sustainable development paths is determined to a large extent by the capacity of its people and its institutions as well as by its ecological and geographical conditions. In order to develop more sustainably, a country depends on the capacity of its people and institutions to understand complex environment and development issues so that they can make the right development choices. Capacity-building encompasses the country's human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional and resource capabilities. A fundamental goal of capacity-building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address crucial questions related to policy choices and implementation among development options, based on an understanding of environmental potentials and limits and of peoples' needs. The need to strengthen national capacities is shared by all countries.

PROGRAM AREAS AND OBJECTIVES

Capacity-building is an essential step in preparing national sustainable development strategies and Agenda 21 action programs. Assistance in the form of skills, knowledge and technical know-how can come from the United Nations, national governments, municipalities, NGOs, universities, research centres, and business and other private organizations. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has been given responsibility for mobilizing international funding and coordination programs for capacity-building.

Theodora Carroll Foster is the Coordinator/Advisor of the Agenda 21 Unit at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Tim Dottridge is a Senior Policy Analysis at the IDRC. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors who have received input from a number of stakeholders, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the IDRC.



ARCHIV
CARROL
no. 105134

The overall objectives of endogenous capacity-building in this chapter are to develop and improve national and related subregional and regional capacities and capabilities for sustainable development, with the involvement of the non-governmental sectors. The Chapter suggests:

- (1) promoting an ongoing participatory process to define country needs and priorities in promoting Agenda 21 and to give importance to technical and professional human resource development and the development of institutional capacities and capabilities on the agenda of countries. Also, due recognition should be given of to the use of existing human resources and the enhancement of the efficiency of existing institutions and non-governmental organizations, including scientific and technological institutions;
- (2) reorienting and reprioritizing technical cooperation, including that related to technology transfer and know-how process, with due attention to the specific conditions and individual needs of recipients. Likewise, coordination among providers of assistance to support countries' own programs of action should be improved. This coordination should also include NGOs and scientific and technological institutions, as well as business and industry whenever appropriate;
- (3) shifting (or adjusting) time-horizons in program planning and implementation which address the development and strengthening of institutional structures, so that they can respond to new longer-term challenges and not only immediate problems;
- (4) improving and reorienting existing international multilateral institutions with responsibilities for environment and/or development matters, to ensure that those institutions have the capability and capacity to integrate environment and development; and,
- (5) improving institutional capacity and capability, public and private, in order to evaluate the environmental impact of all development projects.

Specific objectives under the Chapter include the following:

- each country should aim to complete, as soon as practicable, if possible by 1994, a review of capacity- and capability-building requirements for devising national sustainable development strategies, including those for generating and implementing its own Agenda 21 action program; and,
- by 1997, the Secretary General of the United Nations should submit to the General Assembly a report on the achievement of improved policies, coordination systems and procedures for strengthening the implementation of technical cooperation programs for sustainable development, and on additional measures required to strengthen such cooperation. That report should be prepared on the basis of information provided by countries,

international organizations, environment and development institutions, donor agencies and non-governmental partners.

CANADIAN POSITIONS AT RIO

1. Official Canadian Position

Canada had the following seven main objectives:

- (1) to seek to expand the role proposed for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP);
- (2) to seek to ensure that, if the UNDP was assigned a lead role in this area, then the General Assembly and UNDP's Governing Council would instruct UNDP to strengthen its own regional capacity;
- (3) to seek to ensure that this document envisages a role for indigenous regional organizations -- ASEAN, SADCC, the OAS and the OAU -- which could, in fact, be better placed to achieve some of the objectives set out in this chapter;
- (4) to seek to ensure agreement that the fund be created by reallocating existing resources to it;
- (5) to avoid approval of the creation of a new fund requiring additional Canadian contributions;
- (6) to seek to ensure that the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) plays a major role in the planning of this program; and,
- (7) to seek to ensure that the implementation of fund activities appropriately involves other UN agencies (such as UNEP, FAO, WMO, UNESCO), as well as international NGOs (IUCN, WRI, WWF).

2. Non-Governmental Organizations

NGOs did not develop a specific position on government or international capacity-building.

3. Business and Industry

Canadian business and industry provided no specific input with regard to this chapter.

4. Indigenous

Indigenous Peoples identified the need to support the creation of Indigenous Peoples non-government organizations (local, regional, national and international). These are essential to Indigenous Peoples for the purposes of fulfilling their development, capacity-building and local control needs. Moreover, Indigenous NGOs are vital for the establishment of new relationships, in terms of interaction and communication, between themselves and Western NGOs and other international organizations.

COMMITMENTS MADE BY CANADIANS

1. Legally-Binding Documents

None.

2. Political Pronouncements

During his disclosure of the National Statement of Canada on June 11, 1992 at UNCED, Minister of the Environment Jean Charest expressed the importance of renewing and expanding Canada's cooperation with other countries and international institutions in attaining sustainable development.

In his address June 12 1992 at UNCED, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney stated that, "As a well established organization, the IDRC can be active and productive quickly, particularly in the area of research and technology transfer."

3. Alternative NGO Treaties and Kari-Oca

NGO Treaties

At the same time as UNCED, two major international events were also held at Rio: the International Non-Governmental Organization Forum (Global Forum), and the Kari-Oca Conference. At the Global Forum, 3,100 NGOs discussed a number of matters related to environment and development and produced a parallel set of documents: an NGO Earth Charter and 39 Alternative NGO Treaties. Canadian NGOs played a significant role in developing the treaties and took a lead in coordinating their dissemination. Of these treaties, one addressed the issues discussed in Chapter 37. However, the whole NGO treaty process is an attempt to build new mechanisms for cooperation in the search for and the development of alternative policies, strategies and institutions at each level from local through global.

Treaty for NGO Cooperation and Sharing of Resources

The Treaty for NGO Cooperation and Sharing of Resources, developed at the Earth Summit's NGO Forum, is based on six underlying premises.

- (1) The protection of the environment and the achievement of ecologically sustainable development at every level and in all regions can be more quickly and effectively attained by increasing the numbers and skills of NGOs committed to these objectives.
- (2) The world's new and emerging NGOs have many significant un-met needs and unrealized capabilities which reduce their ability to achieve their goals.
- (3) All NGOs have valuable experiences, skills, and resources, but effective programs to share them have generally not been implemented until now; an open, collaborative and mutual sharing process is needed, which enables all parties to learn and benefit from each other.
- (4) NGOs with important skills, proven strategies, and other resources should make every effort to share them with their fellow NGOs.
- (5) NGOs which offer to share knowledge, skills, experiences and resources should ensure that such sharing be transparent, accountable and available to as wide an audience as possible.
- (6) NGOs who take part in this sharing process, especially on an international level, must recognize and respect their partners' cultural and socio-economic circumstances and make a concerted effort to overcome barriers, in order to promote an effective exchange.

The primary objectives of this treaty are as follows:

- to promote active cooperation and the exchange of information and resources among NGOs, locally, nationally and internationally;
- to strengthen the NGO community worldwide; and,
- to overcome cultural and communication barriers.

Kari-Oca

The second alternative forum at Rio was the International Conference on Territory, Environment and Development (the Kari-Oca Conference). The Kari-Oca Conference was held immediately prior to UNCED by and for the world's Indigenous Peoples. More than 650 Indigenous representatives participated in meetings and cultural events during the conference, where they also developed and adopted a 109-point Indigenous Peoples' Earth Charter. None of these statements were directly relevant to this chapter.

DEFICIENCIES, GAPS AND CONSTRAINTS WITHIN CHAPTER 37

This chapter proposes a major role for the UN in coordinating international programs for capacity-building. But, at present, its own capacity to deliver is in question -- relating both to funding problems and the continuing discussion of UN reform.

The Chapter deals with capacity-building in a very general way. There is little specificity about the implementation of initiatives for capacity and capability-building, in other words, how to go about the task at hand.

NGOs feel "capacity-building" is required, but only a part of the solution. The term "capacity-building" implies that someone knows what to do. Within many environmental and development problems we still have to invent the solution.

Agenda 21 puts its faith in part in technology transfer (broadly defined). In so doing, it assumes that the solution to our problem is to get the right technology, in the right quantity in the right place at the right time.

Many NGOs feel that the real problem will require a much more fundamental rethinking and re-visioning of local, national, and global structures than is conveyed in the concept of "capacity-building".

COMPARISON BETWEEN CURRENT CANADIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY AND COMMITMENTS MADE

Submissions from some NGOs point to inadequate funding by the government for both their domestic and international activities. Overall, this would indicate that, due to recent budget cuts, funding is at a lower level than commitments made.

CANADIAN ACTIVITIES EVOLVING THROUGH THE SUSTAINABILITY PROCESS

The Canadian National Stakeholders' process, also known as the "Projet de société" and the various levels of roundtables (National, provincial and municipal) are initiatives contributing to capacity-building in Canada, and examples for consensus-building and decision-making in other countries.

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) are both funding a variety of capacity-building initiatives in numerous developing countries.

A number of Canadian NGOs and academic institutions have initiated plans and/or implemented projects in Canada and abroad in such areas as forestry, common properties management, development of networks and partnerships on sustainability, education, trade, etc.

OTHER RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED FORA

Not available.

SUGGESTED READINGS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

Doering, Ronald, L. et al, "*Environmental Regulations and the Canadian Pulp and Paper Industry: An Examination of the Porter Strategy*", Working Paper No. 5, (Ottawa: NRTEE/IRPP, 1992).

Gallon, Gary T., "The Role of Green Economics in Canada", Environmental Economics International, (Toronto: August 1992).

Government of Canada. Canada's Green Plan, (Ottawa: Environment Canada, 1990).

_____. Canada's Green Plan and the Earth Summit, (Ottawa: Environment Canada, 1992).

_____. Canada's National Report: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development Brazil, June 1992, (Ottawa: Environment Canada, 1991).

International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Agenda 21: Abstracts, Reviews, and Commentaries, (Theodora Carroll-Foster, ed), (Ottawa: IDRC, 1993).

Keating, Michael. Agenda for Change: A Plain Language Version of Agenda 21 and the Other Rio Agreements, (Geneva: Centre for Our Common Future, 1993).

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE), Discussions on Decision-Making Practices for Sustainable Development, (Ottawa: NRTEE, 1991).

South Commission, *Environment and Development: Towards a Common Strategy of the South in the UNCED Negotiations and Beyond*, (Geneva: South Centre, 1991).

World Commission on Environment and Development. Our Common Future, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

Information Sources:

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, Suite 1500, 1 Nicholas Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7B7, tel (613) 992-7189, fax (613) 992-7385.

United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development, Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, Room S-3060, United Nations, New York, N.Y., 10017, tel (212) 963-5959.

*Planning for
a Sustainable
Future*

PROJET DE SOCIÉTÉ

ASSESSMENT OF
AGENDA 21
DOCUMENT AND INFORMATION
COMMITTEE

ÉVALUATION DE
L'ACTION 21
COMITÉ DE LA DOCUMENTATION
ET DE L'INFORMATION

TOWARD A NATIONAL
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY FOR CANADA

VERS UNE STRATÉGIE NATIONALE
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE
AU CANADA

THIRD NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 16-17, 1993, OTTAWA, CANADA

TROISIÈME ASSEMBLÉE DES INTERVENANTS NATIONAUX
LES 16 ET 17 DÉCEMBRE 1993 À OTTAWA, CANADA



Chapter 20 - Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous Wastes	239
Chapter 21 - Environmentally Sound Management of Solid Wastes and Sewage-Related Issues	251
Chapter 22 - Safe and Environmentally Sound Management of Radioactive Wastes	263
Chapter 23 - Strengthening the Role of Major Groups	271
Chapter 24 - Global Action for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development . . .	273
Chapter 25 - Children and Youth in Sustainable Development	283
Chapter 26 - Recognizing and Strengthening the Role of Indigenous People and their Communities	299
Chapter 27 - Strengthening the Role of Non-Governmental Organizations	313
Chapter 28 - Local Authorities' Initiatives in Support of Agenda 21	325
Chapter 29 - Strengthening the Role of Workers and their Trade Unions	335
Chapter 30 - Strengthening the Role of Business and Industry	341
Chapter 31 - The Scientific and Technological Community	353
Chapter 32 - Strengthening the Role of Farmers	361
Chapter 33 - Financial Assistance	369
Chapter 34 - Technology Transfer	379
Chapter 35 - Science for Sustainable Development	389
Chapter 36 - Education, Public Awareness and Training	399
Chapter 37 - National Mechanisms and International Cooperation for Capacity-Building	421
Chapter 38 - International Institutional Arrangements	429
Chapter 39 - International Legal Instruments and Mechanisms	439
Chapter 40 - Information for Decision-Making	447