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SUMMARY REPORT: ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT ON WORKLOAD, GENDER EQUITY, AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AT IDRC

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January 2001

SIMMONS Graduate School of Management

The Center for Gender in Organizations (CGO) is dedicated to advancing learning and understanding of the connection between gender, in all its complexities, and organizational effectiveness. Through research, education, convening, and information dissemination, CGO aims to be a major catalyst for change in enhancing equity and effectiveness in organizations in both the profit and non-profit sectors worldwide. CGO is a part of the SIMMONS Graduate School of Management and is supported by core funding from SIMMONS College and The Ford Foundation. To learn more about CGO and our activities, visit our website at www.simmons.edu/gsm/cgo.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Overview of the Action Research Project

The action research project was developed in response to concerns that the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) had about the impact of workload and time pressures on staff and on its overall effectiveness as an organization. The Center for Gender in Organizations (CGO) at the Simmons Graduate School of Management was invited to submit a proposal for an action research project to analyze these issues collaboratively with IDRC and to develop proposals for leverage points for change. CGO was interested in this project because it offered a new action research site for exploring the interaction between workload, equity and effectiveness. It also provided an opportunity to develop further our methodology for collaborative action research. The action research was carried out over a one-year period from December 1999 through December 2000. The study was commissioned jointly by the Programs and Partnership Branch and the Evaluation Unit.

The project had six objectives:

- to develop an in-depth analysis of the nature and extent of workload and time pressure problems within IDRC;
- to analyze the nature and extent to which workload and time pressures are experienced by or have different impacts on diverse groups of staff (e.g., men and women; traditionally underrepresented groups; staff at different levels; staff at Headquarters and Regional Offices; or staff in different Branches);[1]
- to explore the implications of workload and time pressures on IDRC's ability to achieve its strategic objectives and do its work effectively;
- to explore the implications of workload and time pressures for staff's ability to lead satisfying lives and integrate their professional and personal lives effectively;
- to develop a set of proposals for explicit changes in management systems, work practices, or norms that IDRC could introduce to reduce the negative consequences of workload and time pressures on men and women employees' lives *and* on IDRC's ability to meet its strategic objectives;
- to refine analytic frameworks, methods, and tools for action research, including surveys, interview guides, and time journaling logs.[2]

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[1] We were asked top give special emphasis to gender differences and to explore the interactions between workload and gender equity within IDRC.

[2] It was agreed that this would have relevance for both IDRC and the action researchers. For IDRC, the engagement in this methodology would help the Center to directly experience the analytic approach linking gender and organizational effectiveness and assess its relevance both for IDRC and for its programming partners or grantees. For the researchers, this would give us an opportunity to experiment with and evaluate new methods of inquiry and indicators of organizational effectiveness.

The research methodology included surveys, interviews, time journaling, and group discussions. The action research team worked closely with a Collaborative Working Group comprised of staff from diverse levels, functions, and social identity groups at IDRC. The team's analysis and interpretation of data were fed back to diverse groups of staff and managers for discussion and reactions over the course of the project. In a final feedback session, IDRC developed proposals for specific change interventions that could be introduced to help mitigate the negative impact of workload pressures and at the same time enhance IDRC's ability to attain its strategic goals.

B. Background

Three recent organizational diagnoses at IDRC highlighted issues of workload and time pressures as problematic for staff. First, results from the IDRC 1998 Employee Climate Survey indicated that workload and time pressures were one of staff's primary areas of concern. [3] These concerns appeared to reside primarily with professional and managerial staff. About half of the middle managers and a third of the program staff indicated that they did not think that the hours they worked were fair given current labor market realities. Middle managers (42%) and program staff (35%) also indicated that time pressures at work meant that they were not able to balance work and personal life. Unfortunately, the survey was not sex disaggregated so data on the differential experiences and perceptions of men and women was not available.

Second, interviews on gender equity within IDRC carried out by Deborah Merrill-Sands from CGO with a small sample of professional staff in January 1999 also surfaced workload as a problem. Merrill-Sands found that staff perceived workload and time pressures to not only impact their own lives, but to also have implications for IDRC's effectiveness in meeting its strategic objectives. Travel demands and time pressures were perceived as significant obstacles for hiring and retaining high quality program staff and managers (particularly women). Time pressures coupled with reduced resources were also seen as making it more difficult for program staff to fulfill all of the accepted values and standards of the IDRC approach[4] to grant-making and supporting research projects. There were also concerns that time pressures interfered with staff's ability to stay current in their fields with respect to reading, publishing, and professional development.[5]

And, third, in response to the employee climate survey, IDRC Programs Branch staff undertook an initial brainstorming to identify factors potentially contributing to workload problems.[6] Factors identified included matrix management and membership on multiple program initiatives; division of labor among program staff; interruptions and fragmentation of efforts; transaction costs of collaboration and consultation; travel demands; inefficiencies in work processes and systems (e.g., e-mail, filing systems, reporting requirements); resource constraints; and expectations of managers and peers.

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[3] Watson and Wyatt Worldwide (1999), *1998 IDRC Employee Climate Survey*, March 1999.

[4] Earl, S. and Smutylo, T. (1998), "Supporting Development Research: An Assessment of the Specifics of IDRC's Approach to Program Delivery." International Development Research Centre, Evaluation Unit, Corporate Services Branch, May 1998.

[5] Merrill-Sands, D. (1999), "Gender and Organizational Change: Observations for IDRC's Programming and its Workplace." Report to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Gender and Sustainable Development Unit. Center for Gender in Organizations, SIMMONS College Graduate School of Management, January 1999.

[6] Internal IDRC Memo from Caroline Pestieau, 5/28/99.

The action research project was thus designed to analyze in greater depth: 1) the extent to which these or other aspects of IDRC's management systems, work practices, and norms and values were contributing to the workload and time pressures; and 2) the impact of these pressures on diverse groups of staff and on IDRC's ability to meet its strategic objectives. The in-depth inquiry would then serve as the basis for assisting IDRC to generate proposals for changes in operational systems, work practices, program delivery methods, and norms and values that would address the twin goals of: 1) reducing the negative impacts of workload and time pressures on staff; and 2) assisting IDRC to strengthen its organizational effectiveness.

C. Our Approach

Our approach has four distinct characteristics: 1) collaborative action research; 2) the goal of achieving what we call "dual agenda" outcomes; 3) the use of a work/personal life lens; and 4) a focus on systemic organizational change with organizational culture and work practices as the primary leverage point for analysis and change.

Collaborative Action Research. Collaborative action research is distinct from traditional organizational development consultancies. The researchers' role is to facilitate and contribute to mutual inquiry, reflection, analysis, and problem-solving with the goal of helping organizations undertake constructive change. Robert Rapport's (1970) definition of action research is useful.[7]

> *Action research aims to contribute to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework.*

By collaborative, we mean that the process is interactive and draws on the expertise of both researchers and IDRC staff, recognizing that relevant expertise and knowledge reside with people in the organizational system as well as with the researchers. The action researchers work with members of the organization from the beginning to set the goals, frame the inquiry and analysis, interpret the findings, and design change interventions. While the researchers' role is more pronounced in the inquiry and analysis phases, the role of the organizational change agents is stronger in the design and implementation phases.

The collaborative action research approach is designed to enhance organizational learning and knowledge, produce an analysis that is grounded fully in the specific context of the collaborating organization, and identify specific action steps for implementing change. We have identified several conditions for success of collaborative action research projects: visible support from leadership; a strong internal group of staff and managers who interact with the researchers throughout the process; a willingness among organizational members to reflect and learn; and the need to tie the inquiry, analysis, and change directly to work.

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[7] Rapoport, R. (1970), Three dilemmas in action research. *Human Relations,* Vol. 23: 488-513.

Dual Agenda Change. From our work on equity and workload issues in other organizations,[8] we have learned that often aspects in the work culture that contribute to experienced workload also have negative consequences for organizational effectiveness. Making the link to organizational effectiveness is what we call the "dual agenda." We have learned that without focusing on this connection, change efforts are very difficult to sustain. We underscore the dual agenda because so often workload (or equity) issues and effectiveness are seen as trade-offs. On the contrary, we have found that these two issues are inextricably linked and that the only way to bring about significant change in workplace culture is to focus on work practices and norms that have workload *and* effectiveness implications. Previous research indicates that, indeed, it is possible to bring about changes in the workplace that not only ease pressures on employees' lives but also lead to enhanced productivity and other benefits for the organization.[9]

Work/Personal Life Lens. We have learned that looking at work through a personal lens—e.g., what is it about your work that makes your life difficult?—surfaces aspects of the work situation that are usually so taken for granted that they are not seen as amenable to change. Also, this lens provides employees the motivation to be more creative about the potential for change, as well as giving them a reason to try hard to ensure that it will work. Results from previous projects have shown that allowing people explicitly and collectively to think about the impact of work on their personal lives provides new energy for organizational change.

In discussing work and personal life, we use the term "work/personal life integration" rather than the more common "work/family balance." Work/personal life integration refers to a process in which individuals engage in both their work and personal life in the way that they want. The concept of "work/personal life integration" captures the ideas that individuals may have important personal lives and commitments even if they do not have families, and that personal goals and organizational goals do not necessarily need to be traded off one against the other.[10]

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[8] Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J.K., and Kolb, D. (1997), "Unexpected Connections: Considering employees' personal lives can revitalize your business," *Sloan Management Review,* Vol. 38 (4): 11-19; Kolb, D. and Merrill-Sands, D. (1999), "Waiting for Outcomes: Anchoring a dual agenda for change to cultural assumptions." *Women in Management Review,* Vol. 14 (5): 194-203; Merrill-Sands, D., Fletcher, J.K. and Acosta, A. (1999), "Engendering Organizational Change: A case study of strengthening gender equity and organizational effectiveness in an international agricultural research institute." In *Gender at Work: Organizational Change for Equality*, A. Rao, R. Stuart, D. Kelleher (eds.), West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, pp 77-128.

[9] For more on this approach see: Bailyn, L. Rapoport, R., Kolb, D., and Fletcher, J.K., et al. (1999), "Relinking Work and Family: A Catalyst for Organizational Change" in *Readings in Organization Science: Organizational Change in a Changing Context*. M. Pina e cunha and Carlos Alves Marques. Lisbon: Instituto Superior de Psycologia Aplicada; Kolb, D. and Merrill-Sands, D. (1999), "Waiting for Outcomes: Anchoring a dual agenda for change to cultural assumptions." *Women in Management Review,* Vol. 14 (5): 194-203; Rayman, P. and Bailyn, L., .et al. (1999), "Designing Organizational Solutions to Integrate Work and Life." *Women in Management Review,* Vol. 14 (5): 164-177; Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J.K., and Kolb, D. (1997), "Unexpected Connections: Considering employees' personal lives can revitalize your business," *Sloan Management Review,* Vol. 38 (4): 11-19; Perlow, L. (1997), *Finding Time: How Corporations, Individuals, and Families Can Benefit from New Work Practices*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press; Rapoport, R. and Bailyn, L. with Kolb, D., Fletcher, J.K., Friedman, D., Eaton, S., Harvey, M., and Miller, B. (1996), *Relinking Life and Work: Towards a Better Future. A Report to the Ford Foundation Based on a Collaborative Research Project with Three Corporations*. New York: The Ford Foundation; Bailyn, L. (1993), *Breaking the Mold: Women, Men, and Time in the New Corporate World*. New York: The Free Press.

[10] Bailyn, L. (1993), *Breaking the Mold: Women, Men, and Time in the New Corporate World*. New York: The Free Press; Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J. K., and Kolb, D. (1997), "Unexpected Connections: Considering employees' personal lives can revitalize your business." *Sloan Management Review,* Vol. 38 (4): 11-19.

Systemic Organizational Change. Successful organizational change requires interventions at multiple levels: individual behaviors, policies, work practices, systems and structures, and work culture. Our action research approach focuses primarily on systemic change at the levels of work practices, systems and structures, and organization culture. Our experience and prior research indicates that interventions at the level of individual behavior (e.g., better work planning or time management) or policies (e.g., introduction of flex-time or flex-place) alone will rarely have sufficient impact to significantly reduce workload pressures while at the same time sustaining or enhancing organizational performance. The factors driving workload are typically embedded in the way work is structured and carried out, the way resources are managed, and the expectations, norms, and values defining leadership, excellence, competence, images of success, and commitment in the organizations.

Our approach is distinguished by the emphasis we place on analyzing an organization's culture[11] and the implication that this has for changing patterns around work and workload. Edgar Schein, one of the leading researchers on organizational culture, defines it as:

> *. . . a pattern of basic assumptions, invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, is to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems* (Schein, 1990: 111).

The organization culture provides the written and unwritten norms and rules that govern behavior, define excellence, and influence how work is done. These norms need to be understood if effective change is to be introduced. Sometimes the best ideas in an organization never get put into practice, not because intentions are weak, managers are distracted, or staff are apathetic, but because they conflict with deeply held assumptions that drive behavior, work practices, systems, and decision-making in the organization.

To make the analysis of organizational culture operational in action research projects, we have drawn on the concept of "mental models" developed by Peter Senge. [12] He defines mental models as:

> *. . . deeply ingrained images and assumptions . . . which we carry in our minds of ourselves, other people, institutions . . . Like panes of glass, framing and subtly distorting our vision, mental models determine what we see and how we act. Because mental models are usually tacit, existing below the level of awareness, they are often untested and unexamined* (Senge et al; 1994: 235-236).

Mental models are normative, identifying ideal images and modes of behavior and work that reveal beliefs about, for example, effective leadership, routes to success within an organization, exemplary behavior characteristics, effective work practices or styles, and organizational loyalty or commitment. Importantly, they are usually tacit, taken-for-granted, and rarely questioned or discussed. Mental models manifest themselves in concrete work practices, structures, processes and everyday routines in work life. These can be formal processes, such as reward systems or

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[11] Schein, E. (1990). "Organizational Culture," *American Psychologist,* February, 1990, pp 109-119, pp.111. Schein, E.H. 1985. *Organizational Culture and Leadership.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

[12] Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R., and Smith, B. (1994), *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday.

performance appraisal instruments, or informal practices, such as interaction styles at meetings or demonstrations of organizational commitment, such as working long hours.

We focus on mental models because often the same "mental models" or assumptions that create workload pressures and create difficulties for men and women to integrate their work and personal lives also lead to unproductive work practices that can subtly undermine the organization's ability to meet its strategic goals. Working with mental models involves: 1) bringing them up for fresh examination; 2) reflecting upon whether they still fit the organization's current world and contribute to effectiveness; and 3) exploring any unintended negative consequences they may have for effectiveness, equity, workload, and work/personal life integration. Making these mental models explicit disrupts the status quo and gives staff new ways of looking at their organization and the systemic, rather than the individual determinants, of behavior. Moreover, the "naming" of the mental models gives members of an organization a legitimate means to discuss issues and values that are often tacit or taboo in the organizational culture.[13]

With this fresh perspective, the organization then decides to either renew its commitment to these beliefs and values or to adapt or discard them if they are no longer relevant to the strategic directions the organization is trying to pursue. Based on these decisions, we then work with the organization to identify leverage points for change that would meet the "dual agenda" of reducing felt workload in order to enhance work/personal life integration *and* organizational effectiveness.

Changes occur in two ways. The first is through changes in work practices that derive from and reinforce the mental models. Changing work practices allows people to *experience* working in different ways as individuals and/or as work groups. Experiencing new ways of working and their outcomes in terms of workload and effectiveness is important for interrupting the unintended consequences of the mental models. It provides people with alternative experiences upon which to build new norms and values. Changes in work practices are often done on an experimental basis and their outcomes for workload, effectiveness, equity, and work/personal life integration are monitored. If the changes yield positive results, then they can be moved out into the larger organization or adopted (and adapted) by other work groups. The challenge here is to ensure that changes introduced at the individual and work group level do not become isolated, but rather create new experiences and understandings that benefit the entire organization.

The second way change occurs is through interrupting the organizational discourse and "sense-making" by developing new ways of understanding workplace issues, something we call "changing the narrative."[14] Changing the narrative means that people have new language, or new stories, for understanding the systemic issues related to their personal experiences at work. These new understandings lead to new stories that are told to explain and diagnose presenting

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[13] Fletcher, J. K. (1997), "A radical perspective on power." *Trialogue*, Vol. 2, No. 2. Washington, D.C: Association of Women in Development.

[14] Ely, R. and Meyerson, D. (2000), *Theories of Gender in Organizations: A new approach to organizational analysis and change.* Center for Gender in Organizations, Working Paper, No. 8. Boston, MA: Simmons Graduate School of Management, pp. 28-30.

problems. Organizational narratives are a primary vehicle for sustaining workplace cultural norms. When these narratives change, especially in conjunction with work practice changes, it can have a powerful effect on the work culture. Narrative changes help to spread the understanding that these issues are systemic and related to the work culture, rather than individual problems to be negotiated and worked out in an isolated, ad hoc, manner.

D. Research Team

The action research team consisted of three researchers from the Center for Gender in Organizations at the Simmons Graduate School of Management (Fletcher, Foldy, and Merrill-Sands); two researchers from the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Bailyn and Kellogg), and a project advisor, also from CGO (Rapoport). Deborah Merrill-Sands, an anthropologist and organizational researcher, was Principal Investigator and Team Leader for the IDRC project. Joyce K. Fletcher, a specialist in organization behavior and gender, was Co-Principal Investigator. Erica Foldy, a Ph.D. candidate in organizational studies at Boston College and Research Associate at CGO, collaborated in the interviews and time journaling components of the study. Lotte Bailyn, a specialist in organizational studies, research methods, and work/personal life integration, assumed primary responsibility for the survey component of the research. Kate Kellogg, a doctoral student in management, served as a researcher and focused primarily on the survey. Rhona Rapoport, a Distinguished Research Fellow at CGO who has extensive experience in action research and work/personal life integration, served as an advisor to the project. In addition, Laura Moorehead, a process consultant, assisted with the design of the three day feedback session at IDRC.

The action research team worked closely with the Collaborative Working Group at IDRC. This group was comprised of staff from diverse levels and Branches within the Center. Members from the Programs and Partnership Branch included David Brooks (Project Leader), Denise Deby, Naser Faruqui, Pamela Golah, Erin O'Manique, Ola Smith, and Necla Tschirgi. From the Resources Branch, members included Gerald Bisson, Sarah Earl, Arlene Lafoley, Judith Lockett, and Terry Smutylo. Kerry Franchuk represented the perspective of the Secretariats, and John Hardie represented the perspectives of the President's Office.

II. METHOD

There were three phases in our methodology: 1) inquiry; 2) analysis; and 3) feedback and development of proposals for leverage points for change.[15] Throughout the process the action team worked collaboratively with a Collaborative Working Group of staff and managers in IDRC as well as with the senior leadership.

A. Inquiry

During the inquiry phase, we reviewed IDRC materials and employed several research methods—surveys of employees and their life partners, interviews, and time journaling. The goal was to explore how workload was experienced by different groups of staff at IDRC and the factors staff perceived as contributing to workload. We also wanted to develop an understanding of IDRC's strategic objectives, its work practices and systems, and the important norms shaping its work culture. Chart 1 shows how the diverse methods contributed to the inquiry.

Survey. The survey was important for determining the nature and extent of specific workload issues and their differential impact on diverse staff groups. It also allowed us to explore the connections between experienced workload and specific organizational factors as well as organizational effectiveness measures. We placed more emphasis than usual on the survey in the IDRC project because we thought it was the most effective and efficient method for capturing the experiences and perspectives of staff in the Regional Offices. The survey data also provides an excellent baseline for monitoring the impact of changes in behaviors, work systems, and practices, and norms resulting from the project.

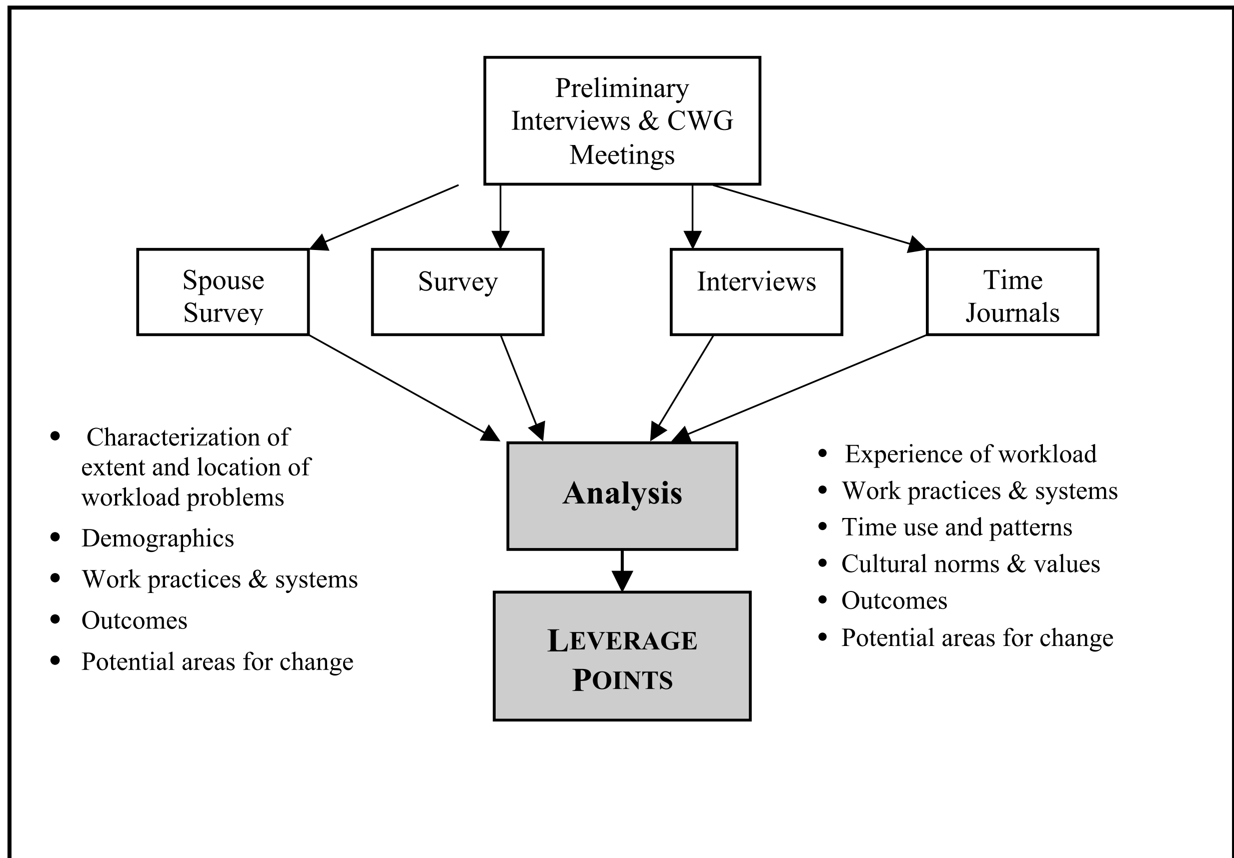
The employee survey was tailored to the specific issues, questions, and effectiveness concerns of IDRC. In its design, we drew on elements identified through preliminary interviews carried out with staff in Ottawa as well as from the regional offices. We also included elements from surveys Bailyn and Kellogg had used in other organizations to examine issues of workload and work/personal life integration. The survey was pre-tested with members of the Collaborative Working Group. The spouse/partner survey was much shorter and focused primarily on the spouse/partner's perceptions of the employee's experienced workload, its impact on family, and its impact on the employee's ability to integrate his or her work and personal life in a satisfactory way. We believed that spouses/partners would give provide another important, and perhaps alternative, perspective on work/personal life integration.

The survey was administered to employees in the Programs and Partnership Branch and to the employees in Units that have regular contact and interaction with the Programs and Partnership

[15] For a detailed case description of the use of this methodology, see Merrill-Sands, D., Fletcher, J.K., Acosta, A., Andrews, N., Harvey, M. (1999), *Engendering Organizational Change: A Case Study of Strengthening Gender Equity and Organizational Effectiveness Through Transforming Work Culture and Practices.* CGO Working Paper, No. 3. Boston, MA: Center for Gender in Organizations, SIMMONS Graduate School of Management.

Branch. In addition, a separate, but paired, partner survey was provided to gather input from these same employees' spouses or partners. One hundred eighty-seven employees and 100

Chart 1. Schematic of research methodology and components



partners completed the surveys, representing a response rate of 70%. More women (55%) than men (45%) completed the employee survey and, not surprisingly, the majority of respondents were from Programs and Partnership Branch (57%) compared to Resources Branch (16%), Secretariats (10%), and the President's office (8%). There were a greater number of respondents from Headquarters (60%) than from the Regions (40%), but the response rate was similar for both. Copies of the employee survey and the spouse/partner survey are in Annex I.

It is important to note that we see the survey as not solely an instrument for collecting data. It is also useful as a tool to help staff (and their spouses/partners) reflect on their experience of workload, the systemic factors contributing to workload, and its implications for their professional and personal lives as well as for IDRC's effectiveness. The survey was an important first step in helping people and IDRC to frame workload as an organizational problem, rather than simply as an individual problem.

Interviews. The interviews focused on helping us to understand what is important for effectiveness and success at IDRC, the experience of working at IDRC and the experience of workload. It also allowed us to examine in more depth the work practices, systems, and norms and values that are perceived to affect workload, individuals' sense of effectiveness, and people's ability to integrate their work and personal lives. We interviewed 75 staff, allowing us to hear many diverse perspectives and voices. Sixty-five percent of the staff interviewed were

based in Ottawa and 35% in Nairobi and other Regional Offices. Interviewees included staff from all levels and from across all Branches: 60% were from the Programs and Partnership Branch, 25% from the Resources Branch, and the remaining 15% were from the President's Office and former Corporate Services Branch as well as Secretariats.

Just as with the survey, we see interviews as more than data collection. Each interview is a micro-intervention. The discussion helps staff to reflect on their assumptions and work practices and think creatively about opportunities for change. In this way, interviews are a critical feature of the action research process. They help to catalyze and seed the foundation for constructive change. The interview guide and a list of the staff interviewed are attached in Annex II.

Time Journaling. We experimented for the first time with using time journaling as a means to deepen our understanding about rhythms of work, how time was allocated across different types of work, and how different types of work were experienced. The time journaling involved 10 people, representing diverse positions in two distinct Program Initiatives: People, Land and Water; and Peace-Building and Reconstruction. Six were based in Ottawa and four in Regional Offices. Every hour, on three randomly selected days (including nights), participants recorded how they had used their time. They also noted whether they had worked on planned or unplanned activities and what had helped and hindered them from getting these specific work tasks accomplished. Foldy then carried out individual interviews with the participants after each time journaling day. The reflection questions focused on the participants' perceptions of productivity, the extent to which work had been planned, the urgency and importance of the work, and whether the day was energizing or depleting. Annex III includes the log and reflection questions.

B. Analysis

The analysis was carried out in a phased and iterative process, with input from IDRC staff throughout. The analysis of the qualitative data from the preliminary interviews helped us to identify initial hypotheses about workload and its impact at IDRC that were instrumental for the design of the survey. The analysis of the quantitative survey data was very useful for documenting the nature, extent, and locus of workload problems; examining the impact of experienced workload on different groups of staff and on IDRC's organizational effectiveness; and for identifying specific work practices and systems that were correlated with workload. Correlation and regression analyses[16] were used to determine the significant determinants of experienced workload.[17] The analysis of the survey data were presented and discussed with the Collaborative Working Group, the senior leadership, and staff in the Ottawa and Nairobi Regional Offices. Feedback from these meetings was used to further refine the analysis.

The full team subsequently collaborated in the analysis of the interview data. This allows us to bring our diverse perspectives to bear in interpreting the interview data. In this phase of the analysis, we sought to understand IDRC's organizational culture and identify the mental models,

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[16] A statistical technique that indicates the significant contributors to an outcome, once the effect of other potential determinants has been controlled for.

[17] The analytic model used in the analysis of the survey data is present in annex I, Part B.

or deeply held assumptions and values, that affected both workload and IDRC's ability to achieve its strategic goals. The time journaling data were integrated into this phase of the analysis. The analysis focused on four mental models. For each mental model, we examined the reasons why it exists (i.e., what it contributes); analyzed its unintended consequences for IDRC's effectiveness, workload, and work/personal life integration; and proposed some potential leverage points for changes in work systems and practices that could interrupt or mitigate the unintended consequences of the mental model. In analyzing potential leverage points for change, we drew on the analysis of the survey, interview, and time journaling data. The analysis, based on mental models, was presented to IDRC staff, and working groups were set up to give staff the opportunity to work with the analysis and critique and further refine it.

C. Feedback and Identification of Leverage Points for Change

We fed back our analysis in stages throughout the action research process. Our ideas and tentative hypotheses were explored through interviews with staff and through discussions with members of the Collaborative Working Group. More formal feedback was provided at the conclusion of the survey. We fed back the survey analysis first to the Collaborative Working Group. Once we had incorporated the group's suggestions, we then gave seminars to staff both in Ottawa and in Nairobi. We also prepared a short briefing note summarizing the key findings which was posted on the Intranet and sent to all staff who had initially been requested to complete the survey as well as to their spouses/partners.

The final analysis, integrating both the quantitative and qualitative data, was fed back during a large meeting of more than 150 IDRC staff in Ottawa in September 2000. Once staff had worked with the analysis of mental models, they then worked in small groups to identify key leverage points for change. For each leverage point, the groups developed concrete proposals for changes in work practices, systems, or structures that they felt would help both to reduce the negative consequences of workload and would also strengthen IDRC's effectiveness. Thirteen proposals were generated. The groups presented their proposals to the rest of IDRC staff in a "poster session." A large number of staff participated in what turned out to be a very energizing session. A participatory priority-setting process was then used to capture staff's input on the change proposals that they felt were likely to have the greatest impact. In order to share the analysis with the Regional Directors, the analysis was also presented and discussed with the IDRC Program Committee in October 2000.

III. Context

There are several aspects of the organizational context of IDRC that have an important bearing on workload at IDRC, how it is experienced, and the environment for introducing changes to address workload issues.

A. Commitment to IDRC's Mission

First, it is important to situate the analysis of workload and its implications within the context of staff's sense of passion and commitment to the mission and work of IDRC. In the survey and interviews, the significant majority of staff stressed the importance of IDRC's mission and their belief that by working at IDRC they were making a difference in the world. Many staff talked about how the work at IDRC brings meaning to their lives and how they felt privileged to be able to do this type of work.

> *I feel very privileged to work here. I am doing work I love and that gives me meaning and satisfaction in my life.*

Many of the spouses/partners who responded to the survey echoed these sentiments. Concretely, in the survey, 77% of the respondents reported that they derive great satisfaction from their work, 76% indicated a high level of commitment to IDRC, and 66% indicated that they felt positive about IDRC as an organization. Responses were similar across Branches and different levels of staff.

Despite this passion, however, only 50% of the survey respondents reported feeling energized by their work. Many staff talked about feeling drained and overstretched and linked this directly to workload. What is important in this story is that staff's concerns with workload are not the result of disaffection with IDRC, lack of commitment or interest in the work, or simple complaining. Many staff are concerned with workload because they feel it is affecting their ability to innovate and do their best work. Almost half of the survey respondents reported that they believed that workload impaired the quality of their work group's performance.

B. Impact of Organizational Change

A second contextual factor affecting workload at IDRC is the significant organizational change that the Center has undergone in recent years. The most salient internal changes are: 1) the shift from a more hierarchical system based on individual producers who operated with a high degree of autonomy (at least in the Programs Branch) to the team-based Program Initiative system operative today; and 2) the reduced funding and related downsizing in staff that has occurred episodically, and with varying degrees of intensity, over the course of the last eight years.

The transition to a team-based organization is not yet complete in terms of getting full alignment of values, expectations, systems, work practices, and individual behaviors. The lack of alignment has created "double binds" for staff that have aggravated workload and inhibited optimal effectiveness. For example, because norms of individualism and autonomy inherited

from the past are still strong, these set up conflicting sets of expectations for staff performance—e.g., team player or individual producer? It also means that the synergies of working in teams cannot be fully realized. Both of these tensions increase experienced workload. We believe that resolving the remaining tensions in the system around working in teams will be a critical step in IDRC's efforts to reduce workload.

The ongoing funding constraints and periodic downsizing have had the obvious impact of reducing the financial and human resources available to do the work. Many staff indicated in the interviews that this has aggravated workload since the scope and scale of work that IDRC undertakes has not been reduced in line with the decline in resources. Moreover, the increased emphasis on resource mobilization has required both Program Officers and administrative staff to take on new responsibilities and tasks. This was felt most acutely in terms of the reduction of Program Officers and the reduction of administrative staff within the Programs and Partnership Branch.

The downsizing has also had other less obvious impacts on workload. First, many staff perceive that scarce resources have accentuated competition between the Resources Branch and Programs and Partnership Branch and made it more difficult for the branches to forge an effective partnership. Second, a norm has become institutionalized that everyone should "go the extra mile" to compensate for scarce resources. Third, and most importantly, the downsizing has increased job insecurity. There is a sense among many, especially in the Programs and Partnership Branch, that staff are vulnerable to being laid off unexpectedly due to program adjustments in response to financial constraints. In the survey, fully 40% percent of the respondents reported that they worry about the security of their jobs at IDRC. This concern leads staff to pursue protective measures that also aggravate workload. These include being on more than one Program Initiative team, and never saying "no" to requests from management for additional deliverables or for taking on new assignments. We believe that addressing concerns about job insecurity will be an important precondition for introducing changes in work practices and systems that will help reduce workload

C. Changes in the External Environment

Two changes in the external environment also appear to have accentuated workload. The international development community's increased emphasis on results and impact has resulted in expanded roles and responsibilities both for IDRC as an organization as well as for Program Officers individually. Second, the strong emphasis on collaboration and partnerships within the donor community has increased the complexity of grant-making and administration and made both of these more time consuming. On the other hand, the changing roles of partner organizations in the Global South, including their increased institutional capacity and expectations for more equitable power sharing, have also opened up new opportunities for less time-intensive modes of grant-making.

Both the internal and external changes have created tensions, which have not been fully resolved. We believe that these contribute to issues of workload and effectiveness at IDRC. Often in changing systems, cultural values and norms that were effective and contributed to success in the

previous system persist, but have unintended consequences that can hinder effectiveness under the new organizational system. We will refer to some of these tensions in the following sections.

IV. Characterizing Workload at IDRC

We relied on the survey to characterize the extent and locus of the workload problem. We drew on all three methods—the survey, interviews, and time journaling—to develop a deeper understanding of how workload was experienced by staff, its impact on their ability to successfully integrate their work and personal lives, and its impact on the organization (Chart 1).

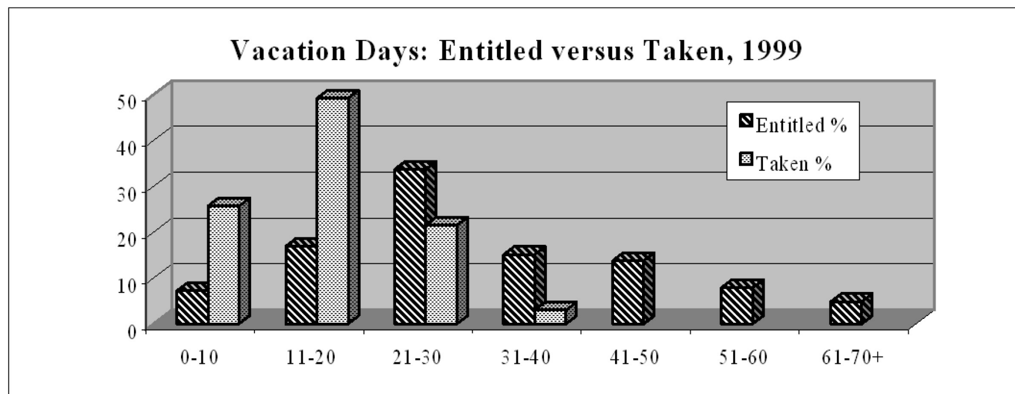
A. Hours Worked

The vast majority of survey respondents reported working more than 40 hours per week, with 76% reporting working more than 40 hours in a typical week and 35% reporting working over 50 hours. The hours worked are highest for the staff at levels 6 and above, with 90% working more than 40 hours per week, almost half working over 50 hours, and 10% working over 60 hours. The time journaling data with 10 staff revealed an average workday of 9.4 hours. Long hours are particularly true for staff and managers at levels 6 and above in the Programs and Partnership Branch, where 55% report working more than 50 hours per week.

These long work hours are routine for all staff, with 81% of the staff reporting that this is standard practice rather than episodic. Among staff at levels 6 and above, 92% report that their long work hours are standard practice. More than one-third of all staff and almost half of those in levels 6 and above said that their current work hours were not sustainable. A third of staff reported that they routinely worked weekends and 44% reported routinely taking work home. Of those working 50 or more hours per week, only 5% consider this to be a "fair" workweek. Again, this pattern was accentuated among staff in levels 6 and above. The time journaling data revealed that 7 out of the 10 staff worked at home at least one evening of the 3 days logged.

Staff also reported that they were not using their full allotment of annual vacation days (Chart 2). On average, respondents reported that they only took 57% of the vacation days to which they were entitled in 1999. The principal reasons given for not taking vacation days are that they have too much work to do (67%) and that there would be too much to do when they return (47%).

Chart 2. Percent of entitled vacation days taken by staff



B. Experienced Workload

While hours worked is the most straightforward measure of workload, it is the way that staff experience workload that matters the most. Therefore, using factor analysis,[18] we developed an index of experienced workload that includes the items shown in Table 1.

Elements in the workload index indicate clearly that the majority of staff sees workload as a problem at IDRC (82%) and as a problem for themselves as individuals (60%). This is accentuated among staff in levels 6 and above.

Not surprisingly, the index of experienced workload is highly and significantly correlated[19] with hours worked per week (+.68). When we divide the experienced workload measure into quintiles, we see 30% of those who work 41-49 hours, and a full 75% of those working 50 hours or more fall into the top two categories. In the 50+ hours per week group, almost half (46%) are in the top fifth of the distribution of experienced workload.

In the interviews, staff described their experience of heavy workload using vivid language that can be paraphrased as follows: 'it makes me feel guilty about letting people down'; 'the workload pressure makes me feel paralyzed'; I feel like am drowning or in quicksand'; 'I feel out of control from too much work'; 'I feel fragmented and unable to concentrate'; 'I feel as if I am always exhausted'; 'I feel like I am always running behind'; 'I feel as if I am being pushed to the wall'; 'I feel like I am being sapped of my creative energy.'

[18] Factor analysis is a statistical technique that clusters similar items together.

[19] The linear correlation coefficient is a descriptive measure of the strength of the linear relationship between two variables. This measures the extent to which two variables vary together either positively (+) or negatively (-).

Table 1: Experience of workload

Indicators of Workload	All Staff	P&P Branch	Level 6 +
	% Agree	% Agree	% Agree
Workload is a problem at IDRC	82	81	87
Workload is greater than regular hours	71	74	77
I take on more than possible in regular work hours	69	66	77
I often feel like I am running behind at work	64	62	72
Workload is a problem for me	60	62	68
I am expected to work extra hours	54	59	66
It is necessary for me to work through lunch to get work done	50	58	66
Workload interferes with work/personal life integration	46	53	60
Workload problems impair quality of my groups' work	40	46	50
I routinely take work home and on weekends	39	33	53
I do not feel my current work hours are sustainable	34	39	46

[Reliability: alpha = .77].

The following quotes suggest how some staff feel that workload affects them in both their personal and professional lives.

> *I feel a lot of stress. I work lots of overtime. I think about work early in the morning and I wake in the middle of the night.*
>
> *IDRC absorbs all of my creative energy. I barely have any energy left for my family or interests outside of work. I feel guilty about my family.*
>
> *I really enjoy my job, but would like to spend more time with my young children . . . However, the workload is such that this is not an option . . . a better follow through of projects could exist if we did not feel so overwhelmed.*
>
> *I am able to meet all my deadlines by working before going to bed and through lunch. However, despite evaluations that state the contrary, I feel I do nothing sufficiently well. Everything seems rushed and there is no time to keep up with what is going on in various fields. . . . I also feel that there is not enough time to provide sufficient support to our partners.*

C. Locus of Experienced Workload

Level and Branch. As with hours worked, experienced workload is highest among staff and managers in levels 6 and above, particularly within the Programs and Partnership Branch (Chart 3). Fifty-five percent of staff in levels 6 and above are in the top two experienced workload categories (divided into quintiles). In the Programs and Partnership Branch, this rises to 67%. The experienced workload is most acute for the middle managers in the Programs and Partnership Branch, e.g., Program Initiative Team Leaders (Chart 4).

With respect to differences in experienced workload between staff in Ottawa and the Regional Offices, the only significant difference was that staff at levels 5 and below in the regions experienced moderately higher workloads than those at the same levels in Ottawa.

Social Identity . In addition to analyzing differences in experienced workload by function, level, and office location, we also explored whether members in different social identity groups (e.g., race, nationality, gender, age) reported different levels of experienced workload.[20] Other research has suggested that people who are not members of a dominant identity group in the workplace can experience higher levels of workload. It is often more difficult for them to gain access to resources and information and achieve recognition as defined by the accepted norms of the organization.

We found that gender was correlated with workload. While, overall, men experience higher workload than women, this difference reflects level and type of position. When level in the organization is controlled for, however, we see that female Program Officers and Team Leaders

[20] We define social identity as based on membership in groups that reflect salient social categories, such as race, gender, ethnicity, class, age, or sexual orientation. These are categories that can be viewed as socially marked or valenced, meaning that they are significant in shaping how societies are organized and how individuals within societies categorize themselves and others. Often these categories shape the distribution of roles, power, opportunities, and resources in societies. As a result, in many societies, these identity categories are “legislated” to prevent discrimination and ensure equal opportunities.

experience the highest workload. Seventy-six of these women are in the top two quartiles of experienced workload compared to 62% of the men.

Chart 3. Distribution of experienced workload by level and branch

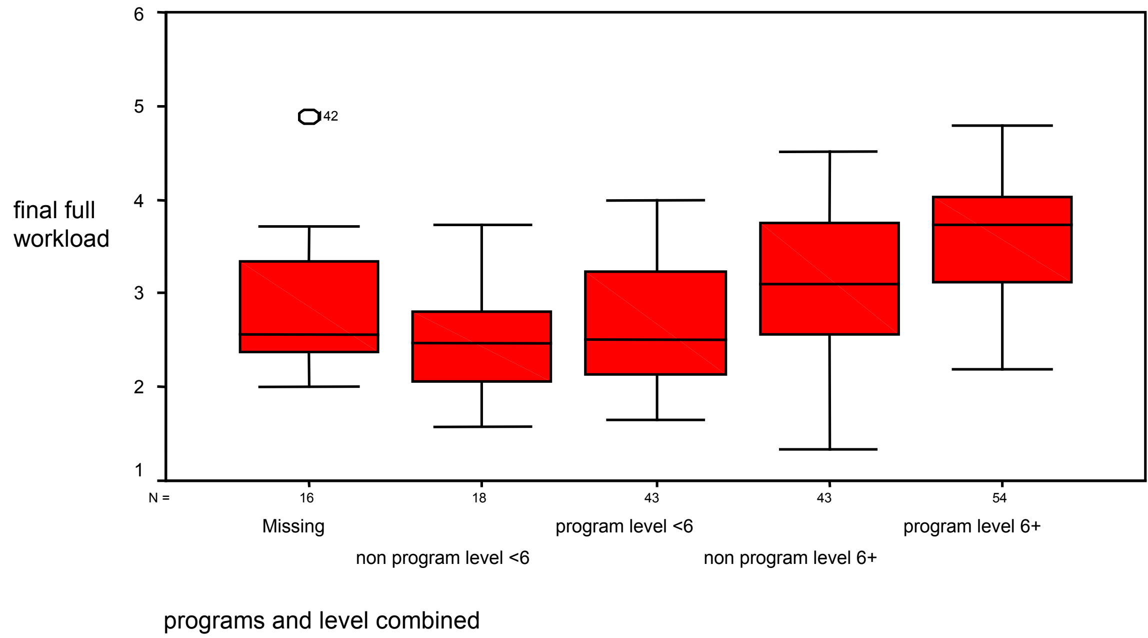
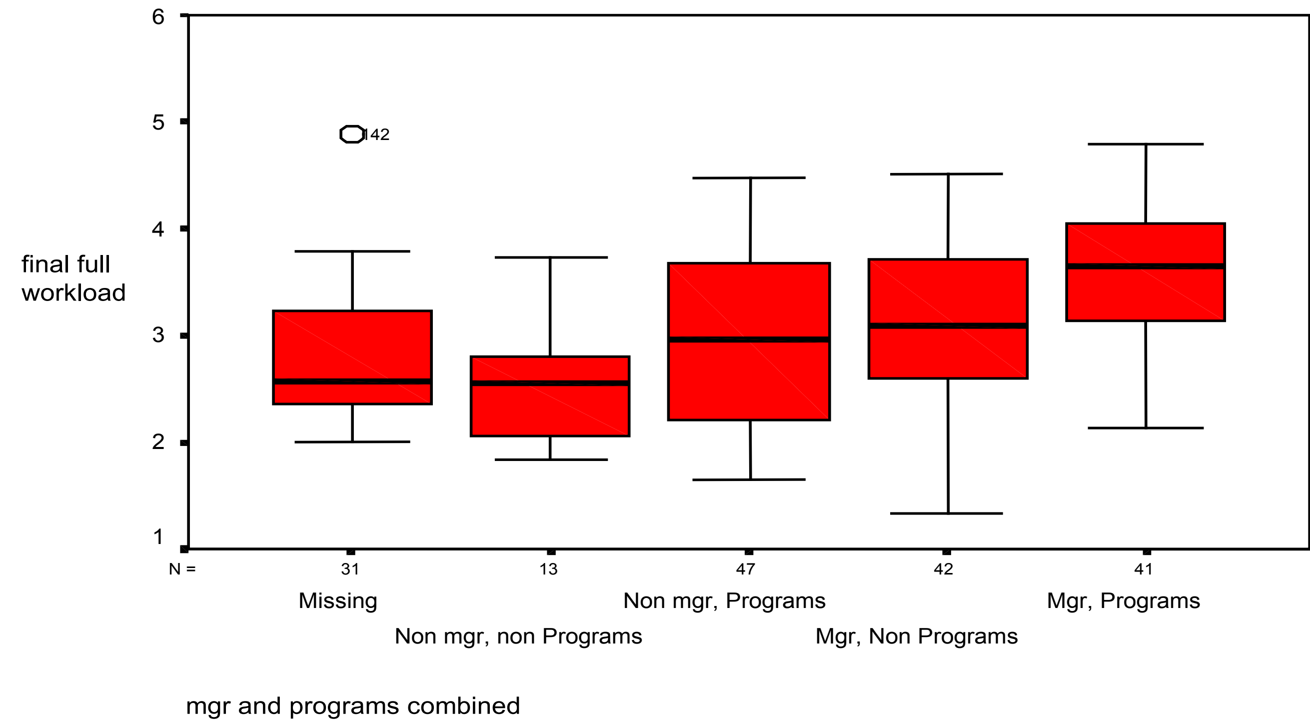


Chart 4. Distribution of experienced workload by level and branch



Interestingly, we also found that age was correlated with workload. Staff 55 years and above report higher experienced workload than other staff. This is most acute among managers. We were not able to examine correlations between workload and other dimensions of social identity, such as race and ethnicity, because many respondents did not provide information on these demographic variables.[22]

Family Status. Often employees with family responsibilities experience higher workload because their time at work is bounded and they often have to work at a more pressured pace. Yet, contrary to our expectations, family status, in terms of having children, was not correlated with experienced workload at IDRC. We did find, however, that staff who are married or have permanent partners experience higher workloads than those who are not. Interestingly, and again contrary to our expectations, the employment status of the spouse/partner showed little relation to experienced workload.

D. What Drives Workload Pressures?

In mission-based organizations such as IDRC, it is often assumed that workload is driven primarily by individual's dedication and internal motivation. Indeed, several of the senior managers at IDRC expressed this view at the beginning of the study. With this perspective, the focus for intervention is on finding solutions at the individual level. Staff are encouraged to take courses in time management, to become better at setting priorities and planning, or to devise more efficient work systems. While such practices can help reduce time pressures to a modest extent, they do not address the root causes of workload pressures. These causes often reside in the way work is done and the values that underpin the work.[23]

This was confirmed at IDRC where we learned through the surveys, interviews, and time journaling that the factors causing workload pressures are primarily systemically driven rather than individually motivated. For example, in the survey, 85% of the respondents said that people take on more than they can do in regular office hours because of organizational demands, not because they want to (23%). Sixty-seven percent of survey respondents, and 75% of staff in levels 6 and above, also reported that staff members are given workloads greater than what they can accomplish during regular office hours. The interviews confirmed staff's perception that workload was driven largely by organizational demands and expectations, rather than by their own ambitions or desires. In fact, many staff felt that they were paying a professional and personal cost because of the workload pressures. The following quotes capture some of the tensions that staff experience in trying to control their workload and cope with systemic pressures.

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[22] It was reported to us that some respondents felt that their identity could be determined if they completed all the demographic data requested in the survey.

[23] Bailyn. L. (1993), *Breaking the Mold. New York: The Free Press.* Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J.K., and Kolb, D. (1997), "Unexpected Connections: Considering Employee's Personal Lives Can Revitalize Your Business," *Sloan Management Review,* 38(4):11-19. Perlow, L. (1998), "Boundary control: The social ordering of work and family time in a high tech corporation." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 43(2): 328-357. Perlow, L. (1999), "The time famine: Toward a sociology of work time," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(1): 57-81. Williams, J., (2000), *Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It.* New York: Oxford University Press.

I feel that my immediate management is supportive of my decision not to work many extra hours so I can spend time with my family. However, the combined demands from management and administrators, as well as inefficiencies, mean that I am very behind in my work and I leave a lot undone, and I don't get to the kind of work activities that are so important.

I do hope that the results will stimulate adjustments to workload at IDRC. I think we all feel motivated and complain little, but the situation is not tenable in the long run.

The systemic factors aggravating workload at IDRC are discussed in detail in Sections VI and VII.

V. WHY SHOULD IDRC CARE ABOUT WORKLOAD?

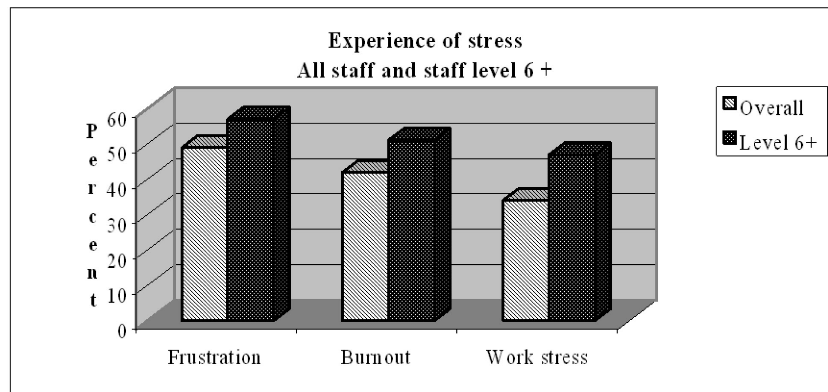
Our perspective is that high experienced workload can have a negative impact both on individuals' ability to lead satisfying and fully productive professional and personal lives as well as on the overall effectiveness of the organization. Contrary to conventional wisdom, having staff working long hours does not always result in higher productivity and better organizational performance. The findings from the IDRC survey support this proposition.

A. Impact on Staff

The survey revealed that the primary impact of workload on individual employees was experienced in terms of stress and problems of integrating work and personal lives. Interestingly, experienced workload was not correlated with work satisfaction.

Stress. Workload causes stress for staff and their spouse/partners at IDRC. A significant proportion of staff at IDRC reported feeling frustrated that they could not achieve their goals at work (49%), that they experienced feelings of burnout in trying to accomplish everything they want to do (42%), and that they experienced work as highly stressful (34%). A combined index of stress is significantly correlated with workload (+.55). Fully 46% of those experiencing the highest workload (top quintile) fall into the highest quintile of the stress index as well. Reported stress is significantly higher for staff in levels 6 and above (Chart 5), particularly for females in the Programs and Partnerships Branch. Program Officers in the Regional Offices also experience higher stress than those in the Ottawa office.

Chart 5. Percent of staff experiencing stress, "burnout," and frustration completing goals



Work/Personal Life Integration. The survey revealed that workload is strongly and negatively correlated with staff's ability to integrate their work and personal life in a satisfactory way (-.66). Not a single person in the highest quintile of experienced workload falls into the highest quintile on the work/personal life index, and only 3% fall into the next highest quintile.

Overall, potential for work/personal life integration seems fairly low at IDRC. Only about half the staff feel that their supervisor supports integration (56%), that organization demands do not affect their children (50%) or partner (49%), or say that they are satisfied with their ability to integrate their work and personal life (49%). An even lower percentage feel that work stress does not cause family to suffer (38%), that IDRC supports work/personal life integration (33%), and that they can attend to personal matters at work when necessary (27%). Finally, an extremely small percentage feel that work/personal life integration is not a problem for IDRC staff (15%). Problems integrating work and personal life are more acute for staff in levels 6 and above and even more so for staff at these levels in the Regional Offices.

The results from the spouse/partner survey show nearly identical responses across all items in the work/personal life index. Nonetheless, spouses/partners were aware that the employees they are partnered with get great satisfaction from working at IDRC (68% agree), and personally they strongly support their partners continuing to work there (78% agree). But the more hours employees work, the less positive is their spouse/partner's attitude toward IDRC (-.45). Also, independent of hours worked, the more employees experience workload and the more stress they feel, the more negative is their partner's attitude towards IDRC (-.45 and -.51 respectively).

While the survey revealed a significant correlation between experienced workload and staff's ability to successfully integrate their work and personal lives, we sensed that many staff were not comfortable addressing this issue fully in their interviews. In fact, we sensed a potent silencing of work/personal life issues in IDRC. While 60% of the female and 40% of the male interviewees acknowledged having trouble integrating their work and personal lives, few gave this much emphasis in the interviews. While some staff explained this silence as reflecting Canadian cultural norms of stoicism and maintaining privacy around personal issues, others felt that it reflected a lack of tolerance within IDRC for the pressures staff experience in trying to integrate work and personal lives.

Yet, research we have done in other organizations suggests that supporting staff in their efforts to integrate their work and personal lives can have direct benefits for the organization.[24] At IDRC, for example, staff's ability to integrate their work and personal lives is positively correlated with both their commitment to IDRC and their potential to innovate at work (see below). Similarly, spouse/partner attitude is also positively correlated (+.34) with employee commitment to IDRC.

Work Satisfaction and Self-Efficacy. We also explored whether workload had a negative effect on work satisfaction as described by being satisfied with the content of work, learning a lot from work, making a difference in the world, and being energized about work. Interestingly, the analysis did not reveal a significant correlation between these factors. There was, however, a negative (but relatively weak) correlation between workload and self-efficacy. Self-efficacy was defined as feeling confident about desired outcomes in one's work and being able to maintain one's professional reputation. The concern that workload undermined staff's abilities to maintain their professional reputations and intellectual capital was a major concern expressed in the interviews, particularly by Program Officers.

[24] Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J., and Kolb, D. (1997), "Unexpected Connections: Considering Employee's Personal Lives Can revitalize Your Business," *Sloan Management Review,* 38(4): 11-19.

B. Impact of Workload on Organizational Effectiveness

The survey revealed two important ways in which workload affects organizational effectiveness at IDRC: retention of staff and innovation potential. Interestingly, and contrary to conventional wisdom, workload and hours worked are not correlated with staff performance. Further implications for effectiveness surfaced through the interviews and are discussed in Section VII .

Organizational Commitment and Retention. The survey revealed that experienced workload is negatively correlated with commitment to stay at IDRC (-.26). This is an important observation since the ability to retain high quality and committed staff is critical to organizational effectiveness. The relation between workload and staff's expectations to remain at IDRC is presented in Table 2. While only 43% of staff reporting medium workload expect to be at another organization in 5 years, a full 69% of those with very high workload (top quintile) expect to leave IDRC in this time frame. This relationship is strongest among staff in the Programs and Partnership Branch and among staff at levels 6 and above, where the percentages of those with very high workload who are expecting to be at another organization in 5 years are 75% and 73% respectively.

Table 2. Percent of employees in each workload quintile expecting to be at another organization in five years

Experienced Workload (quintile)	**Overall** %	**P&P Branch** %	**Staff Level 6+** %
Very Low	33	42	20
Low	34	43	29
Medium	43	52	48
High	46	50	36
Very High	69	75	73

Some might assume that an organization like IDRC is likely to have high turnover because of the importance of professional development afforded by different job experiences. However, an analysis of reasons for intent to leave IDRC shows that when people were asked to cite the top two reasons for their intent to leave, only 35% cited self development reasons such as desiring to develop new skills, and only 15% cited reasons intrinsic to work, such as lack of challenge. In contrast, a full 43% cited work environment reasons, such as work structuring and systems, management issues, and travel demands.

Innovation Potential. Given that IDRC is a research-based organization, we examined the relationship between workload and creativity/innovation potential as an important dimension of effectiveness. Research by Amabile has shown that workload pressure undermines employee creativity, particularly if it is perceived as imposed externally as a means of control.[25] Using

[25] See Amabile, T. (1998), "How to Kill Creativity." *Harvard Business Review* (September-October 1998): 77-87; Amabile, T. M. (1996), *Creativity in context: Update to the social psychology of creativity*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

literature on creativity as a starting point,[26] we created 7 survey items intended to measure creative thinking. Responses to these items were averaged to create an index of individual innovation potential (Table 3). Elements in the innovation potential index indicate clearly that the majority of staff have little time to engage in work activities that foster creativity and innovation, and, importantly, that staff in levels 6 and above have even less time for these activities.

Table 3. Individual innovation potential index

Indicators	Overall % Agree	P&P Branch % Agree	Staff level 6+ % Agree
During regular work hours, I have time to:			
Stretch my abilities	48	49	49
Persevere through problems	43	44	43
Explore new areas of work	22	28	22
Build knowledge and skills	20	24	12
Reflect and think creatively	19	22	15
Concentrate for long periods of time	9	9	9
Gain distance from my work	9	10	6

Reliability: alpha = .85

While 48% of staff report having time to stretch their abilities and 43% have time to persevere through problems, time afforded to other important activities related to creativity is very low. Relatively few employees report having sufficient time to explore new areas of work (22%), to build knowledge and skills (20%), to reflect and think creatively (19%), to concentrate for long periods of time (9%), and to gain distance from work (9%).

Correlation analysis revealed that workload is negatively and significantly correlated with innovation potential (-.35), and this relationship holds both for staff at levels 6 and above (-.27) and staff in the Programs and Partnership Branch (-.37) staff. Similarly, stress is significantly and negatively correlated with individual innovation potential**.** Interestingly, work/personal life integration is significantly and positively correlated with individual innovation potential (+.38).

The negative relation between workload and innovation potential was echoed in the qualitative data. In the time journaling, half the sample reported that they had had no creative days, 4 reported that they had had 1 creative day, and only 1 reported 2 creative days out of the 3 sampled. In the interviews, Program staff talked of workload pressures crowding out time for thinking, reflection, and writing—all important to knowledge generation and innovation. For many, this was the primary cost of the workload pressures, both for professional growth of staff as well as for IDRC. Administrative staff talked of workload pressures as forcing them into "fire fighting" modes of working, undermining their ability to plan and think creatively about new and more effective systems. In Nairobi, administrative staff also talked of workload pressures limiting their ability to take courses to enhance their skills and knowledge which they felt would

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[26] Csikszentmihalyi, M. and Sawyer, K. (1995), "Creative insight: The social dimension of a solitary moment." In Sternberg, Robert J. (Ed); Davidson, Janet E. (Ed); et al. (1995). *The Nature of Insight*. (pp. 329 363). Cambridge, MA, USA: The MIT Press. Also Amabile (1998, 1999) cited above in ft. nt. 25.

make them more innovative and effective at work. The following quotes reflect how staff talked about the relation between workload and innovation/creativity.

> *With too much time pressure, people are losing their intellectual cutting edge.*
>
> *The cost of the time demands is innovation. People do not have time to read and they fall behind in their fields. We need "head space" because creativity comes with headspace. We do not have this. If you lose space and time to think, this leads to bureaucratization and you become less innovative. I think this is a real concern for us.*

We also explored the relation between workload and collaborative creativity since much of IDRC's work is now done in multi-disciplinary teams. Interestingly, while the majority of staff assessed the quality (70%) and quantity of work (88%) produced by their workgroups as high, only 56% assessed the creativity of their workgroups as high. To explore the relation with workload, we asked staff the extent to which they had time during regular office hours to work with co-workers in three areas that the research suggests foster creativity and innovation (Table 4).

Table 4. Collaborative innovation index

Indicators	**Overall % Agree**	**P&P Branch % Agree**	**Staff level 6+ % Agree**
During regular work hours, I have time to			
Help work group members through setbacks	55	50	61
Share my knowledge	54	48	56
Learn from co-workers	44	43	44

Surprisingly, despite the fact that only half of the staff report having time for these activities, the analysis of the relation between workload and creative collaboration did not reveal a significant correlation.

Assessed Work Performance. Contrary to commonly held assumption that long hours result in better work performance, the results from the survey do not show any correlation between experienced workload or hours worked and staff performance. While experienced workload is positively correlated with self-assessed *quantity* of work, it is not correlated with self-assessed *quality* of work produced, innovation/creativity of work, or work efficiency. In terms of actual performance ratings awarded in performance reviews as reported by staff,[27] there were no significant differences in hours worked or experienced workload between high performers and satisfactory or low performers. These data challenge the assumption of a linear relationship between workload and better staff performance.

[27] These were the performance appraisal rankings reported by staff in their surveys.

VI. Work Systems, Structures, and Practices Affecting Workload and Effectiveness

Preliminary interviews with staff, as well as our action research with other organizations, helped to identify key work systems and work practices that could potentially contribute to workload pressures. We built these items into the survey. In the analysis, we used factor analysis and then used regression analysis to identify those factors that were statistically significant determinants of experienced workload. [28] We examined these factors in more depth through subsequent interviews and the time journaling.

The factor analysis of the survey items revealed six factors related to work practices/ structures/and systems. We did a regression analysis to examine the relation between these factors and experienced workload and work/personal life integration as well as the outcomes for organizational effectiveness—commitment and innovation potential. The factors that emerged as significantly related to experienced workload were "lack of clarity," "too much change," "work as crisis driven," "interruptions," "face time," and "coordination." The extent of control over work emerged as important to the link between these factors and outcomes.

The factors are listed in the order of their importance as potential leverage points for reducing workload while enhancing the three outcomes of work/personal life integration, commitment, and innovation potential. Annex IV contains a table with the survey items making up each factor and the percent of respondents that agreed on each element.

A. "Lack of Clarity"

The items in the factor we called "lack of clarity" relate primarily to the extent to which operating and information systems are perceived to be "mismatched" and interfere with work processes, thus not meeting staff needs and aggravating workload. Half of the survey respondents felt that operating and information systems were not designed to meet staff needs. The factor also includes perceived lack of clarity in performance criteria, in the division of tasks and roles, and in work priorities. "Lack of clarity" had the strongest relationship with workload in the regression analysis.

The interviews provided more insight into these areas of ambiguity. The perceived mismatch between operating and information systems and staff needs was manifested primarily in the tensions between the values and needs for standardization and efficiency in the Resources Branch and the values and needs for responsiveness and customized services for grant recipients in the Programs and Partnerships Branch. The new installation of the EPIK system as well as

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[28] Factor analysis groups items into categories so that each factor contains items that correlate with each other more than they correlate with items in other factors. Hence, they capture items that fit together for the respondents. Regression analysis is a statistical technique that indicates the significant contributors to an outcome, once the effect of other potential determinants has been controlled for.

chronic problems with the e-mail system[29] were the most frequently cited examples of these tensions. Staff in both Branches felt that the demands and requirements of staff in the other Branch were making it more difficult for them to do their work, thus aggravating their respective workloads. Program Officers also cited various internal reporting procedures, such as project completion reports, as consuming time, frequently changing in their design and requirements, and not adding value to their grant-making.

Lack of clarity in performance criteria was felt most strongly within the Programs and Partnership Branch. Program Officers reported lack of clarity about the relative emphasis they should give to their diverse responsibilities and a lack of alignment between rewards and recognition and some of the new functions senior managers are encouraging Program Officers to take up, such as synthesizing knowledge, documenting impact, and mobilizing resources. Staff also cited lack of clarity in leadership roles and responsibilities for Program Initiative Team Leaders and Regional Directors within the matrix as aggravating workload for people in these positions as well as for the staff who work with them. Ambiguity in authority results in extensive consultation, over reporting, and complicated decision-making processes. In the interviews, many staff cited these practices as contributing to workload. Not surprisingly, setting clear priorities at the workgroup level was significantly and negatively correlated with experienced workload and this was confirmed in the interviews. Overall, the factor "lack of clarity" was also significantly and negatively related to the outcomes of work/personal life integration, commitment and innovation potential across all of IDRC.[30]

B. "Too Much Change"

This factor reflects the tendency at IDRC to introduce frequent changes in work priorities, job tasks and responsibilities, and operating systems and procedures. This factor had the second strongest relationship with experienced workload, confirming the perceptions of staff as reported in the interviews. Staff feel that it is not simply change, but the frequency and complexity of changes that aggravate experienced workload. Such changes require that more time be invested in learning new systems, tasks (such as resource mobilization) or subject matter areas. Staff also perceive that changes are often introduced without the implications having been fully thought through. This results in reduced, rather than enhanced, efficiencies, at least in the short term. Interestingly, reflecting changes in job definitions, almost half the staff reported in the survey that the skills that are valued for their position are different from those for which they were hired.

In describing this factor, staff used words such as "*nothing seems to be settled*"; "*we are constantly rehashing ideas and decisions*"; and "*everything is always changing, but we need some basic parameters*." The survey and interviews revealed that staff in the Programs and Partnership Branch felt most strongly that changes in operating and information systems aggravate their workload problems. Yet, the survey also revealed that 67% of staff think that frequent changes in work priorities at the organizational level also increase workload. "Too

[29] E-mail problems were cited more frequently at the beginning of the study period (December 1999 - February 2000).

[30] When a factor is cited as being significant in this report, it means that it was significant when outcomes were regressed only on practices and on demographic controls, or was significant in the final regression which included practices, demographic controls, mechanisms, and workload.

much change" was experienced more acutely in the Regional Offices, particularly among staff at levels 6 and higher.

The "too much change" factor was significantly and negatively related in the regression analysis to the outcomes of work/personal life integration and commitment, as well as to innovation potential in the Programs and Partnership Branch.

C. "Crisis Driven"

This factor relates to coping with crises, unexpected demands, and deadlines. In the survey, there was strong agreement that work is deadline driven (74%). Staff also indicated that they spend a significant amount of their time dealing with crises (51%). Half the staff report that unexpected demands from managers make it difficult for them to finish their work during regular office hours. In the interviews, staff attributed the "crisis driven" culture partly to the grant-making cycle as well as to IDRC's commitment to respond quickly to requests from grant recipients. However, it was also seen as driven by lack of forward planning, urgent requests from senior managers who are often responding to demands from the Board of Governors or external constituents, and less than perfect financial information systems that result in unexpected budget changes. This factor was significantly and positively related to workload. It was also significantly and negatively related to the outcomes of work/personal life integration, as well as to innovation potential within the Programs and Partnership Branch.

D. "Face Time"

Face time refers to behaviors and norms that connect impressions of staff members' productivity and commitment to the degree to which they are visible in the office. In many organizations, this norm is a primary driver of workload. "Face time" was significantly related to experienced workload in the regression analysis even though only a third of IDRC survey respondents reported that they work extra hours to make a favorable impression on managers, and only a quarter reported that they work extra hours to make a favorable impression on peers or grantees. On the other hand, 40% of the respondents, and 69% of those at levels 6 and above, reported that being willing to work late was highly valued in their work group. The variability in these responses may reflect individual's discomfort in reporting explicitly that they feel "face time" is important to success at IDRC.

In the interviews, people raised aspects of "face time" as gaining recognition for working on the weekends, working late, or being flexible to come in early or stay late if requested. The interviews also revealed that "face time" at IDRC is more manifest in being visible in e-mail dialogues and consultations than being physically present in the office. People often felt obligated to participate in e-mail exchanges even when they did not feel that they had something important to contribute. This helps to explain why e-mail feels so burdensome to many staff at IDRC. Face time had a negative relation to work/personal life integration in IDRC as a whole, and to commitment amongst staff in levels 6 and above in the Program and Partnership Branch.

E. “Interruptions”

This factor includes items of unexpected demands and interruptions, particularly from co-workers and direct reports. Sixty-four percent of the survey respondents indicated that interruptions make it difficult for them to finish their work. Interruptions from co-workers are perceived to contribute more significantly to workload than interruptions from direct reports. Interestingly, interruptions, while important in the descriptive statistical analysis and the interviews, did not come through in the regression analysis as a factor related to workload in the full sample. It did have a negative relationship, however, with innovation potential. The interruptions factor is also correlated significantly and positively with workload amongst staff at level 6 and above in the Programs and Partnership Branch.

We explored the impact of interruptions in the time journaling study in terms of the degree to which work activities were planned or unplanned throughout the day. We learned that, on average, two thirds of the work activities in the sample days were planned. We also saw that the percentage of planned activities was higher for staff based in Ottawa (which fits with the interview data) and significantly higher for staff in more senior positions with more autonomy, such as Program Officers and Team Leaders. Research Officers had the lowest percentage of planned activities in their workdays (57%).

F. “Coordination”

This factor includes items of responding to requests for input and peer review, coordinating and planning work with others, and collaborative decision-making. The time demands of coordination and collaboration came up frequently in the interviews as contributing to workload problems, particularly in relation to the PI team structure within the Programs and Partnership Branch. In the interviews, people referred to this time demand as “collaborative overhead.” In the descriptive statistics, this cluster of items also emerged as one of the major contributors to workload. Survey respondents reported spending significant amounts of time responding to requests for input from others (71%) and in coordinating and planning work with others (63%). The coordination burden was most acute for the staff in levels 6 and above. However, in the regression analysis, coordination emerged as only significant in the Programs and Partnership Branch. Here it is positively related to experienced workload and is negatively related to innovation potential.

G. Other Factors Influencing Workload

Control Over Work. In addition to the factors reflecting work systems, structures, and practices, the extent of control staff have over their work also emerged in the survey analysis as having a significant correlation with experienced workload. We hypothesized that control over work might be an important mediating variable for understanding the relationship between work practices, workload, and organizational outcomes. To explore this relationship, we created a control factor reflecting items including the extent of control staff have over what work they do, how and when they work, and their flexibility in managing work. The descriptive statistics indicated that the majority of staff felt that they have control over how and when they do their work (74% and 58% respectively) and flexibility in managing their work (69%). They feel considerably less control over how much work to take on (23%), and what work they do (31%).

In the analysis, we found that workload is negatively related to control over work, as were the factors of "interruptions," "too much change," "crises driven," and "lack of clarity." We also found that control over work is positively related to innovation potential, commitment, and work/personal-life integration. The qualitative data from the time journaling research supports the importance of control over work. Several staff noted that, despite the fact that significant portions of their daily activities were unplanned, they still felt in control of their work. They attributed this to the autonomy they had in determining when they worked on what. Interestingly, participants at both administrative support and more senior positions shared this perception, indicating that autonomy may more be a result of team work policies than a direct consequence of job title.

These findings suggest that control over work could be important in the link between work practices and workload and a potential intervention point for dual agenda change aimed at reducing workload pressures while enhancing organizational effectiveness.

Travel. In the interviews, Program Officers and managers in the Programs and Partnership Branch frequently cited travel demands as a major factor contributing to experienced workload. Indeed, the time journaling data revealed that a Regional Director spent 24 hours traveling during one of the sample days and 17 hours on another. Staff report working long hours for one to two weeks before trips, working long and intensive days during travel, and then having significant time pressures upon their return while they catch up with work and communications accumulated during their absence. Since administrative support staff work with several Program Officers, they often are not well enough versed in a PO's work and grants to be able to provide coverage while the Program Officer is away. While many reported that their most creative work was done while traveling, it was also seen to take a significant toll on staff. Many cited intensive travel demands as a major impediment to recruiting high quality staff. Men or women with family responsibilities often are not willing to take on such rigorous travel schedules. Interestingly, travel did not emerge as starkly in the survey results, although it was correlated with workload. Half of the spouses responding to the survey reported that travel interfered with their partner's ability to integrate his or her work and personal life satisfactorily. Travel also revealed an interesting difference by gender. Men travel more than women, even when controlling for level and Branch. It would be worthwhile exploring how some staff are able to keep their travel schedules more limited while performing the similar jobs.

Flexible Arrangements. IDRC, like many other organizations, has instituted policies to give staff more flexibility in how they manage their time. Flexible arrangements are thought to reduce the stress staff feel in managing their workloads and integrating their work and personal lives. Despite these expected benefits, it is interesting that at IDRC we did not find any significant correlations between the use of flexible arrangements and workload, stress, feelings of control over work, work/personal life integration or with the organizational outcomes of commitment and innovation potential.

This supports our view that policies alone are not sufficient to reduce workload for staff. Often staff do not take advantage of policies because of other systemic factors driving workload or strong cultural norms that countermand the intention of the policies. At IDRC, for example, only

42% of the survey respondents reported using the flexible arrangements offered. Of those who use flexible arrangements, the majority (50%) do so by adjusting the start and finish times of their workdays, 11% compress their work hours, and 20% combine flexible hours with working at home. Of those who do not take advantage of flexible work hours, three-quarters cited organizational barriers: 25% reported that they would feel uncomfortable; 25% reported that it would jeopardize their careers; and 22% said that their work unit does not permit it. These responses likely reflect cultural norms that define success and competence at IDRC. The influence of these norms are discussed in more detail in the next section.

H. Summary

The "dual agenda" analysis of work practices, systems, and structures suggests that items included under the factors "too much change" and "lack of clarity" appear to be the most important work practice areas for IDRC to address in reducing workload pressures and in improving the outcomes of work/personal life integration, commitment, and innovation potential. The second tier would be "crisis driven" and "interruptions." And, the third tier would be "face time." Within the Programs and Partnership Branch, and particularly for staff at levels 6 and above where we know workload is most acute, the factors "too much change," "lack of clarity," and "coordination" appear to offer the most leverage for constructive change. Reducing travel demands and ensuring that staff have control over what work they do and how and when they do it are also potential leverage points.

VII. Work Culture and Norms Affecting Workload and Effectiveness

The survey and interviews helped us to identify potential leverage points in the realm of work practices, systems, and structures for “dual agenda” change aimed at reducing workload and enhancing organizational effectiveness. However, as described in Section I, our experience indicates that in order to bring about sustainable changes at the level of work policies, systems, or practices, or even to encourage changes in individuals’ behavior, it is necessary to understand the work norms and values—the mental models—that shape the culture of the organization. Making these mental models explicit disrupts the status quo and gives staff new ways of looking at their organization and at the systemic determinants of behavior.

There are, of course, many mental models that underlie organizational practices and behaviors at IDRC. The four we selected meet our “dual agenda” criteria. That is, they have significant implications for IDRC’s organizational performance as well as for the ability of diverse employees to contribute fully to the Center’s mission, manage their workloads, and integrate their work and personal lives in a satisfying way. In selecting these mental models, we also used a gender lens, focusing on those that we thought had implications for gender equity within IDRC as well.[31] Our firm belief is that addressing the unintended consequences of these mental models would result in a more gender equitable workplace at IDRC in addition to the other objectives outlined above.

The four mental models we identified include:

- “Hands on” Grant-Making is Best;
- Competence Equals New Ideas;
- Program Officers are the Heart of IDRC; and
- “First Among Equals.”

For each, we: 1) describe the mental model; 2) examine why it works (e.g., what it contributes); 3) identify its unintended consequences for effectiveness, workload and work/personal life integration, and for gender equity; and 4) identify potential leverage points for change.[32]

[31] We did not emphasize the implications for gender equity in our verbal feedback to IDRC because, given the time constraints, we wanted to keep a sharp focus on the presenting problem of workload. We also recognized that workload has direct consequences for gender equity. This focus, however, caused concerns among several of the participants in the feedback session who felt that gender equity should have been more explicit. Therefore, we have examined the implications of these four mental models for gender equity in this report. This does not substitute for a comprehensive analysis of gender equity at IDRC, but it brings the gender lens more explicitly into the analysis.

[32] In summarizing our analysis of mental models, we have stuck closely to the language and arguments used in the major feedback presentations in Ottawa on September 11 and October 23, 2000. We felt it was important to capture the ideas in the same form as they were fed back to IDRC during these two presentations. The overheads used for the feedback presentation are included in Annex V.

A. “Hands on” Grant-Making is Best

What Does This Mean? In the interviews, many IDRC staff spoke passionately about how the “hands on” approach to grant-making was what they love about working at IDRC. For many, it is what defines IDRC or, as some said, it is “*who IDRC is,*” “*it’s our signature.*” This view was echoed in the survey where there was strong agreement among the majority of staff that “working closely with grantees in project development” is very important for IDRC’s effectiveness and ability to achieve its mission (See Annex VI, Table of Strategic Objectives).

People talked about “hands on” in many ways. We heard that “hands on” means being a partner and not just a funder. It means working closely with recipients, engaging in the ideas, and “*going the extra mile*,” especially in the project development stage. It means that developing, teaching, and empowering recipients requires getting out to the field, working side by side with grant recipients, and understanding the context and conditions in which they are working. It means providing technical and methodological input into the design of research projects.

“Hands on” also means being responsive to the needs of developing countries and the people who live there. It involves listening and learning. As many said, “*We learn as much as we teach*.” It means being driven by the needs and interests of the regions. As another staff member said, “ ‘*hands on’ means that we are working on the agenda of the regions, not on Ottawa’s agenda*.” This is an aspect of IDRC about which the majority of staff feel passion and pride. As one staff member said, “*I didn’t believe a place like this really existed—but it does. IDRC is truly apolitical. It is not self-interested, but really responsive . . . there’s not another place like it in the world*.” “Hands on” also means that relationships are key, especially the Program Officers’ relationships with the regions and the grant recipients. If you think about whose hands are being envisioned in this mental model, it is clearly the Program Officer’s hands.

Why It Works. This is probably the most tenacious mental model in IDRC’s culture and there are many positive consequences deriving from this belief in the excellence of “hands on” grant-making. It embodies the IDRC understanding of how learning, change, and empowerment happen. These things happen by working *together* in a context of mutual respect and mutual obligation. It embodies the goal of building capacity in the regions and the belief that, if you do this right, you not only help in the short term, but you leave in place the ability to address future problems. It embodies the goal of support for high quality and relevant research and the belief that a “hands on” approach in project development enhances research quality. And, “hands on” gives IDRC its niche. It is what sets IDRC apart from other grant-making organizations. Finally, there is a way that the focus on “hands on” is an antidote to arrogance. It means a premium is put on listening and learning in order to let the developing countries drive the agenda.

Unintended Consequences for Effectiveness. It is clear that this mental model has many positive and intended consequences for IDRC’s work. However, in practice, there are also some unintended consequences. While less visible, these are creating tensions and may not be serving IDRC as well in today’s environment.

In an environment of decreased funding, it is important to be strategic and set priorities. But, it is difficult to be both strategic *and* responsive. Consequently, efforts to be strategic and bring sharper focus to IDRC's program get challenged and eroded by this very deeply held assumption that "hands on" grant-making is best. This tension and its implications for limiting the scope of IDRC's work was cited frequently in the interviews.

The unequivocal, or hegemonic, nature of the mental model also limits the ability of staff to think creatively about alternative forms of grant-making. It is hard for staff to consider what "hands on" might mean in a changing environment or think about how Program Officers can be "hands on" new ways. Indeed, it seems that if a staff member suggests a change that appears to violate traditional principles of "hands on" grant-making, they run the risk of being seen as disloyal to the mission. This silences the ability of staff to talk about or experiment with other kinds of grant-making. Indeed, those who are doing grant-making in different ways often feel uncomfortable talking about it openly, concerned that their efforts will be construed as "second-class" grant-making.

This mental model leads to another, more subtle effect of undervaluing of skills and tasks that are not directly related to "hands on" grant-making. Since working closely with grantees in project development is what is seen as valued and rewarded at IDRC, it is difficult to motivate Program Officers to take on other types of tasks even when these are acknowledged as contributing to IDRC's mission. As one person said, "*the research is the vehicle—outcomes are interesting, but not the point, really . . . they are secondary*." Another commented, "*The most 'hands on' is the project development phase, which is also the most fun and the phase that gets the most recognition. Once the idea is there, it is no longer such a big deal or so much fun*." Consequently, getting people excited about and committed to doing other kinds of activities, even activities that are critically important, like mobilizing funds or assessing impact, is difficult at IDRC. This was evident in the survey responses as well. Synthesizing results of projects and assessing impact were the two strategic objectives where there was the largest gap between its perceived importance for the mission and the extent to which respondents thought it was being realized. Mobilizing external funds and networking with donors were also ranked as the strategic objectives of least importance to IDRC's mission (Annex VI, Table of Strategic Objectives). The "hands on" mental model makes it difficult for staff to give priority to these tasks despite the organization's commitment to them.

In implicitly valuing specific tasks over others, this mental model also limits the ability to capture some of the potential synergies of the new Program Initiative (PI) team structure. Conceptually staff and managers alike feel that it would be beneficial to have more division of labor according to skill areas on the teams. Yet, many individuals also perceive that it could be professionally costly for them to reduce project development activities in order to do other types of work in a PI team. It will be very difficult to implement a more efficient division of labor until the relative valuing of these different tasks underpinned by this mental model is addressed.

Another consequence of this mental model is that it reifies travel. Viewing the world through this mental model, or "pane of glass," means that travel out to work with grantees or scout out talent is *always* seen as "good." As one person commented, "*Travel is a badge of honor here*." Another noted, "*When new projects are over valued, you end up traveling more to try and get*

things going." This makes it hard to think critically about the norms of travel or to assess what types of travel are necessary rather than simply desirable. It makes it difficult to strategize—or even talk about—how to address the impact of travel on the quality of work, e.g., how it affects the ability of others in the office to do their work, or how it affects the flow and timing of work.

Implications for Workload and Work/Personal Life Integration. The "hands on" mental model has significant implications for workload. First, the ambiguities created by this mental model about what kinds of grant-making are valued and what skills and tasks are rewarded at IDRC create dilemmas, stress, and added work for staff, particularly for those in the Programs and Partnership Branch. Some of those who are deeply committed to "hands on" grant-making resent and experience stress about being asked to take on new tasks, skills, and ways of working that they do not think are essential to effective grant-making. On the other hand, other staff who are taking on these new tasks or experimenting with less "hands on" modes of grant-making do not feel that their work is being fully appreciated or recognized. The uncertainty and ambiguity about the value and priority of these additional tasks or alternative forms of grant-making, thus, aggravates experienced workload as staff try to "do it all." As one Program Officer said, "*The workload issue comes down to spending so much time on project development that the Program Officer has little time for the other dimensions of the job. . . . The culture undervalues other parts of the job. There is an imbalance within the set of activities*." In a more subtle way, this ambiguity also aggravates experienced workload because it heightens questions and anxieties about career development opportunities and even job security at IDRC.

The "hands on" mental model creates potent norms about being ever responsive and flexible in attending to the needs and requests of grant recipients. Requests are unpredictable and the norm of responsiveness leads to another norm of "never say no." Moreover, "hands on" means that even the smallest grants are customized, creating more work for staff in both the Programs and Partnership Branch as well as the Resources Branch. These norms of unbounded flexibility, responsiveness, "never say no," and customization aggravate experienced workload. Moreover, the strength of this mental model means that the impact of these norms on staff and their family and personal lives are difficult to discuss. Many staff feel that surfacing these issues and making them explicit may be interpreted as a lack of commitment to the ideals of "hands on"—or good—grant-making.

Travel, which is intrinsic to the "hands on" mental model, clearly puts stress on staff's personal life but this, too, is difficult to discuss. Such a high value is placed on travel—and it is so often seen as a privilege of the job—that the ability to talk about its negative consequences on work and personal life integration is silenced. In fact, there is a sense that because Program Officers are warned about travel demands when they take the job, this means that they cannot talk about it as a problem or try to brainstorm ways of working around its negative impact on personal life. Instead, we heard people talk about how they needed to "placate" or persuade their family to tolerate the travel, as if all the negative effects were on their family members and not on IDRC employees as well. Yet, the survey showed travel is strongly correlated with experienced workload and the majority of spouses/partners perceive that travel interferes with their partner's ability to integrate his or her work and personal life in a satisfactory way (see Section VI). This has significant implications for IDRC ability to attract and keep staff who have children or other family responsibilities, such as eldercare.

Finally, while the mental model of "hands on" is most pervasive in the Programs and Partnership Branch, the extension of "hands on" norm to other types of work and functions creates many of the problems in the operational and information systems that staff perceive to aggravate workload. For example, decision-making is done in a "hands on" way, leading to extensive consultations. Management of financial systems is done in a "hands on" way, leading to what some consider to be excessive controls and "re-dos." Or, the design of information systems is done in a "hands on" way, leading to excessive customization with its consequences for system implementation and maintenance.

Implications for Gender Equity. The "hands on" mental model has direct implications for gender equity. It underpins a highly responsive mode of work in the Programs and Partnerships Branch that depends on both extensive travel and being always available and flexible in use of time. This set of work practices poses distinct challenges for staff, particularly Program Officers, who have responsibilities in their personal lives, such as children or eldercare. While this can affect both men and women, it has a stronger impact on women who still shoulder a larger share of the responsibilities for care for dependents in most domestic units around the world.[33]

These patterns reflect observations made in the interviews that travel and workload demands make it difficult to recruit and retain women (and men) who are interested in having an active parenting role in their lives. We heard from both male and female Program Officers that it is very difficult to integrate work and personal life responsibilities satisfactorily when one has children at home. Some, and particularly women, felt that their standing (and perceived commitment) at IDRC was jeopardized when they structured their travel, office time, and work plans to accommodate family responsibilities.

Potential Areas for Dual Agenda Change. In thinking about this mental model, we were left with several critical questions: What *is* the "hands on" niche for IDRC? Does it still have the same meaning in a changing world where there is more institutional capacity among grant recipients now than in the past? What is essential about this model and what is not? Is there a way to hold it up to scrutiny without fear of losing it altogether? We encourage IDRC to pursue these conversations as it develops its approaches for reducing workload.

Drawing on insights from the interviews, time journaling, and survey analysis, we identified five potential areas for change that we believe could reduce the negative consequences of this mental model on organizational effectiveness, workload, and gender equity.

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[33] This pattern was evident among respondents in the IDRC survey. Of the employees who have children, 66% of the women compared to 48% of the men reported having primary childcare responsibilities. Moreover, the women reported having less partner support for child care; 82% of the women with children had spouses who worked full time compared to 44% of the men. From another perspective, these work practices are likely to cause different patterns of self-selection among men and women interested in working for IDRC. Among the survey respondents, women employees are less likely to be married or partnered (65% vs. 87%), and are less likely to have children (57% vs. 85%). These differences persist when one looks only at staff in levels 6 and above.

- Develop the means for staff and managers to explore alternative images of "hands on" grant-making or alternatives to "hands on" grant-making. Is there a continuum of "hands on" grant-making that varies with the nature of the grant and the grant recipient? For example, IDRC could monitor and assess some of the current experiments with using intermediary partners to do more of the "hands on" work with grant recipients. Or, take stock of whether the high level of upfront investment in projects continues to be essential for ensuring research quality.
- Focus on ways to help people be more critical in applying the norm of responsiveness. Is there a way to move to a model of "tempered responsiveness"?
- Seek ways to reduce the impact of "hands on" norms on defining excellence in other functions and non-grant-making types of work.
- Organize forums within work groups or at the organizational level for staff to talk and strategize about ways of reducing the negative consequences of travel on work as well as on the family and personal life. For example, monitor and examine the impact on work and work/personal life integration of different models of traveling among Program Officers. What can be learned from Program Officers who have reduced their travel?
- Develop ways to strengthen recognition and rewards for the skills and tasks that implicitly get undervalued due to the tenacity and strength of the "hands on" mental model. Build this recognition into both formal and informal reward systems.

B. Competence Equals New Ideas

What Does This Mean? Competence at IDRC, particularly in the Programs and Partnership Branch, is closely linked to intellectual acumen. New ideas are the "currency" at IDRC and being "cutting edge" means having the *next* new idea. As one person observed, "*There is a constant push to be more ambitious at the program level. . . . To remain ahead of the pack, you have to imbibe the latest and the best."* Another person observed, "*What gives you visibility is being associated with the hot new idea . . . the flavor of the day*." And another commented, "*What's important here is your ideas, not your position*." This mental model embodies IDRC's strong value on being innovative, providing cutting-edge ideas to the field of international development, supporting innovative research and knowledge generation, and leading with good ideas. Several people commented that IDRC is *"smart money."* New ideas are not only more important than other contributions, such as project implementation or monitoring or assessing impact, they are also perceived as more fun and rewarding. As one person said, "*What I love at IDRC is the thrashing around of ideas—the intellectual challenge*."

Why It Works. Research is the "core business" of IDRC, and the value of generating new ideas is rooted in the research paradigm. Consequently, this mental model is implicitly valued and rarely questioned because it manifests what research is all about. Moreover, the value placed on innovative ideas embodies IDRC's understanding of how new knowledge can lead to empowerment—the core of IDRC's mission. Most staff see the emphasis on innovative ideas as defining IDRC's particular niche as a donor. The fact that IDRC leads with "smart money" enhances its international reputation and allows it to have much more influence than possible

through its grant resources alone. Also, and very importantly, this norm makes IDRC an attractive and prestigious place to work. It helps IDRC attract top quality people. There is a strong alignment between individuals' desire to contribute to innovative thinking and earn professional recognition in their field and IDRC's organizational goals of continually advancing knowledge for development. Finally, this mental model underpins an appreciated norm of continuous improvement and refinement; there is always a way to make things better.

Unintended Consequences for Effectiveness. This mental model works in concert with the mental model of "hands on grant-making is best" to reduce the perceived value of tasks based on reflection and synthesis. New ideas are implicitly valued over synthesis of knowledge and "closing the loop." This means that it is difficult to structure in and protect time to reflect and learn or to synthesize and apply the knowledge generated through the research that IDRC has funded. As one Program Officer observed, "*I have to spend so much time on project development that I cannot do the other dimensions of my job. Synthesis and dissemination work get very little recognition. . . . This is seen as taking time away from grant-making*."

This norm also underpins the value that generating projects is what is prized. As one person observed, "*Once ideas are not new anymore, people lose interest in them . . . getting money out the door and monitoring projects are not as exciting*." Project design is seen as the cauldron for developing new ideas and approaches. Consequently, considerable attention is given to the upfront work of research design, and other aspects of grant-making, such as project implementation and monitoring, are often assumed to take care of themselves. As one person said, "*If you do the upfront work right, you don't have to worry about the rest*."

The emphasis on new ideas also means that there is constant pressure to take on new initiatives and expand the agenda. With this mental model in place, it is very hard for program staff and managers to focus and say "no" to new things. In fact, there is little sense that saying "no" might sometimes be a *good* thing, that it might actually enhance the quality of the work and be good for IDRC as a whole. And of course, on the flip side, there is little sense of the potential costs of always saying "yes." This helps us to understand why people feel that it has been so difficult to bring the scope of IDRC's program in line with its reduced resources.

Again, like the "hands on" mental model, this norm tends to extend itself and goes beyond its original intent. With new ideas and new ways of doing things so highly prized, change is constant at IDRC. As one person noted, "*We do things because we have the new technology to do it, not because we need it*." Moreover, with the enthusiasm to implement new systems, planning is often short changed. It is often assumed that the up front idea is the most important and that the particulars of implementing change will take care of themselves. People talked in the interviews of experiencing IDRC as always in flux. This affects operational systems as well as program work and means that staff feel that nothing can be taken for granted. Staff perceive that priorities, ideas, and work systems are always vulnerable to replacement by something new, better, and more interesting. This results in sense of frequent and on-going rehashing of ideas, revisiting of priorities, and revising or replacement of procedures, systems, and formats. As we saw in Section VI, frequent and persistent change has negative consequences for organizational performance.

Implications for Workload and Work/Personal Life Integration. This mental model aggravates workload in three primary ways. First, with the attraction to new ideas, there is a drive to continuously add on new projects, activities, or initiatives as "old ideas" lose their currency. As one person said, "*Good work disappears overnight*." Another observed, " *IDRC needs to be more disciplined about putting forward new agendas without taking away or nurturing old agendas. When new agendas come on, old ones die a slow death.*" This has significant consequences for workload. Not only is there continual pressure to always be moving onto something new, but, interestingly, hardly anyone spoke of the importance of taking something away when new activities were added. Hence, work expands, tasks and responsibilities seem to accumulate, and experienced workload heightens.

Second, with the implicit devaluing of synthesis and reflection within the organizational system, these tasks tend to be done during staff members' "personal" time. Most staff commented that they had very limited time during the workday for reading, reflection, synthesis, or writing (see Section VI). As a consequence, these activities are done at home in the evening and weekends, eroding time that staff have for personal life responsibilities and interests. In addition, the tension created by the dichotomy between the assumption that competence is defined by generating new ideas and the pressures that crowd out time for reflection and synthesis as a means to generate new ideas, heightens frustration and exacerbates the negative experiences of workload.

And third, the frequency and complexity of changes in work priorities and systems accentuated by this mental model aggravates experienced workload. This was clear from both the survey and interviews. Many staff feel that they are continually investing precious time in having to learn and relearn as new and "better" systems and procedures are introduced and then refined. As one staff member noted*, "Procedures are constantly changing, maybe for the better, but changing nonetheless."*

Implications for Gender Equity. We believe that this mental model has implications for gender equity in two ways that are both related to the differential valuing of skills and tasks at IDRC. First, with time for synthesis, reflection, and writing relegated to the domain of "personal time," staff who have more responsibilities in their personal lives face more constraints to investing the time required to keep on the "cutting edge" and be prominent in their fields. Secondly, the tasks of synthesis of knowledge, reporting on project results, and impact assessment tend to be allocated more frequently to Research Officers (and the Evaluation Unit). Since these skills and tasks are essential, but less valued within the organization, this colors perceptions of the relative importance and contribution of the Research Officer position. Our inquiry revealed that of all positional groupings, Research Officers appear to be the most frustrated in their positions. This has implications for gender equity since considerably more women than men fill these positions.

Potential Areas for Dual Agenda Change. The questions this mental model raises for us are: How do you get the right mix of generating new ideas and maintaining existing ones? How do you balance generating new ideas with other competencies such as synthesizing knowledge and learning? And, how do you get the right mix of change and stability?

Drawing on insights from the interviews, time journaling, and survey analysis, we identified four potential areas for change that we believe could reduce the negative consequences of this mental model on organizational effectiveness, workload, and gender equity.

- Develop the means to protect time for reflection, learning, synthesis and incubation of new ideas. For example, short internal sabbaticals, reading weeks, or learning groups.
- Explore ways to value other competencies so generating new ideas is not the only way to demonstrate competence at IDRC. For example, give awards or special recognition to staff who publish papers or monographs that synthesize learning from IDRC sponsored research. Or, encourage the practice of awarding grants to individuals for synthesis activities. Or, ensure that learning and synthesis of knowledge are formally included in performance assessment.
- Introduce practices that encourage staff and managers to consider systematically the costs and implications of any planned change in terms of its impact on both work and on experienced workload and personal life. For example, what are the costs have having a three year time frame for PIs when research generally takes much longer to generate meaningful results?
- Build norms and practices into formal and informal planning processes that encourage staff and managers to reflect upon the costs of adding something new without taking anything away. For example, establish a norm in work groups where people could ask each other, "So, what are you going to give up in order to do this?"

C. Program Officers are the Heart of IDRC

What Does This Mean? People talked about this mental model in several different ways. They used terms such as Program Officers are the "*heart*" of IDRC, the "*soul*" of IDRC, the "*meat*," the "*core*," the "*central agency*" of IDRC. But, whatever language was used, it was clear that work of Program Officers embodies the values and mission of IDRC. Program Officers live this out in their focus on grant recipients, their responsiveness and willingness to "*go the extra mile*," to never say "no," and to do whatever it takes to advance the mission of IDRC. They live it out in their understanding and empathy for conditions and context in regions and in the "purity" of their motives—they have grant recipients' best interest at heart.

Program Officers are the conduit for the work of countless others at IDRC. It is as if the Program Officer is the external interface with the regions. All the work of the hundreds of people at IDRC is collapsed and concentrated into a little spark that is then transmitted to the regions through the Program Officer. It is almost as though all the goodness that is IDRC is transmitted through this spark, as in the Michelangelo painting in the Sistene Chapel, to the regions. The skills and competence it takes to be that conduit, to transmit that spark, are the most highly valued and respected at IDRC and are the most important in ensuring that IDRC accomplish its unique mission.

Why it Works. This mental model establishes a unifying mission for IDRC and keeps everyone clearly focused on what is really important—grant recipients and the regions. It helps ensure that

everyone is working together for a common goal and it operates as a system of checks and balances to keep resources in line with the mission. The Program Officer may be the "top gun" out there and the visible hero, but there is an awareness that there are many "invisible" heroes as well and that without them, the Program Officers would not be able to fly.

Unintended Consequences for Effectiveness. Even though this mental model helps at one level to create a unifying mission, at a more subtle level it sets up a divide between the Program and Partnership Branch and other units—the Resources Branch and the President's Office, and between Program Officers and everyone else. Program Officers are seen as the elite and others as less. It is hard to have a team or partnership approach in this environment of differential status.

This sets up several key disconnects between the Branches with harsh judgments on both sides. Finance and administration see themselves as the "stewards" of the resources, but those in the Programs and Partnerships Branch see them as "cops" who overly control and do not trust people in the regions. As one program staff commented "*What does it matter if some little researcher gets $500 extra*?" The needs of people on each side of the divide are not seen as legitimate by the other. Both sides of the divide feel undervalued, not appreciated, and experience a loss of respect for what they do. The consequence is that people on both sides do not invest time and energy in understanding the needs of the other. This leads to a norm of "work arounds" where staff on each side try to side step requirements and expectations of staff on the other side of the divide in order to get their own work done as quickly as possible. This contributes to break downs in systems, the need to frequently redo work, continuous "follow ups" to make sure things get done, over reporting, and aggravations on both sides.

Secondly, the skills and abilities it takes to do the Program Officer's job end up informally defining competence at IDRC. This leads to overvaluing the individual Program Officer, as if he or she alone is responsible for the spark, and undervaluing of the contributions of other staff. It is one thing to be an "invisible" hero, but if that contribution is not outwardly acknowledged, or if you feel like you are somehow less than others or even a "necessary evil," it is hard to be responsive to the needs of the "visible" hero. This can lead to disappointments on both sides, making Program Officers feel that they are not adequately supported and staff in the other branches feeling as if their roles and contributions to IDRC are not appreciated or understood. As a result, collaboration wanes and people stop working together effectively to contribute to the spark.

And, finally, being a conduit can begin to feel burdensome as Program Officers sense that they have sole responsibility for connecting with grant recipients and advancing the mission. We heard Program Officers say things like, "*If I don't do it no one will*"; "*I am the only one with all the information so I am the only one who can do it*"; and "*I am the only one who really knows the impact this is going to have on the regions, so I am the only one who cares*." This means there is no redundancy, no coverage, and no relief from the sense of responsibility.

Implications for Workload and Work/Personal Life Integration. The work practice of open-ended responsiveness has a significant impact on workload. This mode of working is time intensive for Program Officers, and this trickles down to other staff. It affects everyone with a

sense of unpredictability. Many staff feel that they are always "on call." And, as we saw from the survey, the factors of interruptions and being crisis driven, which derive from the norm of responsiveness, were strongly correlated with workload. The norm of "never say no" is also extended throughout the organization and the result is that many people are feeling over committed. Many staff talk of experiencing guilt when trying to limit or put a boundary around their time or the scope of their job. As one program staff commented, "*I feel like I spend more time responding to other people's priorities rather than to my own*."

The divides among staff in different branches created by this mental model also aggravate workload and increase frustration with work. In the interviews, people spoke about the time they spent trying to correct misunderstandings, redoing work because of poor communications, or, more generally, simply coping with the fallout from the mistrust across the Branches. As one person in the Resources Branch said, "*Program Officers are always seeking exceptions, bending the rules, and doing everything as an individual accommodation in order to be responsive. This causes a lot more work on our side."* On the other side of the divide, Program Officers commented on how their workload gets increased because they are constantly being asked to justify their decisions and provide back up information.

This mental model also has an impact on staff's ability to integrate their work and personal lives satisfactorily. The "*badge of courage*" that symbolizes Program Officers commitment to the ideals of IDRC silences discussion of the impact of norms of responsiveness and "never say no" on personal life and family. Because these issues are silenced, there is no forum to brainstorm or problem solve or even to find support and a place to share coping strategies.

Implications for Gender Equity. The impact of this mental model on gender equity in IDRC is subtle. Because, historically, and even today, the majority of Program Officers have been white, Western men,[34] the norms and expectations for the "ideal worker" in this position have been based on the life situations and work norms and expectations of this social identity group. This can make it more difficult for people of different identity groups to be seen as "fitting" the implicit norms of the ideal Program Officer. It also implicitly defines competence as being able to be ever responsive, available, and flexible in the allocation of time to work. Again, this norm leads to a subtle questioning of commitment and competence of those staff, who, because of their personal life responsibilities, have to leave work at the end of the official workday to pick up their children, or cannot come in for early morning meetings, or may not be able to drop everything and make an unscheduled trip to the regions.

Moreover, the conflation of masculine attributes with the Program Officer position helps to reinforce the privileged status of this position within the organization. Several people even used

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[34] In 1999, IDRC data showed that women made up only 20% of the staff at the Program Officer and Team Leader levels (26% at Headquarters and 18% in the regions). Of the 56 workload survey respondents at level 6 and above in the Programs and Partnership Branch, only 30% were female. This low level of representation raises concerns from both a gender equity and effectiveness perspective since the program area represents the "core business" area of IDRC. It is precisely in the core work of an organization that it is important to ensure a diversity of staff if the organization is going to reap the benefits of that diversity in terms of enhanced creativity, innovation, and problem-solving. Similarly, in the IDRC workload survey, 78% of the respondents in levels 6 and above in the Programs and Partnership Branch reported being of European descent and 76% reported their nationality as either European or North American.

gendered language to describe the asymmetrical relationship between the Branches, referring to the Resources Branch as the "*handmaiden*" or "*wife*" of the Programs and Partnership Branch. Since the Program Officer is the "heart" of IDRC, the norms associated with this position essentially define the "ideal worker" at IDRC. Consequently, there is an implicit privileging of white, western, masculinity throughout the organization. Given the explicit values of egalitarianism and non-discrimination at IDRC, this is a very subtle process of conferring advantages on some because of their social identity and disadvantages on others. However, it is a process that numerous staff who are among the "other" experience in the "every day" practices of working at IDRC.

Potential Areas for Dual Agenda Change. The key questions this mental model raises for us are: How can the joy and the collective ownership of the spark be shared so everyone will want to make it easier to deliver? What would it take for Programming, rather than Program Officers, to be the heart of IDRC?

Drawing on insights from the interviews, time journaling, and survey analysis, we see two primary areas for change that we believe could reduce the negative consequences of this mental model on organizational effectiveness, workload, and gender equity.

- Rethink and expand the notion of team. Who is on the team? Should it be only staff from the Programs and Partnership Branch? Can Grant Administrators be dedicated to specific PI teams? Is there a way of transmitting the sense of context and empathy for recipients to those who cannot travel to the regions?
- Rethink and expand the notion of partnership between the Branches. How can IDRC begin to talk about and recognize the valuable work carried out in units other than the Programs and Partnership Branch? Is there a way to make reports and reporting mechanisms useful to all parties involved? Is there a way to reallocate tasks so that some of the things Programs Officers feel they need to do can be handled by others? For example, we heard from some administrative staff and Research Officers that they see some things they could do to lessen the workload of Program Officers, but they do not feel trusted to do them and are not sure how they could earn that trust.
- Rethink the allocation of tasks within teams.

D. "First Among Equals"

What Does This Mean? The phrase "first among equals" surfaced initially in the context of discussions about PI team leadership at IDRC, but we believe it underpins concepts of leadership at IDRC more generally. The phrase captures an interesting paradox. The word "equals" captures what we came to think of as a real Canadian value of egalitarianism—a belief that everyone has an important voice and perspective and that everyone has a right to contribute. But there is another aspect to it as well, because while egalitarianism is valued, it is also true that some voices are more important, or privileged, than others. This seemed to extend itself through all levels at IDRC such that IDRC is first among donors, Ottawa is first among regions, the

Programs and Partnership Branch is first among Branches, and the Program Officer is first among staff and, perhaps, even among partners.

The interviews revealed an interesting definition of what it means to be first. Being first is not bestowed or granted at IDRC, it is earned. It comes from being respected and displaying many of the characteristics and behaviors we have talked about under the other mental models. These include generating new ideas, staying "cutting edge," being responsive to the regions, and "never saying no." It does not come from having positional leadership. In fact, there is a real ambivalence about positional leadership and authority at IDRC. On the one hand, there were expectations of positional leaders. We heard a lot about "IDRC should do this" or the "Senior Management Committee should do that." But on the other hand, the strong norms of individual autonomy and egalitarianism led to a real questioning of any authority and a tendency to consistently question, resist, "work around," or even undo decisions that are taken by those in leadership.

Finally, this mental model of "first among equals" leads to a strong norm of everyone having a say. Several people described IDRC as " *an advisory culture*" or a "*culture of consultation*." There is an expectation that leaders will consult widely on any decision. And, it seems that everyone feels they have a right—even an obligation—to give input. We even heard of an instance where a proposal was sent out to the wrong e-mail list and many people still responded with their ideas!

Why It Works. This mental model embodies the values of participation, empowerment, and learning which infuse IDRC's grant-making as well as its internal culture. It reflects the belief that participation and "giving voice" enhance innovation and effectiveness. It creates an environment of collegiality both externally with recipients and internally with others at IDRC.

The "first among equals" mental model also protects staff's autonomy at IDRC and their right to pursue their ideas. It underpins the belief that people, at least some people, have the right to choose what they do, how they will contribute, and how they will make a difference. This autonomy gives a lot of power to individual staff members. One person commented, "*There's too much to do. I don't work for the money, so I do what I love and give up the other stuff.*" (It sounded to us like the hands down winner for what people give up are Project Completion Reports!). The autonomy is highly prized, and it helps IDRC to attract "the best and the brightest" even if it cannot pay the top salaries.

Unintended Consequences for Effectiveness. While this mental model clearly has benefits within IDRC, it also has some unintended and, perhaps, unrecognized consequences for IDRC's effectiveness. First, it creates ambiguity, or a lack of clarity, in roles, responsibilities, and authority within IDRC. It makes it very challenging to be in a position of authority and creates real dilemmas about the extent to which authority can be taken up and enacted. It creates resistance to positional power and this, in turn, leads to a real reluctance among those with positional power to tell anyone what to do. Leaders are expected to "*ask*" and "*persuade*," but they are not expected to "*instruct*." As one person in leadership said "*I would never tell anyone what to give up. I just delegate and let them decide*." This means that decisions often devolve to the individual and this can create problems for effectiveness at IDRC. It also means, for

example, that it is easier to get people to add things than to drop them, leading to the sense that the scope of IDRC's program always exceeds its resources. To get people to drop activities they care about would take real authority, and it is not clear who has that authority. This ambiguity about authority is most pronounced for the PI Team Leaders and Regional Directors, but it extends to other leadership positions as well.

This mental model also leads to a strong norm of unbounded consultation. Again, there is real ambiguity and ambivalence about this norm. On the one hand, people want to have their say. On the other hand, they resent the seemingly endless consultation and the time it takes to get decisions made. People talked about this norm and its consequences as "*peer review gone crazy*"; "*Sometimes we share our views to the point where we get paralyzed*"; or "*We have become so democratic that it is hard to get anything done*." This mental model also means that decisions are rarely closed. With the consultative mode, it is not always clear when decisions have been made. And, even when it is clear, this mental model contributes to a practice noted by staff of "*picking away at consensus*."

This mental model also shapes the pathways people use to get information and get things done. Without clarity about roles, responsibilities, and authority, people tend to use relationships and "off line" influencing. Some people described IDRC as a "small town" where everything depends on who you know and the extent of your network of relationships. This leads to a lot of uncertainty about who is influencing decisions and how and where this happens.

Implications for Workload and Work/Personal Life Integration. These artifacts of the "first among equals" mental model also have implications and unintended consequences for workload and work/personal life integration. Influencing off line, unbounded consolation and open-ended decisions are all clear time sinks. As we saw from the survey, lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations was strongly correlated with workload (see Section VI).

It also makes it difficult to limit the scope of one's activities and still earn the label of "first among equals." This makes it doubly hard to say "no" and even contributes to what some call a subtle culture of coercion. Leaders do not feel that they can force people to do things, but they can persuade and then rely on the norm of "never say no" to take over. This means that priorities are often not explicitly negotiated and individual staff members must find the way to try to "do it all."

The conflicting demands of what it takes to be first internally versus externally also create stress and favors certain types of work over others. The need to publish for external recognition, for example, can be seen as self-interested. As a consequence, staff tend to do it on their own time, so that it does not "take away" from their other work which is important for establishing them as a "first among equals" at IDRC.

Finally, this mental model sets up a norm of mutual obligation and egalitarianism that, while beneficial in some aspects, clearly adds to workload pressure. People know that if they say no to a request, someone else will have to take it up and this will add to their workload. So there is

again, subtle pressure to say "yes," to "shoulder one's responsibilities," and, hence, to over commit. As one person noted, "*IDRC drives you to the wall, but in a nice way*."

Implications for Gender Equity. We see two implications of this mental model for gender equity. The first lies in the lack of clarity about leadership roles, responsibilities, and authority. Experience and research have shown that in situations where expectations are unclear, people who have been historical minorities in an organization face greater challenges in taking up their responsibilities and authority and being accepted as leaders. This may be one of the reasons why few women have been selected as PI Team Leaders. The second implication is more subtle and relates to the norms and values that shape how "first" is defined and how some voices are more privileged than others, despite the value of egalitarianism. The norm of egalitarianism can give many people voice, but in the cacophony of voices, it can also occlude more subtle processes enabling certain voices to be consistently heard above the din.

The norm of unbounded consultation and "picking away at consensus" also has a gender dimension. When decisions are constantly being reopened and influenced informally by discussions in the corridors, those who are not present, e.g., those who have left work to pick up children or are on maternity leave, fear that decisions will be made—or remade—without their input. As one woman noted, "*There never seems to be a right time to think about having a baby because with things always changing I worry that my area will be cut while I am out on maternity leave!*"

Potential Areas for Dual Agenda Change. In thinking about this mental model, we had two questions. First, how can IDRC engage in effective, efficient, *and* egalitarian decision-making? And, second, what is positional leadership at IDRC? Is there a way to reduce the ambivalence people feel so leaders can be effective and better help the process?

Drawing on insights from the interviews, time journaling, and survey analysis, we see four primary areas for change that we believe could reduce the negative consequences of this mental model on organizational effectiveness, workload, and gender equity.

- Develop ways to clarify and get agreement on leadership roles and responsibilities. What would leadership have to do to make a decision and have it accepted?
- Develop and agree on some norms and guidelines for consultation and decision making. Explore questions such as: When is "buy in" and participation critical and when is it not? Who needs to be consulted on what types of decisions? How can we confirm when decisions have been taken and how can we communicate these effectively? How can we reduce the tendency to reopen decisions or "pick away" at consensus?
- Develop practices to give each other help in priority setting both at the work group and individual levels. Managers need to commit to always discussing what is going to be given up when something new is taken on.
- Focus on broadening the norms that shape what it means to be first at IDRC so that these are not implicitly associated with specific roles, behaviors, or types of people.

VIII. Leverage Points for Dual Agenda Change

A. Process for Generating Proposals for Change

We used a collaborative interactive process to develop ideas for potential leverage points of dual agenda change aimed at reducing the negative impacts of workload and enhancing organizational effectiveness. The three-day process included five stages.

- The action research team developed ideas for potential leverage points for change and presented them during the feedback of our analysis to IDRC in Ottawa in September 2000 (see Chapter VI).
- After the feedback presentation, approximately 150 IDRC staff gathered into working groups organized according to each of the mental models presented in the analysis. In each group, staff discussed the action research team's analysis and its implications for workload and effectiveness. They then generated ideas for changes that could be introduced to address the unintended consequences of the mental model. The group selected two key focal points for further discussion and elaboration.
- The action research team consolidated these proposals and presented them back to staff the following day. Working groups were organized for each potential change area and staff selected the groups in which they had the most interest. In the end, not all the potential change areas were addressed.
- The working groups developed concrete proposals for specific changes or experiments that could be carried out at the individual level and at the working group or organizational level.
- These proposals were presented back to the IDRC staff in a large meeting. Each group prepared a poster summarizing the key aspects of its proposal. Staff has a chance to read the posters and discuss the ideas with representatives from the working groups. Each staff member attending the meeting then had the opportunity to indicate the proposals that they thought should receive priority attention. Staff were asked to use three criteria in setting their priorities: feasibility, potential impact, and level of energy they had to work on the change.

Table 5 on the following page summarizes the evolution of the ideas for change proposals over the course of the process.

A new staff group was formed after the feedback session to develop recommendations for how IDRC should undertake the proposed changes.

Table 5. Evolution of ideas for potential areas for dual agenda change

MENTAL MODEL	PROPOSALS FROM ART ANALYSIS	PRIORITY FOCAL AREAS FROM IDRC ANALYSIS	PROPOSA EXP
“Hands On” Grant-Making is Best			
	• Alternative images of grant-making # • Develop norm of tempered responsiveness # • Reassess norms for travel • Develop means to recognize and reward skills and tasks that are not “hands on”#	• Ensure IDRC support for work/personal and family life integration	• Recognize direc travel (31) • Work less-produ visible & provic to support work (50)
Competence = New Ideas			
	• Build in time for reflection, synthesis, and incubation of ideas • Value other forms of competence • Address implications of implementing change # • Question practice of adding without taking way #	• Reward & value reflection and synthesis • Reward & value “closing the loop”	• Create structure intensive activit • PA/GA/RO/PO • Allow uninterru for all groups of

= Theme not prioritized by working group for further development of change proposals; * = Working Groups not convened due to insufficient number of participants; (#) = Number of “votes” experiment received during poster session - indicates level of staff energy and commitment in pursuing change

MENTAL MODEL	PROPOSALS FROM ART ANALYSIS	PRIORITY FOCAL AREAS FROM IDRC ANALYSIS	PROPOSA EXP
Program Officers are the Heart of IDRC			
	• Rethink notion of team • Rethink and expand notion partnership b/t PPB and RB • Rethink allocation of tasks within teams	• Rethink teams: allocation of tasks, clarification of roles & responsibilities • Strengthen partnership between PPB and RB	• Clarify and coor responsibilities • Program Suppo tualization of C • Better integrate the program cyc • Review project (33) • More efficient c administered ac
First Among Equals			
	• Clarify leadership expectations, roles, and responsibilities • Develop norms and guidelines for consultation • Use explicit processes for priority-setting • Reexamine norms of what it means to be first at IDRC	• Clarify roles and expectations of leaders* • Develop norms & guide-lines for consultation* • Set clear priorities and stick to them	• Match programn • Strengthen worl (18) • Teamwork plan (4)
Cross-cutting theme			
		• Reduce job insecurity	• Ensure clarity ir

B. Summary of Proposals for Dual Agenda Change—Organizational and Work Group Levels

A total of 14 proposals were presented for staff discussion and prioritization. These are summarized below. The proposals are organized by mental model.

"Hands On" Grant Making is Best. Only two proposals were developed to address the unintended consequences of this mental model. Both of these were developed for the leverage point of strengthening IDRC support for better work/personal life integration.

- *Work less—produce more (50 dots)*[35]

  This proposal suggests ways to facilitate staff taking leave and working normal hours. It encourages measuring overtime for staff at all levels, ensuring discussions between staff and their managers on leave time and overtime, evaluating managers on their ability to promote balance or work/personal life, and creating a personal life/workload integration "rating."

- *Recognize "cost" of travel (direct/indirect) (31 dots)*

  This proposal would compensate for the cost of travel by providing incidentals for home when staff are traveling ($20/day) and giving compensation for weekend days and holidays that occur while staff are traveling.

The issues of examining the appropriateness of different types of grant-making, finding ways to temper the norm of responsiveness, and developing means to recognize and value skills and tasks that are not "hands on" were not explored during the feedback session. The action research team believes that these are important leverage points for strengthening effectiveness, reducing workload, and enhancing gender equity and that they merit further discussion at IDRC.

Competence Equals New Ideas. Three proposals were developed to help IDRC enhance the value, recognition, and rewards for reflection and synthesis activities. The first two proposals address the need to formally reserve time for reflection and synthesis activities. The third proposal addresses the need to more efficiently allocate staff to PI teams as a means to reduce "collaborative overhead" and free up more time for synthesis and reflection activities. Staff indicated the second highest level of interest for the proposals focused on developing mechanisms to encourage and protect time for reflection and synthesis activities.

- *Creating time for knowledge-intensive activities (67 dots)*

  This proposal would expand formal time for knowledge-intensive work (including reading, reflection, and validating ideas as well as consolidating, synthesizing, and disseminating knowledge). Time would be protected for these activities by setting aside weekly quiet time, giving employees an annual reading week, creating fora to share knowledge-intensive work, and expanding leave options such as sabbaticals and secondments.

- *Allow uninterrupted concentration time (45 dots)*

  This proposal would have work groups agree to a starting and ending time for quiet time, with clear criteria for when interruptions would be allowed. While it would begin just with agreements within small groups, ideally over time, other staff would begin to respect the quiet time boundaries. The "quiet times" would vary so that different staff schedules could be accommodated.

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[35] (x) dots means the number of "votes" the proposal received from staff attending the poster session. Each staff member was given three dots to distribute as they chose to indicate their priorities.

- *Assign Program Assistants, Grants Administrators, Research Officers, and Program Officers to only one Program Initiative team. (54 dots)*

  This proposal suggests a 3-6 month experiment with assigning program staff to only one program initiative. Staff that are close to 100% in one PI would be divested of other responsibilities so their work would be limited to just that PI. The results would be evaluated by a 360-degree feedback process including the employee, team leader, team members, partners and family.

The potential leverage points raised by the action research team of addressing the implications of implementing change and developing norms to routinely questioning the practice of adding without taking away were not discussed during the feedback session.

Program Officers are the Heart of IDRC. In total five proposals were developed to address the unintended consequences of this mental model. Four proposals focused on strengthening the partnership between the Programs and Partnership Branch and the Resources Branch and two proposals focused on clarifying the allocation of tasks and roles and responsibilities on teams. Staff indicated the highest level of interest and urgency for the cluster of proposals focused on strengthening the partnership between the two Branches.

- *Program Support Team: Reconceptualization of Client Services Group (66 dots)*

  This proposal suggests that IDRC should create a task force to examine redeployment of Client Services Group staff by Program Initiative. Other elements include flattening the structure by having a maximum of three levels; re-examining roles and responsibilities of Grants Administrators, Program Assistants, and Administrative Officers; and renaming the Client Services Group to Program Support Team.

  We note that the Vice-President for the Resources Branch announced that the name change had been agreed upon during the closing session of the feedback meeting.

- *Better integrate all parts of the Center into the program cycle (37 dots)*

  In order to make programming more accessible to all groups in the Center, this proposal recommends that IDRC should make a number of changes, including: 1) deploy all staff by Program Initiative, Secretariat or Program Area; 2) hold "marketplaces" and "open houses" to disseminate awareness of programming activities; 3) include staff from Communications, RIMS, etc. in Program Initiative meetings.

- *Review project policies and procedures (33 dots)*

  This proposal recommends that IDRC establish a task force made up of Program Officers, Grants Administrators, and Administrative Officers to coordinate with the Resource Branch's business process review. The Task Force would conduct an analysis of problematic policies and procedures on a sample of projects and develop creative solutions.

- *More efficient delivery of Center-administered activities (29 dots)*

This proposals recommends that IDRC identify activities with the highest transaction costs, like organizing workshops or booking travel for recipients to go to other meetings. The organization should "say no" to these activities or, where possible, devolve them to other institutions.

- *Clarifying and coordinating team roles and responsibilities (44 dots)*

  This proposal encourages IDRC to change the vision of what constitutes a team by identifying core team members as including non-program personnel (e.g., Grants Administrators and Program Assistants). Teams also need to identify new tasks and responsibilities that Research Officers and Program Officers could do and provide training as necessary. The proposal also noted that it is important to provide ongoing orientation and mentoring for new staff.

First Among Equals. IDRC staff developed proposals for only one of the three intervention points proposed by the action research team for addressing the unintended consequences of this mental model. Three proposals were developed for the leverage point of setting clear priorities and sticking to them. While these proposals clearly address the issues of too much change and the extended scope of program activities, the action research team believes that further attention also needs to be given to clarifying roles and expectations of leaders, particularly the Team Leaders of the Program Initiatives, and developing norms and guidelines for consultation.

- *Matching programming to resources (47 dots)*

  This proposal recommends that staff time and resources be concentrated on fewer program activities. To accomplish this, it recommends that Directors of Program Areas initiate two activities: 1) developing a phased plan to limit programming to closely related groups of countries or zones of shared economic/ecological problems; and 2) reassessing the fit of selected priorities with Center programming.

- *Strengthening the use of work planning by workgroups (18 dots)*

  This proposal recommends selecting two to three workgroups to experiment with developing more effective processes for work planning. These work-unit-level work plans would eliminate need for individual work plans. The plans would be based on consultation of all involved including staff from Client Services Group and RIMS. Training or outside expertise might be required to develop effective processes for work group planning.

- *Team work planning and resources (4 dots)*

  This proposal recommended linking work planning with resource allocation by systematizing the cohesion between individual work plans, "extended" Program Initiative work plans, and the Program of Work and Budget. "Extended" Program Initiative work plans refers to the need to include staff from the Client Services Group and other staff in the planning. In addition, team leaders should be more involved in decision-making regarding Center resource allocation. Additionally, Grants Administrators, Program

Assistants, and Administrative Officers should be assigned more systematically based upon the needs of specific Program Initiatives.

Cross Cutting Theme. During the working group discussions, the cross-cutting theme of reducing job insecurity emerged as a potential leverage point. This issue had also surfaced in the survey and interviews as a factor contributing to workload and undermining effectiveness at IDRC. Job insecurity, for example, was cited as a factor driving Program Officers to want to be on more than one Program Initiative. Multiple affiliations reduced the risk of losing one's job if a specific Program Initiative was terminated.

- *Clarity in hiring and firing (34 dots)*

The proposal recommended that steps be taken to ensure staff confidence in the clarity and fairness of hiring and firing. The proposal recommended that: 1) comprehensive criteria be established for what constitutes quality performance; 2) overall criteria be established to determine if and when termination should take place; and 3) standard procedures be established for termination.

C. Summary of Proposals for Dual Agenda Change—Individual Level

Working groups also developed ideas for actions individuals could take to address the unintended consequences of the mental models and advance constructive change focused on the leverage points identified. These ideas are summarized below.

"Hands on" Grant Making is Best. Attention focused on what individuals could do to alleviate the silence around work/personal life integration and encourage IDRC to give more support to staff in integrating their work and personal lives in satisfactory ways.

- Show interest and concern by acknowledging impact of travel on individuals' personal lives, e.g., "You were traveling recently; it must have been hard on your family or hard on you."
- Say "no" to trips and frame the reason in terms of the impact of travel on family and work.
- Insist on taking the compensatory day after the trip so this becomes the norm and assume that others will as well.

Competence Equals New Ideas. The suggestions focused on protecting time to think and learn as well as for consolidating and disseminating knowledge and information.

- *Create structured time for reading/thinking*
    - Create opportunities to write and publish
    - Program Officers and Research Officers should push to belong to only one Program Initiative team
    - Program Officers and Research Officers should commit to using existing tools and processes, e.g., the Project Completion Reports, as vehicles for synthesizing knowledge and lessons learned
    - Program Officers should exercise self-discipline in limiting the number of projects that they commit to work on
    - Individuals should take the initiative to encourage their work groups to protect time for thinking, synthesis, and dissemination activities
    - Program Officers should draw more on resources of researchers in RIMS
- *Create structured time for consolidating and disseminating knowledge and information*
    - Add 10-15% of time allocated in work plan to these types of activities
    - Publicize success stories and successful products resulting from IDRC funded research
    - Build synthesis and dissemination activities into projects
    - Develop projects specifically for disseminating
    - Use evaluation as a tool with partners to consolidate lessons learned

Program Officers are the Heart of IDRC. The suggestions focused on individual actions to strengthen the partnership between the Programs and Partnership Branch and the Resources Branch and rethinking teams

- *Strengthen partnership between PPB and RB*
    - Program Officers should become more familiar with policies and procedures
    - Resource Branch should offer alternatives or a variety of solutions
    - Individuals should be willing to and raise questions and say “no” when asked to take on additional assignments or tasks
    - Individuals should engage more on “face to face” discussion and negotiation
    - Program Officers should initiate early discussion on program activities with relevant staff in the Resources Branch
    - Make more effort to bridge language barriers
    - Organize more regular meetings with relevant staff in the other Branch to update and discuss projects

- Program Officers take more initiative to relay "news" about projects to administrative staff

- *Rethink teams*
    - Think more about how you work with others based on their skills and opportunities
    - Suggest training needs and requirements
    - Encourage writers to become more closely involved with Program Initiatives so that they can better support communications and "closing the loop" activities
    - Commit to collecting best practices for both Program Initiatives and Secretariats, e.g., what is the experience of TEC working virtually

First Among Equals. Discussions focused on norms for consultation and setting clear priorities and adhering to them.

- *Norms for consultation*
    - Be more selective about who you send emails to
    - Be more selective about which emails you respond to

- *Setting priorities and adhering to them*
    - As a staff member, don't accept unrealistic work plans
    - As a manager, don't demand or accept unrealistic work plans from your staff
    - Use Program Initiative priorities and your own competencies to help you set your own priorities
    - Encourage your team to agree to not take on additional work
    - Circulate good examples of priority-setting

D. Reflections

The feedback session and working groups generated numerous proposals for changes in work practices and norms that can help IDRC both reduce the negative impact of workload on individuals' lives while at the same time strengthening IDRC's effectiveness. In addition to the proposals that emerged from the working groups, we encourage IDRC not to ignore the unintended consequences of the mental model "Hands On Grant Making is Best. As we have argued, this is the most tenacious mental model at IDRC, and this is one of the reasons that the working group had such difficulty in developing proposals for change. Yet, this mental model has significant consequences for workload. While it clearly contributes to IDRC's success, we believe that it has become so reified that it has inhibited the creative exploration of alternative forms of grant-making and other less labor-intensive and less travel-intensive modes of working

with grantees. We strongly encourage IDRC to organize the appropriate fora for exploring the implications of this mental model in more depth.

We also believe that the unintended consequences of the mental model “First Among Equals” did not receive adequate attention during the feedback session. We would give high priority to clarifying the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of the various leadership positions with IDRC. We also encourage IDRC to develop clearer guidelines and norms for consultation. While consultation can be very beneficial, we believe that the unbounded nature of consultation within IDRC, coupled with the norm that commitment is demonstrated by participating in consultations, contributes seriously to workload without significantly adding to effectiveness.

Finally, we observe that the four mental models identified interact in powerful ways to silence discussion of important issues within the IDRC work culture that contribute to workload. The most salient of these are work/personal life integration, gender equity, job security, and the need to manage the scope of the program to bring it more in line with available resources.

IX. Looking Forward

Through this collaborative action research project, we have documented the extent, location, and nature of experienced workload at IDRC. We have also identified the primary work practice areas that both contribute to workload and have negative implications for IDRC's organizational performance. At the same time, we have argued that making changes at the level of work practices alone often does not have the desired results. Too often changes have limited adoption, despite the best of intentions, and cannot be sustained.

We believe that for changes to take hold, it is necessary to understand the norms and values that underpin the work practices. Therefore, our analysis also examined the deeper level of organizational culture. We identified four mental models in IDRC's work culture that contribute to experienced workload. These mental models, or assumptions, are deeply rooted in IDRC's culture and are widely shared by staff. They clearly have some positive benefits for IDRC's success. But precisely because of their connection to notions of excellence and "the right" way to do things, the negative consequences of these mental models are silenced or occluded. The purpose of our analysis is to assist IDRC to hold up these mental models for fresh examination and scrutiny in the context of the world IDRC is operating in today. The goal is to reassess the mental models in terms of both their intended and their unintended consequences. Our experience is that this process opens up new ways of looking at old and entrenched problems, and, in this way, creates new opportunities for constructive change.

To be successful, this needs to be an on-going and intentional process of reflection, action, and learning. It is also a process that requires a steward. Our experience, and that of many others who have studied and led organizational change, [36] is that it is very important to have one or more people who are the designated "champions," or stewards, for the change. Responsibility and accountability for nurturing the change, moving it forward, monitoring results, learning, adapting, and celebrating and disseminating successes needs to be clearly assigned to the steward(s). Responsibility for advancing the change should not reside exclusively with the steward, but the steward needs to provide leadership, strategy, analysis, synthesis, and learning. This leadership role should be seen as a significant and valued piece of the steward's portfolio of responsibilities; it cannot be simply added on to an existing portfolio.

In terms of implementing change, we encourage IDRC to work with the mental models and cultural change in four ways as it moves forward to reduce workload, enhance equity, and strengthen organizational performance. First, as IDRC identifies specific changes in work practices that it wants to introduce to reduce workload, it will be important to always examine how one or more of the mental models identified might get in the way of bringing the change successfully to fruition. If it appears that the mental model will work against the change, then

[36] Rosebeth Moss Kanter. (1983), *The Change Masters: Innovation and entrepreneurship in the American Corporation,* New York, USA: Simon and Schuster. John P. Kotter. (1996), *Leading Change.* Boston, MA, USA: Harvard Business School Press.

this needs to be discussed openly and frequently, and systems and stories need to be put in place to counteract the negative impact of the mental model.

For example, if a workgroup decides to protect specific periods of time for synthesis and writing, this change in work practice needs to be explicitly discussed in the context of the mental models of "competence equals new ideas" and "hands on grant-making is best." Both of these mental models will work against the proposed change in work practices. Examples of how the group might counteract and disrupt the unintended consequences of the mental model of "competence equals new ideas" include using language that connects competence explicitly with synthesis of knowledge and publication of results; building synthesis time explicitly into work plans and holding people accountable for using that time to produce the desired products; and recognizing staff who produce synthesis products with rewards that are meaningful and intrinsic to their work, such as extra funds to participate in a conference or to pay for a research assistant to help with a literature review. Alternatively, to counteract the implicit valuing of new project development that derives from "hands on grant making is best" and crowds out time for synthesis, the work group could encourage a staff member to formulate a new project that allows him or her to do the synthesis work in collaboration with partners.

Generally, a constellation of supporting practices will need to be put in place to support this type of work practice change. As workgroups or individuals engage in these change experiments, it will be important for them to periodically take stock of the experiences. It is often useful to develop one or more simple indictors for assessing the impact of the changes being tried in order to ensure that they are in fact reducing workload and strengthening effectiveness.

Second, it is important that managers and staff alike work to keep the mental models and their intended and unintended consequences explicit in the culture of IDRC. This will help to keep the "space" open for thinking about and experimenting with new ways of working. We think of this in terms of creating "narratives" about the mental models and how they affect work culture and practices. These narratives give staff safe ways to discuss the unintended consequences of these mental models which have previously been silenced in the organization. For example, just being able to name leadership dilemmas as "first among equals" provides a useful and safe short-hand for managers and staff to name and call attention to patterns of behavior as they are occurring in the moment. This often allows work groups to pause, reflect, and redirect their action in ways that are more constructive for the changes IDRC wants to bring about. If, for example, staff in a work group are pushing the leader to engage in a process of wide consultation before making a decision, the leader can name the pattern as "first among equals." He or she can then engage the group in an explicit discussion of the costs of benefits of consultation around the specific issue under discussion. The group and leader may choose to move forward with consultation, but, at least, the decision-making process and the costs and benefits of the decision will be explicit rather than assumed.

Third, it will be important to establish multiple mechanisms for learning from the experiences of working with change. These are important for capturing and understanding innovations as they occur and for disseminating positive results. The change steward should be responsible for encouraging learning from the change process throughout the organization. We would also encourage the management committee to build into its agenda regular and periodic assessments

of IDRC's progress in implementing the desired changes and the impact the changes have had on both workload and effectiveness. We also believe strongly that staff should be involved in the learning process. Staff involvement can take many forms. It could entail a formal change task force that helps to catalyze and coordinate change experiments. It could involve working groups of staff who are interested in experimenting with a specific change area, such as developing norms for consultation or rethinking teams, and sharing their insights and knowledge as they move forward. Or, it could occur through groups of staff who are interested in working with a specific mental model, understanding it more deeply, and catalyzing and monitoring the impact of changes in work practices that disrupt the model's negative and unintended consequences. Whatever the form or combination of mechanisms, it is important that learning is widely diffused throughout the organization and processes are in place to share learning across units and Branches as well as up and down the hierarchy.

And, finally, it will be important to document and disseminate information about positive changes that occur at the individual, work group, or organizational levels. We call this recognizing and learning from "small wins." Undertaking significant organizational change is a long-term process and often the change moves in unanticipated directions. It is very important to acknowledge milestones and successes throughout the journey. This helps to sustain the energy, commitment, and creativity of those involved in the changes. And, it helps the leadership, and the organization as a whole, to stay focused on the change process in spite of the many pressures and demands that compete for their attention.

ANNEX NO. I: SURVEYS

A. Sample Survey Demographics

B. Survey Analytic Model

C. Employee Survey

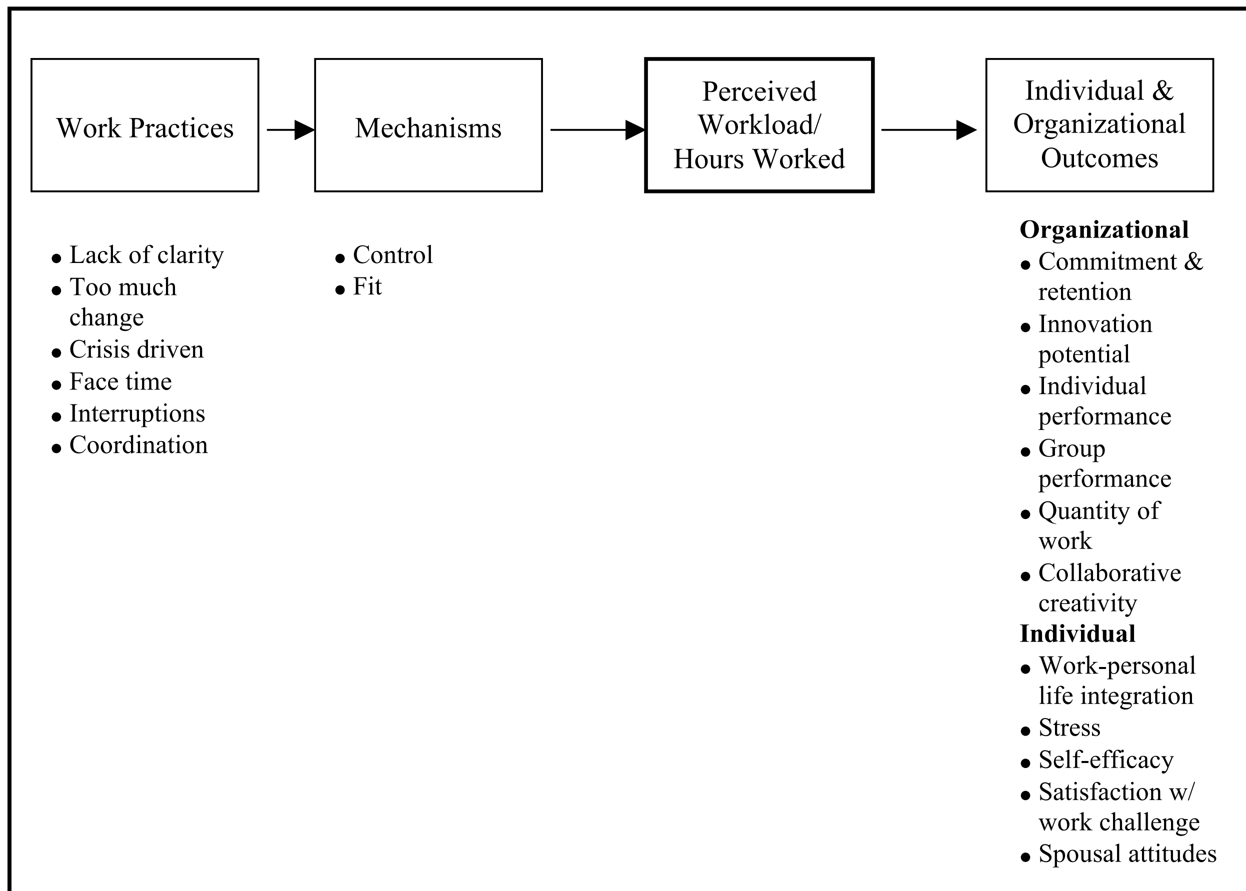
D. Spouse/Partner Survey

A. SAMPLE SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Respondents		**Location**	
Employees	187	Headquarters	103
Spouses	100	Region	73
Pairs	80		
Gender		**Professional Status**	
Male	78	Professional	105
Female	101	Non-Professional	70
Work Area		**Professional Status with Programs Branch**	
Programs	107	Professional	56
Resources	31	Non-Professional	48
Secretariat	19		
President's Office	15		

Note: Where the information on demographics does not add up to the total number of respondents, it is because certain questions were not filled in by every respondent.

B. SURVEY ANALYTIC MODEL



C. EMPLOYEE SURVEY

I. ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Interviews with staff at IDRC identified a number of strategic elements that staff believe are important to IDRC's effectiveness and ability to achieve its mission. Please indicate below the extent to which you believe the following elements a) are important to IDRC's effectiveness in achieving the mission, and b) are currently being realized within your work group/team/unit. We recognize that many of you work in multiple work groups. **Please answer the following questions for the work group/team/unit that you have spent the most time working for over the last year.** If you feel some questions do not apply to you, please circle "Not Applicable (NA)."

	Importance to IDRC						Being realized within my work group					
	Not at all Important	Not Very Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Not applicable	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Much of the time	Almost always	Not Applicable
A. Strategic Directions/ Organizational Effectiveness												
1. Working closely with grantees in project development	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
2. Providing expert technological and methodological input to projects	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
3. Mobilizing support for new opportunities for development-oriented research	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
4. Supporting the application of knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
5. Synthesizing results of projects IDRC has funded	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
6. Assessing the impact of projects IDRC has funded	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
7. Scouting out research talent in developing countries	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
8. Developing research talent of grant recipients	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
9. Promoting networking with donors and grant recipients	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
10. Mobilizing external funding from other donors	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
11. Promoting specific global priorities	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA

	Importance to IDRC						Being realized within my work group					
	Not at all Important	Not Very Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Not applicable	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Much of the time	Almost always	Not Applicable
12. Responding to the needs of Southern researchers	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
13. Providing flexible and responsive funding	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
14. Developing IDRC as a learning organization	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
15. Using a multidisciplinary approach to programming	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA
16. Promoting research that is innovative and cutting edge	1	2	3	4	5	NA	1	2	3	4	5	NA

II. WORK

This section asks about the way work is accomplished at IDRC. Please circle the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If some questions do not apply to you in your position, please circle "Not Applicable (NA)."

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
A. Work Practices						
17. Much of my work is deadline driven	1	2	3	4	5	NA
18. Because of the following, it is difficult to finish my work during business hours:						
a. Unexpected demands from managers	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Interruptions from recipients, partners, or internal clients	1	2	3	4	5	NA
19. I spend a significant part of my work week:						
a. Lobbying for management support for my projects	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Preparing status updates to managers and directors	1	2	3	4	5	NA
20. I am given adequate training for new tasks I take on	1	2	3	4	5	NA
21. Without sacrificing the services I provide to internal clients and external recipients and partners, some of my job could be:						
a. Streamlined	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Eliminated	1	2	3	4	5	NA
B. Work Structuring						
22. Frequent changes in work priorities increase demands on my time	1	2	3	4	5	NA
23. Information systems are designed to meet staff needs	1	2	3	4	5	NA
24. Operating procedures within IDRC enhance efficient work processes	1	2	3	4	5	NA
25. Demands on my time are increased by:						

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
a. Frequent changes in information systems	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Frequent changes in operating procedures	1	2	3	4	5	NA
26. There is an imbalance in the workload among those in similar positions	1	2	3	4	5	NA
27. I am able to take on tasks matched to my abilities	1	2	3	4	5	NA
28. I am able to take on tasks matched to my interests	1	2	3	4	5	NA
29. There are aspects of my job that could be better done by staff with different skills than my own	1	2	3	4	5	NA
30. There is adequate support staff at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	NA
31. The division of tasks and roles are clearly defined at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	NA
32. I am often expected to take on additional unplanned work as a result of the departure of colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	NA
C. Reward Systems						
33. Staying at the cutting edge in one's field is rewarded at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	NA
34. There are clear criteria for performance assessment for my position at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	NA
35. Skills that are valued now for my position are different than those that were valued when I was hired	1	2	3	4	5	NA
36. I worry about the security of my job at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	NA
37. There is a lot of competition among staff at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	NA
38. Salaries at IDRC are competitive with those for similar positions at similar organizations	1	2	3	4	5	NA

III. WORK GROUP

This section asks about the way work is accomplished within your work group. Please answer the following questions for the work group/team/unit that you have spent the most time working for over the last year. Please circle the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements. If some questions do not apply to you in your position, please circle "Not Applicable (NA)."

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
A. Work Practices						
39. If we worked smarter in my work group, we could accomplish the same amount of work in less time	1	2	3	4	5	NA
40. Much of the work in my work group is reactive to crises rather than proactive	1	2	3	4	5	NA
41. I am satisfied with my work group's overall operating efficiency	1	2	3	4	5	NA
42. In my work group, we spend sufficient time and energy planning the work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
43. In my work group, we are good at setting priorities	1	2	3	4	5	NA
44. Because of the following, it is difficult to finish my work during regular business hours:						
a. Unexpected demands from co-workers	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Unexpected demands from people who report to me	1	2	3	4	5	NA

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
c. Interruptions from co-workers	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d. Interruptions from people who report to me	1	2	3	4	5	NA
45. I spend significant time on the following activities:						
a. Coordinating and planning work with others	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Peer review of the work of others	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c. Participating in work group decision-making	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d. Responding to requests for input from others	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e. Dealing with crises	1	2	3	4	5	NA
f. Mobilizing complementary funding	1	2	3	4	5	NA
g. Playing the role of manager rather than advising research	1	2	3	4	5	NA
46. I sometimes find it necessary to extend my normal workday in order to make a favorable impression on my:						
a. Manager(s)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Grant recipients or partners	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c. Peers	1	2	3	4	5	NA
47. Most meetings I attend are a good use of my time	1	2	3	4	5	NA
48. Most email communications in which I am involved are a good use of my time	1	2	3	4	5	NA
49. I often spend significant time revising my work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
50. It is necessary for me to work through lunch to get work done	1	2	3	4	5	NA
51. I have sufficient time during regular work hours to do what I need to do to stay current in my field	1	2	3	4	5	NA
52. The coordination I must do with others makes it difficult for me to focus on my own deliverables	1	2	3	4	5	NA
B. Work Structuring						
53. I have the freedom to decide how I am going to carry out my work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
54. My reporting relationships are clear	1	2	3	4	5	NA
C. Reward Systems						
55. The time I spend collaborating with others is valued by my manager in the assessment of my performance	1	2	3	4	5	NA
56. Much of the work I do on a routine basis is appreciated by my work group	1	2	3	4	5	NA
57. My success is assessed by time I put into the job rather than by my output	1	2	3	4	5	NA
58. Being willing to take on additional tasks is highly valued within my work group	1	2	3	4	5	NA
59. Being willing to work late is highly valued within my work group	1	2	3	4	5	NA
60. When people in my work group take on more than they can do during regular office hours it is because they want to do it	1	2	3	4	5	NA
61. When people in my work group take on more than they can do during regular office hours it is because there are too many demands	1	2	3	4	5	NA
62. Success at IDRC is judged more by the quality of work than the quantity of outputs or tasks accomplished	1	2	3	4	5	NA

63. During regular work hours, I have the time to:						
a. Reflect and think creatively about my work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Build knowledge and technical skills in my areas of expertise	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c. Take on challenges that stretch my abilities	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d. Explore new areas or lines of work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e. Gain distance from my work in order to think in new ways	1	2	3	4	5	NA
f. Concentrate for long periods of time	1	2	3	4	5	NA
g. Persevere through tough problems	1	2	3	4	5	NA
h. Help work group members through difficult periods and setbacks	1	2	3	4	5	NA
i. Learn from co-workers	1	2	3	4	5	NA
j. Share my knowledge and skills with others	1	2	3	4	5	NA

IV. Work Hours

This section asks about your use of time as an employee of IDRC**. Please report the time you actually spend working, not the official workweek.** Do not include commuting time but do include business travel time and time spent working at home for IDRC. Take a moment to reflect, and try to be as accurate as possible. To answer this, think of last week, unless it was not a typical week.

Work Hours and Vacation

Hours Per Week

64. How many hours do you typically work each week? ______________

65. How many hours do you feel your manager expects you to work per week? ______________

66. How many hours do you feel IDRC expects you to work per week? ______________

67. How many hours do you think constitute a fair workweek at IDRC? ______________

68. If you work more than the official workweek (37.5 hours), do you think that this is a short term (episodic) or long term (standard practice) occurrence?
    __________ Episodic
    __________ Standard practice
    __________ NA

69. On average, what percentage of your work time is spent: (Please make sure that percentages add to 100%)
    __________ In the office
    __________ Traveling to meet with clients or partners
    __________ Working at other sites
    __________ Working at home
    __________ Other (if other, please explain): ____

70. In Fiscal Year 1999-2000, how many vacation days were you entitled to (include accumulated vacation days and days awarded this year)?
    __________ days

71. In Fiscal Year 1999-2000, how many vacation days did you actually take?
    __________ days

72. When people in this organization do not use all of their vacation time or personal days, the main reasons are (circle the 2 most common reasons):
   a. Nobody else uses all their vacation or personal time
   b. Not using all your vacation or personal time shows commitment to the organization
   c. Their manager looks down on it
   d. They would not be able to meet expectations of co-workers
   e. They have too much work to do to take time off
   f. Their absence increases their co-workers' workload
   g. There is too much to do when they return
   h. Grantees' or internal clients' needs would not be met adequately
   i. The quality of their work would suffer
   j. There would be negative consequences for the work
   k. They don't need the time off
   l. Other (please explain): ________________________________

Please circle the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If some questions do not apply to you in your position, please circle "Not Applicable (NA)."

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
73. I feel that my current level of work hours is sustainable over the long term	1	2	3	4	5	
74. When I am ill or have a doctor's appointment, I am able to take time off from work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
75. I use vacation time when I am sick or need personal time off	1	2	3	4	5	NA
76. I routinely take work home	1	2	3	4	5	
77. I routinely work on weekends	1	2	3	4	5	

V. Experiences

This section asks about your personal feelings and experiences with regard to your work. Please circle the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If some questions do not apply to you in your position, please circle "Not Applicable (NA)."

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
78. I derive great satisfaction from the content of my work	1	2	3	4	5	
79. I feel that I learn a lot from my work	1	2	3	4	5	
80. I feel like I have significant control over:						
a. When I work	1	2	3	4	5	
b. Where I work	1	2	3	4	5	
c. What work I take on	1	2	3	4	5	
d. How much work I take on	1	2	3	4	5	
e. How to carry out my work	1	2	3	4	5	

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
81. I feel that I am contributing to making a difference in the world through my work	1	2	3	4	5	
82. I feel like I have significant autonomy in doing my work	1	2	3	4	5	
83. I feel that I have flexibility in managing my work	1	2	3	4	5	
84. I consider my work to be highly stressful	1	2	3	4	5	
85. I often feel frustrated that I am not able to achieve the goals I think I should be able to achieve at work	1	2	3	4	5	
86. I feel able to meet the expectations of others at work	1	2	3	4	5	
87. I feel confident that I can bring about desired outcomes in my work	1	2	3	4	5	
88. I am often disappointed in myself because I am not able to achieve the goals I would like to achieve in my work	1	2	3	4	5	
89. I often feel sad, restless or nervous because of my work	1	2	3	4	5	
90. I feel energized and excited by my work	1	2	3	4	5	
91. Since I have been at IDRC, I feel that I have been able to maintain my professional reputation in the field	1	2	3	4	5	NA
92. Currently I am experiencing some stress in my personal life	1	2	3	4	5	

VI. Workload and Time Pressure

This section explores the issues of workload and time pressure at IDRC. **In the following questions when we refer to work group, please answer the questions for the work group/team/unit that you have spent the most time working for over the last year.** Please circle the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If some questions do not apply to you in your position, please circle “Not Applicable (NA).”

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
A. Workload and Time Pressure						
93. Workload is a problem in general at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	NA
94. Workload is a problem for me in trying to do my job	1	2	3	4	5	NA
95. I rarely experience time pressure in meeting deadlines within my work group	1	2	3	4	5	NA
96. My sense is that I am expected to work extra hours	1	2	3	4	5	NA
97. I rarely take on more than I can get done during regular office hours	1	2	3	4	5	NA
98. Workload problems within my work group impair the quality of our group’s work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
99. I rarely feel that I am “running behind” at work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
100. In general, people at IDRC are given workloads greater than what they can accomplish during regular office hours	1	2	3	4	5	NA

101. What are the three most important things contributing to workload issues at IDRC?

a. ____

b. ____

c. ____

VII. Work and Personal Life

This section looks at the connection between work and personal life. Please circle the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If some questions do not apply to you, please circle "Not Applicable (NA)."

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
102. In general, I feel satisfied with how I can integrate my work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
103. Work and personal life integration is a problem for staff at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	
104. The amount of stress I experience from my work causes my family or personal life to suffer	1	2	3	4	5	
105. The amount of stress I experience from family or personal pressures causes my work to suffer	1	2	3	4	5	
106. I am able to tend to personal matters at work when necessary	1	2	3	4	5	
107. I experience feelings of burnout in trying to accomplish everything I want to do in my work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
108. In order to integrate my work and personal life, I leave some of my work undone	1	2	3	4	5	
109. In order to integrate my work and personal life, I leave some of my personal life unattended to	1	2	3	4	5	
110. IDRC is supportive of my efforts to integrate my work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
111. My supervisor is supportive of my efforts to integrate my work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
112. One of the difficulties I have in integrating my work and personal life is the feeling that I should extend my work hours to maintain a favorable impression	1	2	3	4	5	
113. IDRC demands have had a negative effect on:						
a. My children and my relationship with them	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. My relationship with my spouse or partner	1	2	3	4	5	NA
114. In general, an organization's support of an individual's efforts to integrate work and personal life would be very important to me in a job selection decision	1	2	3	4	5	
115. In general, an organization's support of an individual's efforts to integrate work and personal life would be a very important factor in my decision to remain at the organization	1	2	3	4	5	

116. Some people are particularly happy when Friday comes along and they can have their weekend (TGIF); others are more engaged on Mondays when they can go back to their work (TGIM). At this point in your life, which category do you fit in most closely?

__________ TGIF

___________ TGIM

117. What are the three most important things interfering with your ability to integrate your work and personal life in the way you want?
a. ____________________
b. ____________________
c. ____________________

	Strongly Hinder	Hinder	No Effect	Help	Strongly Help	Not Applicable
118. To what extent would the following affect your ability to integrate your work and personal life in the way you want:						
a. Improving my work group's operating efficiency	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Changing IDRC's culture to be more concerned with output than with time put in	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c. Changing my immediate manager to be more concerned with output than with time put in	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d. Streamlining or eliminating nonessential parts of my job	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e. Calibrating my hours to match the ebb and flow of work	1	2	3	4	5	NA
f. Adding administrative or professional/technical assistance to my work group	1	2	3	4	5	NA
g. Improving information systems at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	NA
h. Improving operational procedures at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	M/A
i. Additional job training for myself	1	2	3	4	5	NA
j. Additional training of people to be able to back up one another in my work group	1	2	3	4	5	NA

119. Please review the items a – j (above). **Circle the 1 item** that would contribute most to a better integration of your work and personal life.

Flexible Arrangements

Flexible arrangements are agreed-upon alternatives to the "normal" work schedule.

Some examples of flexible arrangements are:
- Telecommuting
- Flexible starting and finishing times
- Job-sharing
- A compressed work week

120. Does IDRC offer flexible arrangements?
___________ Yes
___________ No
___________ Don't Know

121. How does your manager feel about flexible arrangements?
___________ Encourages them
___________ Tolerates them
___________ Discourages them

122. If IDRC does or were to permit employees to have flexible arrangements, would you participate?
__________ Yes
__________ No

123. Are you currently working under any form of flexible arrangements?
__________ Yes
__________ No

If yes, please specify: ______________________________________

If you are participating in flexible arrangements to the extent you would like, please skip to Question #125. Otherwise proceed to Question #124.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
124. I am not currently participating in flexible arrangements to the extent I would like because:						
a. I am not aware of any opportunities for flexible arrangements	1	2	3	4	5	
b. I have no need for such arrangements	1	2	3	4	5	
c. I could not perform my job effectively	1	2	3	4	5	
d. I would feel uncomfortable participating	1	2	3	4	5	
e. I fear it would jeopardize my career	1	2	3	4	5	
f. My unit does not allow it	1	2	3	4	5	NA
If you are a manager, please answer this question. If you are not a manager, please answer this question as you think your manager would answer it.						
125. If I allowed my employees to have flexible arrangements:						
a. Recipient or partner satisfaction would decline	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b. Work results would improve	1	2	3	4	5	
c. It would be more difficult for me to manage employees	1	2	3	4	5	
d. I might be penalized by my manager(s)	1	2	3	4	5	

VIII. Ratings

This section asks for individual and work group ratings.

	Very Negative	Negative	Neither Positive nor Negative	Positive	Very Positive	Not Applicable
126. Taking everything into account, how do you feel about IDRC currently?	1	2	3	4	5	
127. Taking everything into account, how do you feel about your personal life currently?	1	2	3	4	5	

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Not Applicable
128. What is your current level of commitment to IDRC?	1	2	3	4	5	
129. How would you assess your individual performance over the last year in the following areas:						
a. Quantity of Work	1	2	3	4	5	
b. Quality of Work	1	2	3	4	5	
c. Efficiency	1	2	3	4	5	
d. Creativity/Innovation	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e. Overall	1	2	3	4	5	
130. For the work group you have spent the most time working for over the last year, how would you assess your work group's performance over the last year?						
a. Quantity of Work	1	2	3	4	5	
b. Quality of Work	1	2	3	4	5	
c. Efficiency	1	2	3	4	5	
d Creativity/Innovation	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e. Overall	1	2	3	4	5	

131. What rating did you get at your last performance review?

____

132. How would you have rated yourself?

____

IX. Demographic Information

The following questions are intended to provide information to the researchers for statistical analysis. Your responses to these questions, and to all of the questions on the survey, will remain completely confidential. No one at IDRC will ever see your individual responses linked to any of this demographic information. All analysis will be presented to IDRC in aggregate. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the following questions for any reason, please feel free to leave them blank. Please check one:

133. I am:

___________ Female
___________ Male

134. My age is:

___________ 18-25
___________ 26-35
___________ 36-45
___________ 46-55
___________ Over 55

135. I am currently:
   __________ Married or living with a partner
   __________ Single, divorced, separated, or widowed
   __________ Other: _______________

136. The employment status of my spouse/partner is:
   __________ Full time paid employment (including self employed)
   __________ Part time paid employment (including self employed)
   __________ No paid employment
   __________ N/A

137. How many children do you have?
   ____

138. Please list the ages of your children (including stepchildren) and circle the ages of the children who live with you:
   ____

139. Do you have primary responsibility for child care
   __________ Yes
   __________ No
   __________ N/A

140. Do you have primary responsibility for eldercare?
   __________ Yes
   __________ No
   __________ N/A

141. In terms of race and ethnicity, how would you describe yourself?
   ____

142. What is the highest degree you have attained?
   __________ BA/BSc
   __________ MA/MSc
   __________ PhD/Doctorate

143. I have worked for IDRC for _____________ years.

144. The area I work in is (using branch structure as of 1 April 2000)
   __________ Secretariat
   __________ Programs & Partnerships Branch
   __________ President's Office
   __________ Resources Branch

145. Do you work in headquarters or in a regional office?
   __________ Headquarters
   __________ Regional Office

146. To which occupational group do you belong?
a) If in Programs Branch:
__________ Executive Secretary, Executive Assistant, Program Assistant, or other Assistant
__________ Senior Manager (levels of research managers, directors, senior advisors or higher)
__________ Middle Manager (Program Initiative Team Leaders and other managers)
__________ Program Officer
__________ Project Officer
__________ Research Officer
__________ Awardee
Other? ____________________

b) If not in Programs Branch, what is your salary level? (salary level used here as a proxy for type of occupational groups)
__________ Level 1-3
__________ Level 4-5
__________ Level 6-7
__________ Level 8-9
__________ EX Levels
Other? (Please specify your occupational or salary category): ____________________

147. I am a member of ____________(#) work group(s).

148. What work group have you spent the most time working for over the last year?
____

149. What percent of your time have you spent devoted to work related to that primary work group over the past year?
__________%

150. How many people, if any, do you manage?
____

151. What is your level of external recipient and partner interaction?
__________ High
__________ Medium
__________ Low

152. When you think 5 years ahead, where do you expect to be?
__________ In this same position
__________ In this organization, in a higher position
__________ In another organization
__________ Other (please specify): ____

153. If you are not planning to be at IDRC, what are the top 2 reasons why not? If you are planning to be, what are your top two reasons why?
a. ____
b. ____

154. The following 2 questions are designed to enable the researchers to match your survey responses to your spouse's or partner's. Please be assured that the anonymity of you and your spouse/partner will be protected. No one at IDRC will ever see the results of this confidential survey. Moreover, the researchers have no access to personnel data that might allow you or your spouse/ partner to be identified. All analysis resulting from the surveys will be presented to IDRC in aggregate form only.

a. What is your spouse/partner's birthdate (day/month/year)? ____/____/____

b. What are the last four digits of your primary home phone number? ___ ___ ___ ___

155. Please use the following space to add anything else on issues related to the survey:

Thank you for your time and cooperation in answering this survey. Please return it to the researchers in the enclosed envelope.

D. SPOUSE/PARTNER SURVEY

Survey of Spouses/Partners of IDRC Staff and Awardees with Center Programs
This survey asks about how you feel about your spouse's/partner's link between work at IDRC and personal life. Please circle the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If a question does not apply to you or you do not know the situation, please circle "Not Applicable (NA)."

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly Disagree/ Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
1. In general, I feel satisfied with how my partner can integrate his or her work at IDRC and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The amount of stress my partner experiences from work causes our family or personal life to suffer	1	2	3	4	5	
3. The amount of stress my partner experiences from family or personal pressures causes his or her work to suffer	1	2	3	4	5	
4. My partner experiences feelings of burnout in trying to accomplish everything he or she wants to do in his or her work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
5. IDRC is supportive of my partner's efforts to integrate work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
6. My partner's supervisor is supportive of his or her efforts to integrate work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
7. Travel is a big issue in my partner's ability to integrate work and personal life	1	2	3	4	5	
8. My partner routinely brings work home	1	2	3	4	5	
9. My partner routinely works on weekends	1	2	3	4	5	
10. My partner's work at IDRC often interferes with our ability to take vacations or holidays together	1	2	3	4	5	
11. My partner often has unexpected demands at work	1	2	3	4	5	
12. I often take on additional work in the household because of the work demands of my partner	1	2	3	4	5	
13. IDRC demands have had a negative effect on:						
a. Our children and my partner's relationship with them	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
b. My relationship with my partner	1	2	3	4	5	
14. My partner receives great satisfaction from his or her work at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	
15. I am supportive of my partner continuing to work at IDRC	1	2	3	4	5	

16. How many hours does your partner typically work each week? (Do not include commuting time, but do include business travel time and time spent working at home for IDRC). ________

17. What are the top two feelings that your partner shares with you about his or her work at IDRC?
    a. ____
    b. ____

18. The following questions enable the researchers to match your survey responses to your partner's. Please be assured your anonymity will be protected. No one at IDRC will ever see the results of this confidential survey. Moreover, the researchers have no access to personnel data that might allow you or your spouse/ partner to be identified. All analysis resulting from the surveys will be presented to IDRC only in aggregate form.
    a. What is your birthdate (day/month/year) ___/___/___
    b. What are the last 4 digits of your primary home phone? ___ ___ ___ ___ (Leave blank if you do not have a phone at home.)

19. Please use this space to add anything else on issues related to the survey.

When you have completed this survey, please return it to the researchers in the attached envelope. Thank you.

ANNEX NO. II: INTERVIEWS

A. List of Interviewees

B. Interview Guide

A. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

FIRST	LAST	TITLE
Edith	Adera	Program Officer
Gerald	Bisson	Director, Finance and Administration
David	Brooks	Research Manager, Programs
Daniel	Buckles	Program Officer
Simon	Carter	Team Leader, Program Initiative
Johanne	Charbonneau	Vice President, Resources and CFO
Gilles	Cliché	Program Officer
Maria	D'Souza	Financial Assistant
Monica	Dankers	Administration Officer
Brian	Davy	Team Leader
Denise	Deby	Program Officer PI
Serge	Dube	Program Officer
Sylvain	Dufour	Director, Client Service Group
Roger	Finan	Regional Director
Gilles	Forget	Team Leader, Ecohealth
Chantall	Fortin	CSG
Kerry	Franchuk	Sr. Program Officer, CEEI
Francois	Gasengayire	Program Officer
Terry	Gavin	Director, Management Information Services
Chusa	Gines	Team Leader, Sustainable Use of Biodiversity
Gladys	Githaiga	Program Administrator
George	Githembe	Program Assistant
Pamela	Golah	Awardee
Christine	Haines	Administrative Assistant
John	Hardi	Director, Policy and Planning Group
Brent	Herbert-Copley	Team Leader, PI
Charles	Hunja	Computer Manager
Penda	Ireri	Accountant
Sunita	Kapila	Program Officer
Mwihaki	Kimura	Program Assistant
Kabiru	Kinyanjui	Program Officer
Jean Michel	Labatut	Program Officer
Arlene	Lafoley	Director, Resource Policy Group
Renald	Lafond	Team Leader, PAN
Real	Lavergne	Team Member, City Feeding People
Judith	Lockett	Director, Human Resources
Joseph	Mambo	Program Administrator
Naseem	Mamujee	Intern and RO, PLaW
Wanjiku	Maranga	Administrative Manager, EARO

FIRST	LAST	TITLE
Rohinton	Medhora	Team Leader, PI
Gisele	Morin-Labatut	Senior Program Officer, SI
Sabi	Muteshi	Partnerships and Business Development Officer
David	Mwendwa	Driver
Luis	Navarro	Team Leader for PLaW
Emmah	Njogu	Financial Accountant
Hutoxi	Nobele,	Program Assistant, PI
Erin	O'Manique	Research Officer
Maureen	O'Neil,	President
Osita	Ogibu	Program Officer
Don	Peden	Program Officer
Caroline	Pestieau	Vice President, Programs Branch
Eglal	Rached	RD MERO
Eva	Rathgeber	Regional Director, EARO
Lynne	Richer	Grant Assistant
Sarwat	Salem	Regional Controller
Cerstin	Sander	Program Officer
Flora	Shiroya	Librarian
Chris	Smart	Director, Special Initiative Unit
Olo	Smith	Team Member, City Feeding People and People, Lane, and Water
Terry	Smutylo	Director Evaluation Unit
Steve	Song	Unganisha Web Survey
Veronica	Suarez	Executive Assistant
Sibry	Tapsoba	Regional Director, WARO
Karen	Trebert	Program Assistant
Necla	Tschirgi	Team Leader
Marc	van Amerigen	Regional Director, ROSA
Joachim	Voss	Senior Research Manager, Programs
James	Wagura	Finance Manager
Florence	Waiyaki	Secretary
Imelda	Wasike	Executive Secretary
Marjorie	Whelan	Service Manger, RIMS
Pierre	Zaya	Program Officer

B. INTERVIEW GUIDE

The goal of the interviews is to understand the cultural norms and assumptions that lead to ineffective or non value added work practices (i.e., why, despite the acknowledgement that these work practices have some negative consequences do they persist? What positive role are they playing? What legitimate needs are being served/met?). In looking at the climate study and our survey data I think it would be fruitful to explore:

- the issues of coordination and support, especially support of Programs Branch by others within IDRC;
- issue of control over the "what" and "how much" of work (how are priorities set? what is the issue of "lobbying for management support" about?);
- issues of innovation, creativity, contribution, zest, challenge, etc.; and
- unexpected/unplanned work.

1. What do you think sets IDRC apart from other organizations of its kind? (or, what in your mind is the "essence" of IDRC?)

2. What aspects of its mission, values and strategy contribute most to its success and unique contribution? In your experience, what level/category of worker at IDRC most live out these values? least? Why do you think this is so?

3. What is the most compelling reason for you to be working at IDRC? Why are you here? What keeps you here? What else is important to you in your life?

4. Describe what you would consider your most successful moment, event, activity at IDRC. Something that you are most proud of. Was this contribution recognized and rewarded?

5. What energizes you about the work you do at IDRC? What do you need in order to do more of this kind of work? What prevents this from happening?

6. Who or what enables/supports you in doing your work well and in a satisfying way?

7. What do you, as a unique individual, think you bring to your job that adds the most to IDRC's mission/success? Is this seen/recognized by others? Who?

8. Performance evaluations. Are there clear criteria for performance? How useful is the annual evaluation? What was your reaction to last year's evaluation?

9. People talk about frequent changes at IDRC in terms of work priorities and operating systems? What drives these changes? How could they be reduced?

10. How do you personally experience time and workload issues? Who or what determines how much work you do? Which things you choose to work on?

    What impact does this have on your personal life? What do you give up at work or in personal life in order to integrate?

11. What does it mean to be innovative in your job at IDRC? What prevents you from being innovative?

12. Collaboration is a strong value here. What do you gain through collaboration? What are the costs?

13. If you think of a typical day, how much of your time is spent on unexpected work? Why? Where does it come from? Can/do you refuse to do it? Why?

14. To what extent are interruptions a problem for you in terms of exacerbating your workload? What causes these interruptions? How could they be avoided?

15. If you could wave a magic wand and change something that would reduce workload pressure without sacrificing quality, what would it be? Why do you think this doesn't happen?

16. How would you characterize the "ideal worker" at IDRC? Within programs branch? Outside programs branch? (could ask some variation of the "suppose a friend" question, e.g., suppose a friend were coming to IDRC and taking a job in PB, what would you tell them to do to be successful? to be seen as successful? Would you add anything if the person were female? a person of color? How about if the person were working outside Programs Branch?

ANNEX NO. III: TIME JOURNALING

A. Time Journaling Log

B. Reflection Questions

A. TIME JOURNALING LOG

Name________________________________ **Date**________________

24-Hour Time Log
Day One

Hour	**Activities**: (Include both work and home.[37])	**Planned?** Y for yes, N for no	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, helped you get your work done?	**For Work Activities:** What, if anything, hindered you from getting your work done?
16:00				
16:30				
17:00				
17:30				
18:00				
18:30				
19:00				
19:30				

[37] For work activities, include both the specific activity and the program or purpose of the activity. For example: Spoke on the phone with AB re: new proposal for SUB. Or: Meeting with CD, EF and GH on new funding sources for X project.

Hour	**Activities** (Include both work and home.)	**Planned?** Y for yes, N for no	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, helped you get your work done?	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, hindered you from getting your work done?
20:00				
20:30				
21:00				
21:30				
22:00				
22:30				
23:00				
23:30				
24:00				
24:30				

Hour	**Activities** (Include both work and home.)	**Planned?** Y for yes, N for no	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, helped you get your work done?	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, hindered you from getting your work done?
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				

Hour	**Activities** (Include both work and home.)	**Planned?** Y for yes, N for no	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, helped you get your work done?	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, hindered you from getting your work done?
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				

Hour	**Activities** (Include both work and home.)	**Planned?** Y for yes, N for no	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, helped you get your work done?	**For Work Activities**: What, if anything, hindered you from getting your work done?
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				
12:30				
13:00				
13:30				
14:00				
14:30				
15:00				
15:30				

B. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1) Overall, how productive was the day? What helped or hurt productivity the most? If you could have dropped any of these activities, which would you choose?

2) How much of the work you did today had you planned to do? How much was unexpected? Overall, how much did you feel in control of you work? Why did you (or didn't you) have control?

3) Stephen Covey has a useful and well-known framework for looking at how we spend our time. He suggests a 2 x 2 matrix, with urgency on one axis (urgent and not urgent) and importance on the other axis (important and not important.) Important items are significant and consequential. Urgent things are pressing and require immediate action according to someone, but you may disagree.

Based on this framework, Covey identifies four different kinds of work activities: those that are both important and urgent; those that are important but not urgent; those that are not important but are urgent; and those that are neither important nor urgent. Take the four or five things you spent the most time on yesterday: what kind of activity were they?

4) How did it feel to juggle both work and home responsibilities? How stressful was it? How successful were you?

5) Overall, was the day energizing or energy-depleting? How creative did you feel? How satisfied? What contributed to feeling more or less satisfied, energized or creative?

ANNEX NO. IV: TABLE OF ITEMS CONSTITUTING WORK PRACTICES FACTORS

Note: Elements were derived from factor analysis to make up each work practice factor. Table shows percent of survey respondents who agreed with each statement. Respondents are broken down by the full sample, Programs and Partnership Branch, and staff at levels 6 and above.

WORK PRACTICES - FACTORS	**Overall % Agree**	**Programs % Agree**	**Level 6+ % Agree**
LACK OF CLARITY			
Operating procedures do not enhance work processes	50%	52%	54%
Information systems are not designed to meet staff needs	46%	51%	53%
Staying on the cutting edge of the field is not rewarded	43%	47%	48%
Performance assessment criteria are not clearly defined	41%	47%	42%
Division of tasks and roles is not clearly defined	41%	46%	39%
Work group is not good at setting priorities	12%	18%	16%
TOO MUCH CHANGE			
Frequent changes in work priorities increase demands on my time	67%	68%	66%
Frequent changes in information systems increase demands on my time	47%	55%	52%
Skills valued no for my position are different from when hired	47%	48%	46%
Frequent changes in operating procedures increase demands on my time	45%	55%	42%
Time spent on collaboration is not valued by manager	22%	27%	21%
CRISIS DRIVEN			
Much of my work is deadline driven	74%	72%	80%
Spend significant time dealing with crises	51%	51%	59%
Unexpected demands from managers make it difficult to finish work	50%	54%	48%
Much of work in workgroup is reactive to crises rather than proactive	37%	33%	35%
Spend significant amount of work week preparing status updates	36%	37%	30%
Spend significant amount of work week lobbying for mgt. support	20%	16%	23%
INTERRUPTIONS			
Interruptions from grant recipients make it difficult to finish work	64%	61%	63%
Unexpected demands from co-workers make it difficult to finish work	50%	0.517	50%
Interruptions from co-workers make it difficult to finish work	48%	45%	47%
Interruptions from direct reports make it difficult to finish work	43%	36%	42%
Unexpected demands from direct reports make it difficult to finish work	31%	29%	32%
COORDINATION			
Spend significant time responding to requests for input	71%	73%	80%
Spend significant time coordinating & planning with others	63%	60%	73%
Spend significant time in work group decision making	54%	55%	68%
Spend significant time in peer review of other's work	49%	50%	53%
FACE TIME			
Extend hours to make favorable impression on managers	30%	24%	26%
Extend hours to make favorable impression on grantees	26%	26%	23%
Extend hours to make favorable impression on peers	21%	24%	23%

ANNEX NO. V: OVERHEADS FOR FEEDBACK PRESENTATIONS

SEPTEMBER 11, 2000 AND OCTOBER 23, 2000

OTTAWA

ANNEX NO. VI: TABLE OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

TABLE OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Relative importance of strategic objectives to IDRC's mission, and extent to which objectives are being realized (N=167)

Relative Importance of Strategic Objectives and Extent Objectives Realized -	Importance to mission	Being realized in work group/team unit	Difference
Working closely with grantees in project development	4.7	4.0	0.7
Providing expert technological & methodological input into projects	4.6	3.8	0.8
Supporting the application of knowledge	4.6	3.6	1.0
Synthesizing results of projects IDRC has funded	*4.5*	*3.1*	*1.4*
Assessing the impact of projects IDRC has funded	*4.5*	*3.1*	*1.4*
Responding to the needs of Southern researchers	4.5	3.6	0.9
Mobilizing support for new opportunities for development-oriented research	4.4	3.5	0.9
Developing research talent of grant recipients	4.4	3.4	1.0
Promoting research that is innovative and cutting edge	4.4	3.4	1.0
Providing flexible and responsive funding	4.3	3.6	0.7
Developing IDRC as a learning organization	*4.3*	*3.2*	*1.1*
Using a multi-disciplinary approach to programming	4.3	3.6	0.7
Scouting out research talent	4.2	3.2	1.0
Promoting networking with donors and grant recipients	4.2	3.6	0.6
Mobilizing external funding from other donors	4.2	3.4	0.8
Promoting specific global priorities	4.0	3.4	0.6

Scale: 1= not at all important and 5= very important; 1= not being realized at all and 5= almost always being realized

Objectives in *italics* are those where there is the biggest gap between importance to mission and extent it is being realized.