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CIDA Pakistan Program Evaluation

Executive Report

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AKDN	Aga Khan Development Network
AKRSP	Aga Khan Rural Support Program
CESSD	Communication for Effective Social Service Delivery
C-DSP	Canadian-Devolution Support Project
CEA	Canadian Executing Agency
CDPF	Country Development Programming Framework
CHC	Canadian High Commission
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIET	Community Information and Epidemiological Technologies
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DGP	Democratic Governance Program
GOP	Government of Pakistan
HASP	HIV/AIDS Surveillance Project
IDPR	Institutional Development for Poverty Reduction
ISO	Independent Social Organization
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
LGO	Local Government Ordinance
LUMS	Lahore University of Management Sciences
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGSP	Oil and Gas Sector Program
PAGE	Program for Advancement of Gender Equality
PEP	Pakistan Environment Program
PSU	Program Support Unit
RBM	Results-Based Management
SEDP	Social Enterprise Development Program
SIDP	Social Institutions Development Project
SPDC	Social Policy and Development Centre
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS

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1.0 Introduction

The evaluation of CIDA's Pakistan Program was undertaken by the Evaluation Division of CIDA's Performance and Knowledge Management Branch in collaboration with the Pakistan Program to review performance in the implementation of the Program's Country Development Programming Framework (CDPF) 2001-2006. The evaluation is intended to assess the results achieved by CIDA-supported projects and programs, to provide lessons learned, and to inform future programming, including the development of the Program's next CDPF.

2.0 Country Context

The Political/Administrative Context: Pakistan suffers from persistent domestic uncertainty that includes a history of confrontation with India, difficult civilian-military relations and sectarian violence. Since 2001, a key feature of the political landscape in Pakistan has been a process of devolution intended to create a three-tier system of local government as presented in the Local Government Ordinance (LGO) of 2001.

The new system of devolved powers to local levels of government is intended to provide opportunities for civil society to interact with government at the local level, especially through infrastructure and social development projects to be carried out by community-based organizations.

In 2004, the World Bank identified the key components of governance reform in Pakistan: public financial management, procurement of goods and services, tax administration, devolution as a cornerstone for improving service delivery, civil service reform, access to judicial services, and anti-corruption measures.

Given the window of opportunity presented by the LGO and the critical importance of effective local government for improved social services delivery, CIDA has chosen to focus almost exclusively on support to devolution as its key governance activity.

The Humanitarian Relief Context: The major earthquake of October 2005 in Northeast Pakistan created a major humanitarian emergency - the most seriously affected regions were remote, isolated, very poor even by local standards, and vulnerable to worsening weather conditions as winter approached.

The national and international emergency response was massive and involved personnel at the Canadian High Commission (CHC) and the Program Support Unit (PSU) in a lengthy and intensive process of coordinating, facilitating and programming Canada's response (including fielding of the Canadian military's DART team). This took time and resources away from the management and monitoring of development programming.

The Security Context: The CIDA programming period under review (from 2001 to 2006) spans a period of considerable turmoil in Pakistan's security situation. Events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan led to real and perceived security problems making it difficult for Canadian Executing Agencies (CEAs) to field expatriate Canadians and seriously interrupting the management, monitoring and supervision of CIDA-supported projects. The security situation in

Pakistan is not unworkable but it does add to the complexity of operational planning and project and program management.

Donor/Government Relations and Programming Modalities: CIDA interacts with the Government of Pakistan (GOP) and with many active bilateral and multilateral donors in Pakistan. In keeping with recent global commitments to harmonize donor programs and projects and align them with government priorities, many bilateral donors are placing greater emphasis on joint sector programming in the form of General Budget Support. With the exception of a planned debt swap in support of programming in basic education CIDA has not entered into either sector-wide joint programming or general budget support.

3.0 CIDA's Pakistan Program

The goal of the CDPF (2001-2006) is to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development through support for democratic local governance, social development and equality between women and men.

Objectives are: for Governance - to promote democratic local governance through support to devolution and effective citizen participation, especially that of women; for Social Service Delivery - to improve the quality and delivery of social services in basic education and primary health care, especially for the female population, and to increase access to those services by the poor; for Equality between women and men - to contribute to the improvement of women's human rights, health and education, and economic empowerment.

Priority development needs for the CIDA Program in Pakistan are: to empower poor people politically and economically at the local level; to pay urgent attention to gender inequality; to deal directly with widespread poverty; to stay the difficult course of economic reform; and to address issues of international concern.

The Pakistan Program has an allocation of approximately \$20 million per year. Disbursements for 2004/05 were approximately \$18 million (\$21.9 million in 2005/06). As of March 2005, the Program reported that there were 36 bilateral projects at different stages of development and implementation in its portfolio with a total value of \$253.4 million. The breakdown by Program objective was:

- Support to Democratic Governance – 8 projects with a total value of \$81 million (32% of the portfolio)
- Social Service Delivery – 8 projects with a total value of \$89.1 million (35% of the portfolio exclusive of the planned \$130 million Pakistan-Canada Debt for Education Conversion)
- Equality between women and men – 5 projects with a total value of \$20.9 million (8% of the portfolio)
- Other Areas – 5 projects with a total value of \$62.4 million (25% of the portfolio)

4.0 Evaluation Objectives and Issues

The evaluation had two main objectives:

- 1) to assess the effectiveness of the current Program strategy (2001-2006) from an analysis of the cumulative results that are being achieved (through a performance assessment of primary areas of intervention); and
- 2) to assess the continuing relevance of the current CIDA Program in Pakistan and the steps necessary to strengthen this strategy and ensure sustainability of results through an analysis of the broader issues related to the relevance of CIDA's current strategy in Pakistan, including recommendations to update the program rationale).

Key evaluation issues addressed by the evaluation included:

- Program and Project Relevance
- Results Achievement
- Sustainability and Capacity Development
- Program Effectiveness
- Program Coherence
- Future Directions.

In assessing program and project relevance, the evaluation team considered the requirements of recent international agreements governing development cooperation, including the commitments made by all donors under the OECD/DAC-led *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (2005). The evaluation clearly addresses three of the five major indicators of progress specified under the Paris Declaration: Alignment, Harmonisation, and Managing for Results.

5.0 Evaluation Methods

An interdisciplinary team of four external and independent evaluators (two Canadian and two Pakistani) carried out the evaluation from October 2005 to March 2006. They relied on five key methodologies:

- a comprehensive review of program and project documents
- structured interviews with over 120 key informants from the Governments of Canada and Pakistan, Program staff based in Islamabad, project advisors and monitors, civil society organizations and direct beneficiaries of a number of projects
- an intensive review of 11 projects with a total value of about \$150 million or just over 60% of the Program portfolio, together addressing the three Program objectives (see table below)
- presentation and discussion of preliminary results in Islamabad and at CIDA headquarters
- presentation of results to the Government of Pakistan during annual program consultations in Canada in April, 2006
- integration of the results of other project evaluations carried out during the period under evaluation.

Eleven Bilateral Projects Selected for Review

Objectives	Project Title	Budget \$M
Governance	Social Institutions Development Project	25.8
	Social Enterprise Development Program	5.0
	Democratic Governance Program	12.0
	Communication for Effective Social Service Delivery	7.2
Social Services Delivery	Social Policy and Development Centre	16.5
	Institutional Development for Poverty Reduction Project	9.0
	Canada-Pakistan HIV/AIDS Surveillance Project	8.0
Equality between women and men	Program for Advancement of Gender Equality	9.0
	Effective Representation by Women Councillors Project	2.0
Other	Pakistan Environment Program	18.7
	Oil and Gas Sector Program	36.0
Total		149.2

6.0 Evaluation Findings

6.1 Program and Project Relevance

The evaluation examined how well projects and programs contribute to the objectives of the CDPF, how well they address Pakistan's national and local development needs and priorities, and how well the Program contributes to key CIDA corporate level priorities, particularly equality between women and men and poverty reduction.

All of the projects and programs reviewed by the evaluation contribute to one or more of the three key Program objectives: promoting democratic local governance, improving the quality of social services in health and education, and advancing equality between women and men. Most contribute to more than one key Program objective. Interestingly, there are more links to more objectives for projects in the governance and equality between women and men sector than for those in social development.

Similarly, the Program's projects and sub-programs are, for the most part, clearly linked to a national development priority and program. They also respond to an accepted national development challenge.

The evaluation also endorsed the current Program's pragmatic approach to providing support mainly through project modalities but with selective use of programmatic forms (as evidenced in the Pakistan-Canada Debt-for-Education Conversion).

Finally, the evaluation found that the current Program contributes significantly to the corporate objective of promoting equality between women and men. For many projects and activities supported, however, the direct link to poverty reduction can, and should, be made more explicit.

6.2 Achievement of Results

The evaluation assessed the extent to which CIDA-supported projects and programs in Pakistan are defining and monitoring results, whether projects and the program as a whole are being managed for results, and the extent to which results are being achieved in key areas.

The evaluation noted that CIDA staff, advisors in the Project Support Unit, and most key informants with partner civil society organizations are conversant in the language of Results-Based Management (RBM) and familiar with their project's Logical Framework (LFA). On the other hand, government counterparts were typically less aware of RBM concepts and principles. RBM is generally well integrated into the projects but there remains scope for improving the use of RBM tools at the sector and program level.

The evaluation found that most projects continue to work throughout the project cycle on improving results and improving monitoring. CIDA's decade-long investment in RBM is starting to pay dividends. However, the currently active projects reviewed have room for improvements in how they are managed. The credibility of performance data from selected indicators remains uneven; performance reports vary widely in quality; risk assessment is too often informal rather than being an explicit part of regular performance review; and evidence of learning across projects is largely absent.

Nonetheless, the key finding is that CIDA-supported projects are being managed for results under the current Program, despite weaknesses which can be relatively easily addressed.

The evaluation also assessed the type and level of results achievement across the sample of 11 CIDA projects/programs chosen for review. Overall, there is evidence that the Pakistan Program is achieving significant positive results relevant to all three sectors of the CDPF.

Some projects have been very impressive in terms of results. Six of the 11 projects were judged to have achieved excellent results; eight were judged good to excellent. Two were poor to good; one was poor. Some projects produced more mixed results than others; and two were notably less impressive in terms of results achieved.

Governance: Of the four sample projects used to assess achievement of results in governance, the Social Institutions Development Project (SIDP) was found to be exemplary. Implemented by the Aga Khan Foundation (Canada and Pakistan), the SIDP is designed to strengthen the institutional capacity of independent social organizations and institutions in Pakistan.

Results in Governance:

The Social Institutions Development Project

- Supported 17 intermediary or large independent social organizations (ISOs) and institution
- Improved organizational performance of key ISOs as measured by efficiency, effectiveness and relevance
- Improved policy environment and human and knowledge resource base in education for NGOs
- Established ISO-Canadian institutional linkages contributing to improved capacity
- Influenced changes in Sindh government policy in early childhood education
- Garnered increased funding for partner ISOs from other donors

SIDP provided significant support in human resource and financial management at a critical time to what is now the best-performing micro-finance lender to women in Pakistan. This relatively small but well targeted investment has yielded major returns in the improved performance of the organization to the benefit of thousands of poor women.

SIDP is considered a leading-edge approach for strengthening civil society organizations within the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). The model is being promoted in Pakistan and the 36 countries where AKDN works, including Afghanistan.

The Social Enterprise Development Program (SEDP), implemented by the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and the Centre for International Management Studies at McGill University, is at the other end of the results achievement scale. The Project, designed to build capacity of community-based social service organizations through a university-offered management course, was poorly conceived and has lagged on gender issues and results reporting.

That said, LUMS has recently established the Social Enterprise Development Centre as a result of the Program, which should lead, over time, to an economically viable and sustainable program of management training for social enterprises.

The assessment of results for the Canadian-Devolution Support Project (C-DSP), the largest component of the Democratic Governance Program, and the Communication for Effective Social Service Delivery (CESSD) Project is mixed. It is important to note that both projects are working in a difficult, unpredictable and uncharted sector.

C-DSP is designed to develop and disseminate models of good practice in devolving authority, responsibility and resources to local government. Working in two districts in Punjab, C-DSP's approach emphasizes capacity building and community mobilization. The Project works separately and in parallel to the government system, raising concerns about sustainability and ability to replicate results.

**Results in Governance:
Canadian –
Devolution Support Project**

- Improved planning at the local government level
- Developed database of Citizens Community Boards
- Trained 106 Union Council Secretaries for 55 Union Councils
- Strengthened secretariats to local government
- Increased involvement in budgetary decision making through public fora involving 1,474 participants, including 364 women

Social Services Delivery: Three projects were examined in detail to assess social services delivery. The Canada-Pakistan HIV-AIDS Surveillance Project (HASP), in its second year of implementation at the time of the evaluation, has impressive outputs that bode well for the eventual achievement of its two expected outcomes. There is already increased technical skill in 2nd generation surveillance techniques in research institutes and selected NGOs, and improved understanding of HIV prevalence among vulnerable men and women, and of the prevalence and distribution of high-risk behaviours.

The Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) Project is well established (since 1994), but shows good performance on only two of eight outcomes (namely SPDC recommendations adopted in government policy and implementation, and increased knowledge and awareness of social development issues by government and civil society), evidenced by government implementing many social policy recommendations put forward by SPDC, SPDC staff participating in important government task forces, and SPDC influencing Pakistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the devolution plan.

While SPDC is recognized as a leading research institute in Pakistan and enjoys a reputation of excellence in economic policy, it is now struggling with understaffing, senior management changes, and lack of strategic direction and leadership. It is overwhelmed with immediate research activities, lacks a strong gender focus, is unable to effectively manage outcome performance, and has been unable to extend its funding sources beyond CIDA, calling into question its long-term survival.

The Institutional Development for Poverty Reduction (IDPR) Project is a follow-on to several phases of the Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP); together they span 20 years. AKRSP - Phase IV (1998 to 2004) was designed to enhance the capacity of communities to plan and manage their own development through institutional development and social organization, and human resource development with a focus on women.

IDPR Project focuses on developing larger institutions in the form of Local Support Organizations to govern and support Village Organizations and Women's Organizations, adds a component linking these to local government agencies, and strengthens the gender dimension of the Program.

A 2001 World Bank evaluation of AKRSP is glowing: "AKRSP has achieved remarkable results over both the life of the program and over the last five years. While weaknesses have appeared in some project components, they are matched by strengths rarely found in rural development interventions." CIDA records note that AKRSP's interventions met or exceeded targets. Further, the model has been replicated, in that at least eight major projects in Pakistan have drawn substantially from AKRSP experience and the GOP has indicated a willingness to provide funding for the model as implemented by AKRSP. The benefits of the Project have reached far beyond its boundaries, enhancing its value in development terms relative to CIDA's investment. CIDA's consistent and sustained support to AKRSP and now the IDPR Project over two decades has no doubt contributed to its success.

**Addressing a National Priority:
The Canada-Pakistan
HIV/AIDS Surveillance Project**

The Project had its origins in consultations between the National Aids Control Program of Pakistan and bilateral and multilateral donors (including CIDA and UNAIDS). Pakistan is a low-prevalence country with significant infection rates among high risk and vulnerable groups. A strong national system of HIV/AIDS surveillance is essential to both assess levels of infection among high-risk groups and develop appropriate interventions and services. CIDA links Canadian specialists and their counterparts in national and provincial Aids Control Programs in Pakistan to field-test and prove the effectiveness of 2nd generation HIV/AIDS surveillance approaches.

**Results in Social Services Delivery:
Institutional Development for Poverty Reduction Project
Aga Khan Rural Support Program**

- Improved delivery of and access to community services
- Enhanced women's participation in, and benefits from, the development process
- Created and strengthened new Village and Women's Organizations (85 and 192 respectively under AKRSP-IV)
- Trained 250 women to manage Women's Organizations
- Established a network of local service delivery outlets (adult education, continued education and vocational centres) for women
- From 1997 to 2001, incomes of targeted households increased from 8,900 rupees to 13,796 rupees per year
- From 1997 to 2001, infant mortality decreased from 130 per 1,000 live births to 100
- Increased role for women
- Provided political training to women and was key in securing 33% quota for women representation in all political bodies in Northern Areas
- Increased women's literacy and entrepreneurial opportunities
- Completed construction schemes (roads and irrigation channels)
- Increased recognition by government that community organizations are legitimate development partners
- Achieved an estimated economic rate of return of 25% to 30%

Equality between women and men: Results have been impressive for those projects with a direct equality between women and men focus, and similar results can be found across the Program. Long and persistent investment in equality between women and men by CIDA at the institutional level and within the Pakistan Program has led to notable results. Most projects within the sample had a written gender strategy and had gender built into their LFA using specific, gender-relevant indicators and disaggregated performance data.

Equality between women and men in Pakistan is both a separate and visible program component and a criterion for program design and evaluation. The Program's gender strategy links gender-specific projects to gender mainstreaming, and most of its projects address gender issues either directly or indirectly.

To further assess results in equality between women and men, two projects specifically categorized in the sector were examined. The Program for Advancement of Gender Equality (PAGE) builds on previous CIDA gender funds that have made an important contribution to equality between women and men in Pakistan, where equality is now a publicly recognized issue actively reported by the media. PAGE is a locally administered fund with a goal of contributing to the improvement of women's human rights, health, education and economic empowerment.

With support to numerous NGOs and institutions across the country, PAGE has helped build and strengthen organizations that are committed to and capable of taking action on equality between women and men issues. These organizations are working at the grass roots level in remote rural and village communities, and in towns and urban centres.

PAGE has contributed to groundbreaking work in many very conservative communities resulting in attitudinal change among women and men.

The Effective Representation of Women Councillors Project is implemented by the Pakistan-based Aurat Foundation to provide targeted support to women elected to local government councils. The 2001 election provided an unprecedented opportunity when more than 36,000 women were elected as local councillors. The Project enabled women councillors to better represent constituency interests in local development. Some women councillors are successfully accessing funds for micro-development schemes.

In the area of equality between women and men, CIDA's Program in Pakistan is at the fore. With a small budget (equality between women and men projects account for only 8% of the total), the Program has achieved significant value for money, in part because of its ability to respond quickly to emerging events and opportunities.

Other Areas: The environment is not a major objective area under the current CDPF. However the program period reviewed by the evaluation did see the continuation and completion (in 2005) of a major project to promote environmental improvement and sustainability in Pakistan - the Pakistan Environment Program (PEP). PEP strengthened government capacity to implement the National Conservation Strategy, enhancing capacity and performance of four key institutions to more effectively support the Strategy and other sustainable environmental initiatives at federal, provincial and local levels.

CIDA's support to PEP has been credited with important results in the environment sector, most notably helping to establish the environment as a major national priority for both civil society and provincial governments. PEP promoted strong environmental awareness among the public and government officials and allowed the government and civil society to work together effectively on environmental issues.

Like the environment, the oil and gas sector is no longer a sector of CIDA programming in Pakistan. The Oil and Gas Sector Program (OGSP) was operational from 1993 to 2006, following on previous programs beginning in 1974. Canada was the largest donor to Pakistan's oil and gas sector.

The OGSP is intended to strengthen capacity of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources to develop and manage Pakistan's oil and gas sector, and of public and private companies to develop and manage hydrocarbon resources in an environmentally friendly way. Recent performance of the OGSP has been poor because of difficulty in finding short- and long-term qualified advisors willing to work in Pakistan because of political uncertainty and insecurity.

**Results in Equality between women and men:
Effective Representation
by Women Councillors Project**

- Established 5 Provincial Resource Centres and 70 District Resource Centres providing networking, advice and training to women councillors and a place for them to meet with their constituents
- The Provincial Resource Centres each held 3 provincial conferences and district meetings to reach out and raise awareness of resource centres
- Built a network of women councillors around each centre
- Provided critical support to women councillors through two rounds of local elections in support of governance and equality between women and men objectives

The Program can, however, demonstrate numerous achievements in the reform of GOP policy and regulatory functions in the petroleum sector. Other results include increased percentage of domestic oil and gas in the total energy mix and replacement of less environmentally friendly fuels with natural gas. However, it is difficult to attribute these latter results directly to the Program.

6.3 Sustainability and Capacity Development

The evaluation shows clearly that the CIDA Program in Pakistan has been entrepreneurial in finding windows of opportunity to create or support civil society organizations in a policy environment that is not always supportive. An impressive number of organizations supported by the Program have become important activists for community mobilization and poverty reduction – and especially for the rights of women. Many of these have become more sustainable over time either by developing workable funding models or by substantially diversifying their donor base.

The recipient organizations supported under the Social Institutions Development Project show strong evidence of sustainable impact. Newly strengthened organizations have found ways of attracting other donors and will continue to work on local development initiatives long after SIDP ends. SIDP has also helped the Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan to develop its model for building social capital – a model now promoted throughout Pakistan and in the 36 countries where AKDN works.

The sustainability of AKRSP interventions is well documented, not least in a series of World Bank evaluations. The multi-sector approach, local empowerment and ownership, and capacity building of community-based organizations, in partnership with government counterparts, all lead to sustainable impact.

The Program for the Advancement of Gender Equality shows more mixed results. The report of the recent external evaluation summarized that the program had been successful in its main purpose of strengthening capacities of individual organizations.

**Sustainability in Equality between women and men:
Program for Advancement of Gender Equality**

PAGE attempts to achieve sustainability by supporting sub-projects that help to build sustainable institutional capacities in organizations that show the potential to benefit over the longer term from such support.

The Program supports activities that are catalytic in nature such as gender training for key actors in policy development and developing voter education materials for women during elections.

PAGE has made a significant contribution to advancing gender equality in Pakistan and promoting growth of an active women's rights movement.

While direct activities supported may be periodic and not sustainable, the longer-term results often are sustained. PAGE is an example of providing parallel support to both government and non-government organizations to build capacity for achieving results.

PAGE provided ground-breaking support for NGO collaboration with the GOP in the preparation for and follow up to the Beijing Conference on Women, including the development of the National Plan of Action that continues to guide government and donor programs in support of Gender Equality.

At the same time, the evaluation found that PAGE partner organizations that were already well established and experienced as donor recipients had better prospects than those less experienced and working in remote areas. The evaluation concluded that capacity-building initiatives fell far short of need and of PAGE intentions, and recommended that such initiatives continue in the next phase but with a more structured approach.

Results of the Social Enterprise Development Program with the Lahore University of Management Sciences have not been impressive. It is unlikely that the Project's goal of significant capacity building within civil society organizations will be achieved before the project ends in 2008. However, it is likely that training will continue after CIDA's involvement ends and that it will be sustained profitably by LUMS through the newly created Social Enterprise Development Centre.

For the Social Policy and Development Centre, the issue is the opposite of LUMS. The organization, created and sustained by CIDA funding, has achieved some important outcomes. Unfortunately, project results cannot be sustained over the long term. Almost complete dependency on CIDA as a donor and a lack of attention to its own organizational development now threaten the survival of SPDC.

In general, CIDA has experienced more difficulty in supporting sustainable capacity development for government organizations than for civil society organizations. While the Pakistan Environment Program and the Oil and Gas Sector Program have had sustainable results because of their close integration with government programs over long periods of time, more recent projects with government appear to be less able to sustain achievements.

The HIV/AIDS Surveillance Project (HASP), for example, while located within the National AIDS Control Program and its provincial counterparts, seems to be having difficulty matching its impressive technical and operational achievements with sustainable improvements in the capacity of the national program. However, HASP is part of a wider, government-supported and multi-donor-financed initiative.

The two projects in support of devolution to the district level appear to have somewhat limited interaction with government authorities at the provincial level - authorities whose support will be essential in the long term.

The crux of the challenge facing CIDA in its efforts to support devolution is: how to build effective partnerships with provincial government to empower and build capacity of local government. This is a situation of ongoing resistance to the process of devolution by disenfranchised power brokers who have traditionally held the reins of power and are loath to change. However, there is evidence that the provincial bureaucracy is slowly becoming more committed to working with local government – a promising development from the perspective of sustainability.

Towards Sustainability:

Communications for Effective Social Service Delivery (CESSD)

- Active participation in CESSD's Project Steering Committee (chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary) by up to six provincial Secretaries
- Official request from the province that the Project be funded for a new phase
- Proactive targeting by CESSD of provincial government officials, informing them of CESSD activities and ensuring their concerns are addressed
- 929 Citizen Community Boards were created in 4 Districts; 171 of their projects were approved for funding.

The Social Audit Project with Communication Information and Epidemiological Technologies (CIET), a sub-project under the Democratic Governance Program, led to recent CIDA support of a larger National Social Audit Project also implemented by CIET. The original (smaller) CIET Project aimed at auditing local government service delivery and led to a new awareness of public accountability. While the methodology is rigorous from a social-research perspective and is widely respected internationally, some consider it too exhaustive, expensive and time consuming. Yet it does provide a means to monitor improvements in social service delivery over time.

The new (larger) National Social Audit Project, however, appears to have no links with other CIDA governance projects or other devolution support projects supported by other donors. More specifically, none of these projects has used - or is planning to use - the CIET methodology for district-level needs assessment, baseline determination or ongoing monitoring. To improve prospects for sustainability, the Project needs to connect more effectively with national and provincial institutions, and be modeled within all CIDA-supported devolution support projects.

The environment for development programming in Pakistan constantly challenges sustainability strategies. On the other hand, devolution in Pakistan is protected under the constitution until 2009. Building a consensus around devolution and the opportunities it provides for improved social service delivery is part of the Program's challenge as it strives to effect sustainable change. In this respect, programming through GOP institutions should be balanced with ongoing attention and assistance to civil society.

6.4 Program Effectiveness

The analysis behind the present CDPF was updated in July 2003 and by 2004/05 the Pakistan Program had launched a first round of new projects. The complexity and lack of geographic focus of the Program was seen during the evaluation as placing an unsustainable demand on the limited human resources available.

The portfolio of projects in the present CDPF is diverse, uses a wide range of project implementation modalities, is widely dispersed geographically, and has multiple layers of administration and complicated management and monitoring arrangements. These factors were exacerbated by the high turnover of CIDA staff at Headquarters and at the CHC. In late 2005/06, seven key Canadian CIDA staff changed. There can be some advantages to starting with an entirely new team, particularly if there are longstanding issues to be addressed. However, the extent of the changes at that time likely negatively impacted Program effectiveness.

On the other hand, the Program has shown an impressive and consistent willingness to take responsible risks and to be innovative. Canada has clearly been an early and persistent leader in equality between women and men programming, willing to pilot new approaches, pay for training and capacity building, and document and disseminate lessons learned, all within a relatively small budget. The same innovation can be seen in the Program's willingness, since 1998, to invest in RBM.

Based on ongoing internal performance reviews the Program made four specific strategic decisions to boost effectiveness: 1) focus on a smaller number of larger initiatives; 2) explore opportunities to coordinate with other donors and the GOP; 3) find delivery channels less vulnerable to security disruptions; and 4) strengthen the Program Support Unit (PSU).

Significant progress has been made on all four fronts. As an example, in 2004 the PSU in Pakistan was expanded with an infusion of \$1.4 million to provide additional professional and operational resources to the field in order to improve development program delivery and better monitor results. And while it has taken years to close the Pakistan Environment Program and the Oil and Gas Sector Program – projects not in line with the present CDPF, these large projects are now drawing to a close.

Canada's response to the 2005 earthquake in northwest Pakistan severely strained resources, and, while Program staff responded quickly and effectively to the humanitarian emergency, the ongoing development program was left on "automatic pilot" for many months. Indeed, more than \$77 million of Canadian relief and recovery support is being channelled to victims of the earthquake with virtually no additional human resources in CIDA's field office. CIDA needs to re-examine its application of human resources during a humanitarian crisis to better mitigate the risk of compromising on-going development operations.

The Pakistan Program has been an active participant and often a leader in various mechanisms to promote donor coordination. CIDA was a founding member and has been a long-time ardent supporter of the influential Interagency Gender and Development Working Group, and has been active participant in the newly formed Donor Poverty Reduction Working Group and in the working group on governance. In an effort to coordinate more effectively around specific devolution issues, CIDA was instrumental in forming the Like-Minded Group (Canada, Switzerland, Norway and the Netherlands), which has become a recognized and respected coordination body.

**Program Effectiveness:
Innovation and Risk-Taking**

- Early response to the opportunity presented by the Local Government Ordinance with a focus on support to devolution (DGP, CESSD) despite the significant risks involved
- Timely support to macro-economic research with a poverty focus (SPDC)
- Technical support for 2nd generation HIV/AIDS surveillance (HASP)
- Support to CIET well before the potential of the social audit process was widely understood
- Critically timed support to women councillors (ERWC)
- Sustained and explicit capacity-building support to progressive organizations (SIDP, PEP, AKRSP, PAGE) that now play important and ongoing roles

There are few examples of active or planned projects where CIDA is making a sustained commitment to the multi-donor platform consistent with the 2005 *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*. There may be opportunities for the Program to do more at the sector coordination level (for example with donors of other devolution support projects) and to be more proactive in coordinating its initiatives with those of the GOP and other donors in line with the Paris Declaration.

Effectiveness of the Pakistan Program is linked to its ability to influence policy, and to its partnership and networking capacities. The evaluation team found that Program influence on government policy is primarily at the project level with mixed results. Through HASP, the Program supports specific elements of Pakistan's national HIV/AIDS control program. This integration within a larger and well-funded (by the World Bank, DFID, UNAIDS and others) GOP program gives HASP its potential for policy influence. In contrast, SEDP is a stand-alone project owned and operated by LUMS independent of other partners and the GOP. It has little potential for influencing government policy.

The evaluation saw evidence of various partnerships and networking at the project level, including CIDA's collaboration with the Swiss through a governance project implemented by South Asia Partnership - Pakistan, and CESSD's interaction with other projects and institutions working in the project area. However, networking among the various devolution support initiatives in Punjab was found to be wanting and CIDA might encourage increased cooperation and coordination involving the provincial government, various donors, and key stakeholders.

To facilitate networking across one or more program sectors, CIDA introduced the Partners Forum - a simple but potentially effective mechanism to improve coordination, information sharing, learning, and coherence among project partners. The Forum calls key stakeholders together periodically in a topic-specific session. The objectives are determined through a participatory process; the output is a specific action plan with delegated responsibilities and timelines for partners. Although the Forum was inactive at the time of the evaluation, there is strong interest among CEAs, their local partners and civil society organizations for this CIDA-led initiative.

CIDA's Pakistan Program should continue to partner with strong civil society institutions that have been created by previous CIDA assistance in order to capitalize on past CIDA investments. In many cases, these local institutions may be more effective than the less sustainable CEA design-and-deliver model of project delivery, which is best suited to projects where the CEA brings a very strong and specific set of skills not available locally (as in HASP).

In general, efforts should continue to reduce the complexity and diversity of the Program portfolio, perhaps through consolidation in the democratic local governance sector and by linking social development projects more explicitly to national sector reform programs. Similarly, the roles and responsibilities of project managers, monitors, PSU advisors, team leaders and CEA staff could be further clarified, simplified, and streamlined.

6.5 Program Coherence

The CIDA Program in Pakistan is coherent in terms of its objectives and is well focused on a limited number of key sectors and sub-sectors. All of the projects and programs reviewed have a clear link to at least one (and most to more than one) of the three priority objectives of promoting democratic local governance, improving social services, and advancing equality between women and men.

Further, almost all activities under the governance objective are directed squarely at efforts to support devolution to local levels of government. The evaluation concluded that the Program's focus in this area of governance is high risk but calculated and justified¹. CIDA could further sharpen coherence by encouraging additional linkages among governance projects, especially in the areas of monitoring and information sharing.

Social services delivery, with its focus on basic education and primary health care, especially for women, has a clear thematic focus. The project portfolio is diverse at the present time, but is moving to a more concentrated and coherent approach to supporting the social sector. Opportunities exist to more explicitly connect projects to specific national reform action plans, as CIDA has done in the past.

Equality between women and men remains a key focus of the Program, both as a cross-cutting theme and as a specific sector of programming. This has been one of the defining strengths of the Pakistan Program, has helped to build effective linkages across projects and programs, provides significant value for money, and should continue.

6.6 Program Risk

The concentrated focus of the CIDA Program in Pakistan gives rise to some level of developmental risk, especially in the area of support to devolution under the governance objective. In this case, risk is the flip side of the desired attributes of program focus and concentration. However, this risk is considered justified and is offset by the comparative advantage gained by CIDA in terms of donor experience with support to devolution processes at the grass-roots level.

This risk may be addressed in future programming by some (limited) broadening of the focus of CIDA support to include other selected areas of democratic governance in Pakistan, such as support to parliamentary institutions, to the national audit authority, and to the judiciary.

Both developmental and fiduciary risks are being managed and mitigated through strong monitoring and reporting requirements at the project level and adequate financial control mechanisms. While the developmental risks in Pakistan are significant, the Program's

¹ Among bilateral donors, CIDA is supporting a uniquely focused program of devolution support in two districts working at a very grass roots level and subject to all of the risks facing the national, provincial and local levels of government as they implement a complex, multi-faceted and politically charged series of reforms in governance. While this has given CIDA a comparative advantage in terms of donor experience with support to devolution processes at a grass roots level, it does expose the Program to some risk if this aspect of devolution proves even more difficult than expected.

close surveillance and responsible approach lessen the actual risk to CIDA. The advantages to the Program will likely outweigh any disadvantages in the long term.

Comprehensive risk strategies for each of the three programming areas would serve to articulate potential risks and formulate options for their management and mitigation.

7.0 Recommendations

The evaluation recommends retaining the basic structure and focus of the current Pakistan Program with its three core objectives of promoting democratic local governance, improving the quality of social services in education and health and advancing equality between women and men. It suggests some areas for strengthening and clarifying management and monitoring arrangements at the project and program level. The evaluation makes ten specific recommendations:

Program Structure and Focus

1. CIDA should maintain the basic structure and focus of the Program in Pakistan with its three core objectives of promoting democratic local governance, improving the quality of social services, especially in basic education and primary health care, and advancing equality between women and men. Under the three major objectives, innovation in partnership with government and civil society institutions can be strengthened. Learning and disseminating lessons should be emphasized so that the GOP, civil society and other donors can benefit from CIDA's experience.
2. CIDA should ensure that poverty reduction is more specifically and rigorously applied as an objective at the project level. CIDA's corporate policy on poverty alleviation provides guidance on how project designs should incorporate efforts to explicitly promote poverty reduction, even when their main focus is creating an enabling environment for poverty reduction.
3. CIDA should undertake some specific initiatives to further strengthen the Program's contribution to its equality between women and men objective. These include:
 - drawing on field experiences in CIDA projects as the source of information and data for research on equality between women and men issues by institutions such as SPDC;
 - exchanging feedback among governance and equality between women and men projects in relation to women's political empowerment;
 - strengthening the monitoring capacity of the PAGE team in accordance with recommendations of the draft PAGE evaluation;
 - providing sufficient human resource allocations for adequate gender-sensitive programming, especially staffing arrangements within project budgets;
 - continuing to engage with the government through specific program interventions such as the Gender Reform Action Plan and working with the Ministry of Women Development and relevant line departments;

- continuing to emphasize advocacy and education efforts in equality between women and men to “keep the pressure on” through ongoing advice, technical support, and policy recommendations.
4. CIDA should continue to retain an appropriate level of flexibility in the choice of modalities of development cooperation by selecting project- or program-based approaches according to pragmatic factors such as the scale of the Canadian Program and the need for targeted support to capacity development in specific projects. The Program in Pakistan should also continue to contribute to donor harmonization and coordination through such instruments as the Like-Minded Group.

Capacity Development and Institution Building

5. Where possible CIDA should ensure that projects strengthen their capacity building component by ensuring that support flows through both civil society and government channels, especially where government bodies and NGOs are collaborating on program implementation (the dual channel approach to program support). In order to improve capacity development support to targeted government agencies, the Program might develop a program-level “how-to” strategy or checklist for promoting institutionalization of CIDA project support within government.
6. CIDA should build on its success in developing civil society organizations in Pakistan by selectively supporting the same agencies as channels for project design, implementation and monitoring. There are occasions where contracting with these agencies may be more appropriate than with CEAs for project implementation.

Program and Project Management Effectiveness

7. In the governance sector, the CIDA Program could benefit from a renewed commitment to the Partners Forum with regular, topic-specific, professionally facilitated meetings led by CIDA and with specific action planning and follow-up.
8. For the Program to be more fully RBM-compliant, there is a need to develop and monitor indicators of results at the outcome level for the Program as a whole, not just for individual projects.
9. CIDA should better define and simplify the different roles of the Project Team Leader, the Executing Agency (Local or Canadian), the contracted external monitors based in Canada, local monitors who may be sub-contracted by the external monitors, advisory staff based in the PSU, and CIDA staff based in the Canadian High Commission. The current structure of monitoring, in particular, is complex, inefficient, and often confusing. It should be reviewed, keeping in mind the importance of monitoring as a tool to assist in mitigating developmental risk.
10. The Earthquake of October 2005 illustrated that current CIDA capacity to provide extra management and administrative resources in the field during humanitarian emergencies places excessive demands on development staff in the CHC and the PSU. While they were able to meet the requirements of the humanitarian crisis, staff at the CHC and the PSU noted that important momentum was lost across a number of development projects during the period from October to March. In this

light, the experience of the Pakistan Program reinforces the need to develop surge capacity to support local management and administrative capacity during a humanitarian emergency by fielding resources from headquarters.

8.0 Broader Lessons Learned

1. To achieve outcomes and to be sustainable, institutions require strong and constant leadership, clear strategic direction, dedicated staff, long-term commitment at the institutional level, and sources of funding beyond one or two donors. Institutions must be encouraged to attend to their development as an organization in addition to their activities, outputs and outcomes.
2. Consistent and sustained support to projects or sectors over many years can be a key to success. CIDA's long-term commitment to equality between women and men, RBM and the AKRSP/IDPR Project in Pakistan are strong evidence of this.
3. Providing parallel support to both government and non-governmental organizations to build capacity for achieving lasting benefits in a given sector can increase the likelihood of success. Similarly, assisting the collaboration between government and non-governmental organizations leads to an environment more receptive to advocacy and more supportive of change. A balanced programming approach with assistance to both government and civil society is suggested.
4. CIDA's notable achievements in equality between women and men in Pakistan are linked to its long and persistent investment in gender, and to its both mainstreaming equality between women and men and supporting gender-focussed initiatives. To effect real change on gender issues, equality between women and men should be programmed both as a cross cutting theme and through targeted projects with a equality between women and men focus.
5. In humanitarian emergencies there is a need to field resources from headquarters to support local management and administration capacity. This "surge capacity" would ensure that demands of the humanitarian programs are met without compromising ongoing development programs.

Annex A – Management Response

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Commitments / Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility Centre</i>	<i>Target Completion Date</i>	<i>Status</i>
<p>The Pakistan Program should maintain its basic structure and focus with its three core objectives: promoting democratic local governance, improving the quality of social services in education and health, and advancing equality between women and men.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree that the current core (non-Earthquake) Program is well focused on current CDPF objectives. • While recognizing the inherent value in maintaining the current basic program structure and focus in terms of continuity, clarity of results and development benefits, the program does not want to pre-judge the outcome of a new CDPF process now underway, given that Pakistan's role in the world has significantly changed since the last (2001) CDPF. 	<p>Pakistan Program Deputy Director, Planning</p>	<p>CDPF review to be completed by mid-2007.</p>	<p>CDPF review process begins Sept. 2006</p>
<p>The program should ensure that poverty reduction is more specifically and rigorously applied as an objective at the project level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. For new projects, the Program will address the link between the project and poverty reduction. • To make links explicit, the program will utilise guidance provided in the corporate policy on poverty alleviation. • For many South Asia Earthquake-related rehabilitation and reconstruction initiatives, links with poverty alleviation are well-evident. 	<p>Pakistan PTLs, Project Team planning members</p>	<p>Will be ongoing for new projects. CDPF review will also incorporate the linkage issue.</p>	<p>CDPF review process begins Sept. 2006</p>

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Commitments / Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility Centre</i>	<i>Target Completion Date</i>	<i>Status</i>
The Program should undertake some specific initiatives to further strengthen its contribution to the equality between women and men objective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. The Program generally accepts the evaluation's suggestions regarding the optimal use of GE project experience, strengthening monitoring capacity, providing adequate human resources, continuing GE engagement with GoP, and continued emphasis on advocacy, education, technical assistance and policy advice. 	Pakistan PTLs, Project Team planning members	Ongoing	Field review of the GE sub-program is underway as of Sept. 2006, and is ongoing.
The Program should maintain flexibility by selecting project or program-based approaches according to pragmatic factors such as the scale of the Canadian support and need for project-specific, targeted capacity development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. The Program will continue to lead and support the Like-Minded Group of donors to keep apprised of programming coordination opportunities. • The Program will closely follow the education debt swap as a pilot for future direct budgetary support projects. • Agree with evaluation comments that there are sound operational reasons why CIDA is generally not acceding to pressure to work through GoP, do infrastructure projects, or to provide general budgetary support. • Pakistan is a fragile state of high interdepartmental and programming interest to the Government of Canada (START) ; and it is therefore essential that 	Pakistan Program Director, field staff, PTLs, Deputy Director, Planning	Ongoing field coordination. These matters will also be an important CDPF review consideration. Inter-departmental coordination is ongoing.	CDPF review process begins Sept. 2006

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Commitments / Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility Centre</i>	<i>Target Completion Date</i>	<i>Status</i>
	GoC directive programming flexibility be maintained.			
The program should seek to achieve a similar level of success in supporting targeted government agencies as it has in developing the capacities of civil society institutions, particularly where government-NGO collaboration applies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. The Program must strive to achieve support that is balanced between government and non-government institutions and to build on successful support to particular institutions. There should be developed a short-list of government institutions to potentially be supported, institutions with direct and tangible links to CIDA program interventions. 	Pakistan Program Director, Deputy Director, Planning, PTLs	The required balance will be a CDPF consideration, and will require discussion at CIDA/GoP annual consultations.	CDPF review process begins Sept. 2006 Next annual consultations will be Spring, 2007.
The program should build on success in developing civil society institutions by selectively supporting the same agencies as channels for project design, implementation and monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. The program will actively consider using strong local NGOs, whose development has been CIDA-assisted, to deliver CIDA programs. • Any NGO should be rigorously evaluated before being "stretched" through use in other demanding capacities. 	PTLs	Ongoing	

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Commitments / Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility Centre</i>	<i>Target Completion Date</i>	<i>Status</i>
In the governance sector, the CIDA program could benefit from a renewed commitment to the Partners Forum with regular meetings, action planning, follow-up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. The Post has renewed its commitment to the Partners' Forum and to renewal of the Governance sub-group. Following months of onerous Earthquake relief work, Post governance staff will be active participants in the sub-group, 	Head of Aid and field staff.	Commitment to sub-group renewal and participation was made June 22, 2006.	
To improve RBM compliance, results indicators should be developed at the outcome level for the Program as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. The program will work with the Asia Branch performance assessment specialist to develop program indicators, and to develop an action plan to track program indicators. 	Pakistan Program Deputy Director, Planning, Deputy Director, Operations	January 2007	
The respective monitoring roles of PTL, executing agency, Canadian and local external monitors, PSU advisory staff and High Commission staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree that monitoring methodology could benefit from a review. The program will develop a roles/responsibilities matrix in order to document and clarify monitoring roles, but generally all HQ/Post/PSU parties understand their respective roles. 	Pakistan Program Deputy Director, Operations	February 2007	Planned.

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Commitments / Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility Centre</i>	<i>Target Completion Date</i>	<i>Status</i>
should be better defined and simplified.				
CIDA corporate-level surge capacity should be developed to support local management and administrative capacity during a humanitarian crisis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree fully. This was also noted in CIDA and inter-departmental "lessons learned" exercises. The Pakistan Program will encourage and participate in the development of an Agency "surge" roster for emergencies. 	Pakistan Program Director, Deputy Director, Operations	To be determined. Requires Agency-level coordination	Discussions will begin October 2006