



Canadian International  
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de  
développement international

**CESO** ☐

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**INSTITUTIONAL AND FIELD AUDIT** ☐

☐

**AND EVALUATION**

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**Canada** 

## Summary

### CESO – INSTITUTIONAL & FIELD AUDIT AND EVALUATION

#### 1. PROFILE OF CESO

The Canadian Executive Services Organization (CESO) is a not-for-profit, volunteer-based organization founded in 1967. Its purpose is to transfer Canadian expertise to businesses, communities and organizations in Canada and abroad that cannot access paid consulting services.

CESO Volunteer Advisers (VAs), highly experienced in their profession or industry, serve as advisers and trainers to clients in Canadian Aboriginal communities, developing nations and the new market economies in Central and Eastern Europe. CESO-SACO volunteers undertake up to 1000 assignments in up to 40 countries each year. Since 1967, CESO estimates that it has worked with over 30,000 clients worldwide.

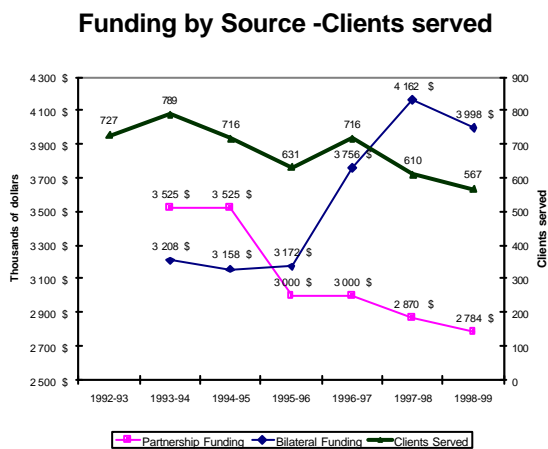
CESO is governed by an elected 22 member Board of Directors and has two subsidiary organizations: CESO Aboriginal Services and CESO International Services. Both subsidiaries share CESO staff, services and roster of volunteers. However, each has its own board composed of senior-level professionals from the public and private sectors.

CESO's roster includes some 4000 volunteers with expertise in areas such as agriculture, government/governance, manufacturing, primary resources and services. CESO has developed a program 'model' and delivery system, which operates in the same basic way for all the programs funded by CIDA.

A CESO Volunteer Advisor provides assistance to a local client organization (a business, government department or a NGO) for a period ranging from 2 weeks to 3 months to solve problems that have been identified by the client.

CESO projects funded by CIDA are worldwide in scope. Over the years there has been an important transfer of funding from the Canadian Partnership Branch (CPB) to Bilateral Branches, while the number of assignments, clients served, has decreased

(See the following graph).



Between April 1998 and March 1999, CESO undertook a process of strategic planning led by a Task Force composed of management staff and International Services Board Members. This was done in direct response to the shrinking sources of Partnership Branch funding and the new demands and opportunities offered by taking on bilateral projects. CESO recognized in its Task Force Report that it needed to be proactive in maintaining funding at current levels, including by raising new sources of funding, if they were to remain a significant contributor to Canadian Development Assistance. The evaluators wish to commend CESO for this strategic initiative that prompted the kind of reflection necessary for CESO to begin adapting to its new environment. It is hoped that the evaluation will further assist CESO to develop the management practices in which CESO must become proficient in order to meet the challenges it is faced with.

## **2. EVALUATION – BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

### *Background*

As part of its regular evaluation cycle, CPB. requested an institutional and program evaluation of CESO in early 1999. CESO was also selected by Performance Review Division to take part in CIDA's corporate review of support for Private Sector Development, because (a) it employs short-term technical assistance (TA) to provide support to small and medium-sized enterprises, (b) it manages the greatest volume of assignments on an annual basis, and (c) CESO uses *only* volunteers to achieve program results. At the same time, two contract audits were requested for CESO's programs in Central and Eastern Europe and Peru / Bolivia.

### *Evaluation objectives*

- 1) Determine the relevance and importance of CESO's contribution to PSD.
- 2) Determine the cost effectiveness of CESO's programs in terms of: the cost of General Administration (G.A.) and Overhead (OH), the cost-sharing requirements of certain Bilateral programs, and the mechanisms used by CIDA to finance CESO's programs.
- 3) Determine the adequacy of CESO's program management capacity for bilateral programs.
- 4) Assess the CIDA – CESO relationship.

### *Field visits*

More than 100 overseas clients (host organizations) in 10 countries were interviewed by the evaluation team through field visits to Partnership and Bilateral projects.

## **3. OVERALL EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS**

### **For CESO**

**Findings on program activities and results** highlight CESO's capacity to deliver effective programs that achieve results, which support private sector development.

CESO must still improve its planning, RBM and evaluation of its programs, particularly in light of the Board's strategic decision to seek out a greater number of Bilateral projects. Because

budget reductions in CESO's global and regional programs were not followed by equivalent reductions in fixed costs associated with those programs, the cost-effectiveness of CESO's program has been reduced substantially.

**The institutional evaluation has identified three major areas for improvements:**

1) Financial administration and control constitute the most urgent priority, particularly in light of the fact that CESO has not complied with contractual requirements, and has already suffered financial consequences. Furthermore, it must rapidly meet the challenge of establishing a better equilibrium between its resources and the financial value of its contracts in order to improve cost effectiveness of program delivery.

2) Planning at both the strategic and program / project levels must be strengthened in order to achieve a better match between CESO's new organizational objective of seeking an increased number of Bilateral projects, and the institutional requirements for managing such projects. CESO should ensure that an appropriately funded inception phase is included in all Bilateral projects in order to validate assumptions and assess risks for the project.

3) Bilateral project management requires more analytical and program planning and management skills than the traditional CESO programs. CESO must enhance its expertise in these areas and ensure its staff complement has the appropriate skill-sets to meet these new challenges. Evaluation of personnel and recording of personnel time must be strengthened if CESO is to improve cost-efficiency. Better knowledge of the capabilities of personnel and the capacity of the institution would also improve CESO's planning capacity.

**For CIDA**

The problems encountered with CESO point to two main difficulties for CIDA.

The first is its ability to develop an overview and understanding of its programming at a higher level of aggregation than a single project or program. Many of CIDA's problems with CESO could have been diminished through better co-ordination within CIDA, a responsibility that even Partnership Branch does not recognize as its own.

The second difficulty has to do with CIDA maintaining the quality at entry of its programming. Traditionally, this was ensured in CIDA by the varied and combined knowledge, experience and abilities of the members of the project team supplemented by the project review committee processes. These mechanisms are no longer consistently available or applied by CIDA. With proper support and review processes in place, many design deficiencies encountered in the CESO projects would have been caught early on and corrected with greater ease. Lessons learned from one project would have been passed on to other interested parties in CIDA to avoid later projects repeating the same mistakes.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND MAJOR FINDINGS ON PROGRAM DELIVERY

### 4.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF CESO'S PROGRAM DELIVERY

#### *Characteristics*

The CESO program **uses short-term placements** to address four main areas of intervention supporting private sector development: production, management, commercialization / marketing and control and finance

As will be readily understood given the short (2 to 6 weeks) duration of an assignment for most CESO placements, **results are achieved at the Output level**. Significant results (Outputs and Outcomes) are achieved when (a) the beneficiaries have the capacity to make use of the Outputs to produce Outcomes and or (b) when further interventions are undertaken by CESO with the same client in the same area or in a related area.

### 4.2 CONCLUSIONS

CESO has the expertise to successfully deliver its model and CIDA has recognized this expertise. The model has shown good results, and is appropriate for private sector development, specifically at the level of individual enterprises (micro level). VA assignments within rapidly expanding, medium and larger size companies have more impact than within micro or very small companies. The program demonstrated few interventions at the meso or macro levels.

While this was not a stated objective for CESO programming, it was found that the regular CESO volunteer-sending program does not generally provide good economic returns to Canada. Some of the countries identified, and most beneficiaries, are too small to attract Canadian business and/or to generate sales of Canadian goods and services.

### 4.3 FINDINGS ON RESULTS ACHIEVED IN PROJECTS VISITED

Virtually all of the projects visited produced outputs in one or several areas: production, and marketing principally and in management and control / finances. Eighty-eight per cent (88%) of the projects produced one or several Outcomes linked to the Outputs delivered. This level of achievement is due in large part to the CESO Model, which promotes highly focused interventions, which have been agreed to by the beneficiary and to which the latter contributes, delivered by motivated and practical hands-on Canadian volunteers. Other factors contributing to the success of the delivery model follow.

#### *Strengths of CESO's program delivery*

Appropriateness of mandate with needs of beneficiary. In 82% of cases, the mandate was identified as totally appropriate to the needs of the host organization. In all cases, VAs brought expertise that was not available in the country.

Appropriateness of outputs produced with needs of the beneficiary. In 75% of cases, the outputs produced were totally appropriate to the needs of the host organization and in many cases exceeded the clients' expectations.

Capacity of the beneficiary to integrate / implement the outputs produced. Capacity of host organizations to implement outputs remains limited. Only 38% of the host organizations were totally capable of implementing the outputs produced, while (55%) indicated they had implemented only some of the outputs because of financial limitations.

Short-term technical assistance from experienced Volunteer Advisors is an effective way to provide support for private sector development when the interventions are targeted specifically to the client's needs. Repeat assignments, which build on previous results, help to improve sustainability.

The age of CESO VAs and their proportionately extensive experience were generally a key success factor in achieving results. Most VAs were highly appreciated for their technical knowledge and hands-on expertise.

The RRs show expertise and dedication in the areas of marketing and networking, strategic approach to placements and capacity to assess client's needs.

The clients selected are willing to participate in the technical assistance process by paying local costs for the VA, dedicating the necessary time to make the technical assistance, process effective, and following through to the extent they are able.

#### *Conditions for achieving success*

The evaluators have identified a number of conditions that may be considered prerequisites for achieving program / project success.

The program / project objectives must be focused on primary objectives, which may be thematic (PSD) or geographical. When project objectives cover various priorities or cross-cutting themes, the capacity of the CEA to achieve satisfactory results may be reduced. In some cases, a broad focus can work against achieving the primary sector objectives. For example, given the short duration of an assignment, introducing a parallel Youth Internship Program may dilute the focus of the original VA assignment.

Geographical distribution can also limit results. When too many countries are included in a regional program, at CIDA's request, the CEA's capacity to achieve results is limited by the small number of assignments per country and the limits of its financial resources. Activities will not reach the critical mass required for the program to achieve notable results in any of the countries.

Targeting beneficiaries or thematic objectives outside CESO's niche and institutional strength, for example by proposing a focus on micro-enterprises which require a different sort of intervention than the traditional CESO clients, will also reduce the chances of achieving satisfactory results.

#### *Constraints identified for achieving results*

At the beneficiary level, the lack of financial resources to undertake technological improvements is most important. In some countries there is also lack of entrepreneurial approach.

External constraints, or lack of an enabling environment in some countries selected by CIDA, include: the absence of controls on imports to reduce competition, and limited access to credit at reasonable rates.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS ON CESO'S INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY**

### **5.1 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS ON CESO'S MANAGEMENT CAPACITY**

Both the evaluation and the financial audits of CIDA contracts identified weaknesses in CESO's capacity to manage bilateral projects. CESO was found to be relatively inexperienced in bilateral project management. It needs to enhance its capacity to scope, plan and manage such projects and to further develop its management systems to support that capacity. Financial management of projects is the first area where improvements are needed, including: budget proposals, cost controls and compliance with CIDA's contractual requirements. Planning is the second area of weakness, with improvements needed in: the definition of objectives, level of activities, expected outputs and indicators of success; analysis of success factors and constraints that will affect the attainment of objectives. CESO should allocate more resources to program evaluation to identify lessons and develop policies and procedures to assess its institutional performance.

### **5.2 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

#### *Conclusion / findings*

CESO is still developing its costing systems and internal controls required to manage Bilateral projects. The audits of CIDA contracts included in this evaluation provide evidence that the costing systems and internal controls were not suitable to support the administration of bilateral contracts. The allocations of direct administrative costs to contracts are estimates, based on samples of costs and on budgeted assignments per contract. They are not based on actual costs. The allocation of staff time to the contracts was not adequate because there was no system for recording and allocating actual time spent by personnel on each contract. Indirect costs allocated to direct administrative costs are also not well documented. The auditors have also identified important deficiencies in internal control procedures. These weaknesses have resulted in a lack of compliance with financial requirements in CIDA contracts.

### **5.3 CESO'S PROGRAM COST EFFECTIVENESS**

#### *Conclusion*

The management of CESO's programs has not proven cost efficient in the last three (3) years, particularly in the area of fixed costs in Canada. While the number of assignments per year has dropped substantially, for many projects, OH costs have been maintained and direct administrative costs have risen slightly.

#### *Findings*

The number of assignments has steadily gone down in the last three years from 732 to 596. As the number of clients served and the number of assignments has decreased, the average cost per assignment has increased. The only exception is the Partnership Program, where clients pay a larger portion of in-country and travel costs for the VAs, and management and reporting requirements are less.

The unit cost per assignment is made up of: field costs, direct support costs in Canada, direct program administrative costs in Canada and G.A. and OH.

*Factors that impact on unit costs are:*

- The variables in field costs (e.g.: travelling), and maintaining fixed costs in the same number of countries while the number of placements per country is reduced. For example in CEE/FSU regional program, the number of assignments was reduced from 232 to 154 between 1997-1999 while the number of countries was maintained at 13 at CIDA's request.
- CESO chose to allocate the reduction in project budgets to field costs. Thus, the number of assignments was reduced for most contracts by 29 % while G.A. and OH costs were maintained and more direct administrative costs were also allocated to most contracts. As a result, the unit cost per assignment has increased.

#### 5.4 PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

CESO's human resource management policy establishes a salary grid that is comparable to similar sized NGOs of CESO's size. However CESO must strengthen its personnel management and performance evaluation policies and practices. At the present time, it is difficult for CESO to determine whether all personnel are qualified to execute their specific job description within a performance framework and in a cost-efficient manner.

#### 5.5 CESO'S SELF-ASSESSMENT, PLANNING AND REPORTING CAPACITY

*Integration of program evaluation with institutional performance review (self-assessment)*

CESO's evaluation relates solely to outputs and is completed at the end of assignments. Evaluation has not been integrated at the planning stages and throughout the implementation of a project. An RBM approach to project management requires that greater importance should be given to performance review and evaluation functions. Evaluation must be integrated and continuously applied within the framework of program delivery.

The CESO Board has not developed a formal mechanism or guidelines to assess the performance of management at the administrative and accounting levels, particularly related to financial administration and budgetary controls. CESO therefore, has been unable to review the cost efficiency and effectiveness of its management, or to draw lessons about the impact of management on program results. This weakness has had a direct impact on CESO's recent planning capacity for bilateral programs.

*Strategic planning*

CESO's most recent strategic planning exercise was carried out by a Task Force, mandated to make recommendations to the Board on future strategic directions of CESO International Services (CIS). The Task Force reported in March 1999. Its recommendations are summarized as follows: (a) focus the international program (both place and product), (b) recognize the realities of a contract-driven organization, and (c) develop a capability profile for the organization. The Task Force addressed the following major issues: redefinition of the CIS mission, the development of strategies to increase income in the next three years, focusing of program development strategies around defined successful niches, and making the necessary adjustments at the institutional level.

Although the Task Force envisioned International Services moving from a grant-based organization to a contract-based organization, it did not sufficiently analyze its institutional capacity to meet the challenges that would arise from such a shift. The Task Force analysis gave prior-



ity to program development and growth strategies to maintain levels of funding, rather than to the capacities required for CESO to meet the challenges of these changes.

#### Program and project planning

##### *Conclusion*

CESO's planning capacity requires strengthening efforts in order to suitably manage its bilateral projects. Indeed, CESO has been forced to reprofile project budgets and timeframes, and to review its delivery approach to achieve better results. When such changes occur at an advanced stage of project implementation, they undermine CIDA's perception of the project and the credibility of CESO's management capacity. In addition, the importance of results achieved is diminished. However, CIDA also bears some responsibility for weaknesses at the planning stage of some bilateral projects. CIDA did not require an inception phase to validate the assumptions on which the project is based.

##### *Findings*

CESO's desire to maintain its income in the face of Partnership Branch budget cuts provided a compelling rationale for it to accept new bilateral contracts. However, in some cases it is apparent that CESO did not undertake a thorough analysis and evaluation of the conditions proposed by CIDA, including the delivery model and the low level of remuneration. Nor did it adequately assess its own capacity to manage and deliver these programs.

From a corporate point of view, CIDA has not performed well in its relationship with CESO. At a time when CESO, along with other NGOs, was undergoing severe funding cutbacks, no corporate assessment of the impact of the cuts on these long-standing CIDA partners was completed. Partners were advised to seek funding from bilateral branches or other non-Partnership Branch and non-CIDA sources. No consideration was given to the minimum critical level of operation required for CESO to be sustainable as a national organization providing CIDA access to a specific constituency of retired and semi retired Canadians committed to development objectives.

#### **RBM approach to program delivery**

##### *Conclusion*

While the exposure to bilateral project management practices has sometimes been difficult for CESO, it has yielded definite benefits by encouraging CESO to focus more on results, to refine its focus and more strategically select potential beneficiaries.

CESO is currently implementing an RBM approach to program delivery. This will make it easier to compare actual results for each of the projects with what was projected. Monitoring will be easier, and adjustments in the selection of the clients to achieve expected results would be feasible. The only area where the program is inherently weak in adopting RBM is in its continued focus on responding to the requests of CIDA, and to the needs of individual clients, on an ad hoc basis. This is why the evaluators are recommending that CESO take a more proactive and strategic approach to planning, and a more in-depth client-oriented approach to analysing needs and potential results. This recommendation builds on CESO's own experience with some more recent initiatives that are showing promise as described below.

### *Findings*

- CESO's past projects were not developed using the RBM approach. Expected results for a program were not defined in advance because the program was responsive to the needs of individual clients, which could not be anticipated. The only result defined in the contract was the number of placements that would be completed in a country.
- The first project to be designed within the RBM framework was the Peru/Bolivia project, where CESO has moved from an assignment approach to a client oriented approach. Projects in Guyana (phase II) and Ghana have also strengthened their RBM framework by identifying, at the planning stage, the sectors for CESO's interventions and the cumulative results that can be expected within these sectors. The new Partnership Branch agreement has taken a similar approach.

### *Other evaluation issues*

CESO's approach to recording results has improved in the last two years, reflecting an increased emphasis on monitoring and evaluation. However, outputs are still recorded for each placement rather than being consolidated for each beneficiary enterprise when multiple assignments take place over a period of time. This approach makes it difficult to track a client's overall progress.

In recent years CESO's reporting to CIDA has also improved. Current reports now include a summary of outputs and outcomes by sector, and an analysis of potential impact for each client. However, the limits noted above on reporting cumulative results by beneficiary still apply.

## **6. CIDA'S APPROACH TO CESO'S FUNDING**

### *Conclusions*

In recent years, the CIDA-CESO relationship has been characterised by important shifts in funding sources, from Partnership to Bilateral Branches. As a result of these shifts, CESO has moved from a grant-based to a contract-based organization, a change for which CESO was not prepared and which still necessitates important adjustments on its part. For example, various reporting formats and contractual funding allocations, some disadvantageous to CESO, are currently being used by CIDA, for basically the same delivery model. This has led to communication and management between CIDA and CESO. Some of these problems were resolved while others still remain

CESO and CIDA need to internalize lessons learned from difficulties encountered in earlier projects and apply them to new designs. CIDA must propose project designs that can reasonably be delivered and CESO must take stock of its capacity and turn down activities that fall outside its areas of expertise or that would dilute its operating effectiveness in the field.

### *Findings*

#### *CIDA-CESO communications*

Throughout the period that CESO has been funded by Partnership Branch, the relationship has been very positive. CPB took a hands-off approach towards the CESO program in keeping with the Partnership values of encouraging various Canadian constituencies to define their own approaches to development. With bilateral projects, the organization has been forced to become much more focused in its approach to programming so that each project will meet specific objectives and demonstrate results using the RBM framework. CIDA has often managed these con-

tracts with a heavy hands-on manner at the same time as it required CESO to apply an RBM approach. CESO has not found this transition easy. CIDA's main failing here was not in promoting bilateral project management approaches but in not bringing together the numerous CIDA staff working on the various projects to take an integrated and comprehensive approach to resolving difficulties with CESO. Thus, communications between CIDA and the organization have been strained in a number of instances. These strains were exacerbated by the frequent changes in CIDA program managers.

#### *CIDA contractual cost allocation and cost sharing policies*

An analysis of eight (8) contracts provided the following findings: There are no fixed guidelines for funding project costs, and allocation of funds for major categories of expenses varies from one contract to another. Bilateral projects allocate proportionally more funds for direct program field costs and proportionally fewer funds for direct program costs in Canada and for G.A. & OH costs than Partnership Branch programs.

Furthermore, the ratios of G.A. & OH costs in Bilateral contracts have been diminishing over the years; for two contracts, those ratios have proven disadvantageous for CESO. In the current Partnership contract recently signed, the direct program field costs are being reduced, as clients are assuming a greater proportion of airfares. At the same time, direct support in Canada and G.A. and OH ratios have increased up **to 66%** of the total program funding by CIDA, i.e. only 34% of CIDA Partnership Branch funding is available for direct program activities in the field.

CIDA and other donors have long since concluded that the principle of clients sharing the cost of support received under PSD programs was a key success factor particularly when the beneficiaries were private companies in production, services and commercial trade. The evaluation concluded that cost-sharing constitutes a form of partnership and demonstrates commitment by beneficiaries for achieving results. It has proven to be a success factor in CESO's programs / projects as well. However, CIDA's PSD policy has no minimum standards for cost sharing from beneficiaries. Cost-sharing requirements depend on policies and competition from other donor countries (e.g. Ghana). Cost sharing by the host organizations appears to be the lowest in bilateral contracts and the highest in the Partnership contract.

Shared accountability is one of the key principles in CIDA's approach to Results-based Management. CIDA, its Canadian partners and developing country partners are all expected to share responsibility for achieving results, including how results are planned and reported. Comments above on communications and cost allocation suggest that, in some cases the relationship between CIDA and CESO has not adequately applied a shared accountability approach. CESO has not been able to effectively take ownership of the projects, based on its own analysis of the context and needs in the country or region. As a result, CESO has been unable to negotiate with CIDA from an informed and confident position.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**For planning**, recommendations are made to strengthen CESO's capacity at many levels. They range from strengthening personnel, to allocating more resources for the inception phase of a project, to improving the appraisal of the organization's capacity to deliver and manage projects with adequate financial resources. These recommendations are given high priority because of the negative impact that inadequate planning has had in the past, and because of the need to fully integrate RBM at the institutional and program delivery levels.

**For Reporting,** recommendations are made to improve and decrease the number of reports made to the Bilateral Branches. Most important, a common format for reporting on Bilateral Branch projects should be developed by CESO in collaboration with CIDA.

**For Program management,** recommendations seek to strengthen CESO's program evaluation and institutional performance assessment functions. Improvements in these areas will facilitate the integration of RBM and provide better information for planning and for decision making. These recommendations will require that: (a) more resources be allocated to the evaluation and performance assessment functions, (b) program evaluation functions be integrated to program delivery within a RBM framework, and (c) personnel management control and performance assessment procedures be strengthened.

**For Financial management,** recommendations for strengthening costing and internal control procedures are considered to be of high priority because the weaknesses identified strongly impact on CESO's capability to manage Bilateral projects. Efforts should also be made to reduce fixed costs to acceptable levels in order to achieve cost effective program delivery.

**For CIDA / CESO relations,** recommendations made to CIDA seek to achieve greater consistency in Bilateral project budgets by defining cost sharing policies and the minimum acceptable standards for direct administrative and G.A. and OH budget ratios. Since CIDA is committed to using an RBM approach in its projects, it should seek to define the operational framework within which projects are to be executed, define results to be achieved and then leave CESO to manage its project. It should seek to develop with CESO a common understanding of the requirements for management and achievement of results. A common format for reporting and a consistent approach (even in the face of staff turnover) would also help to improve CIDA / CESO communications and relationships.

## **8. LESSONS LEARNED**

### *CESO's program management*

For an organization to improve its planning capacity, it must make use of relevant information drawn from internal performance review (conclusions and lessons learned). To improve results-based management of its program, (activities, results achieved and reporting), the CEA should take a pro-active role in defining its targets and focusing its program activities and delivery strategies. A purely responsive approach does not permit adequate planning of results within the objectives defined for the program. The RBM approach to program management and delivery requires an effective partnership relationship between the stakeholders. Shared accountability and good communications are essential to achieving results.

### **CIDA program planning**

CIDA will achieve greater success in its programming if it seeks to build on the specific expertise it has available among its partners. Some organizations effectively occupy a specific niche for which they are well suited and have developed the appropriate expertise and support systems. This niche expertise will not always transpose effectively into new areas. Pursuing other areas can even, in some circumstances, jeopardize the original objectives pursued by the organization.

If CIDA wishes to support successful programming, it must focus on a limited number of objectives for each project directly linked with those of the sector involved. Introducing too many crosscutting themes or parallel programming objectives can reduce the CEA's capacity to achieve the original objectives of the project. That an organization does one type of activity well does not automatically mean that they can easily take on additional responsibilities outside their main area of expertise.