ORGANIZATION ASSESSMENT GUIDE

Overcoming challenges

Delivering results

Meeting expectations

Making a contribution

Evaluation Division
Performance & Knowledge
Management Branch

June 2006

Canada

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Foreword

> Performance is a function of an organization's enabling environment, capacity and organizational motivation

Investing in organizations lies at the very heart of progressive and sustainable development. Donor agencies that reach out and cultivate partnerships can help to improve the performance levels of both established and emerging organizations. Organizations need to continuously learn, grow, and adapt. People within organizations need to learn to work together to reach common goals, and externally organizations have to function effectively within the context of their enabling environments. Organizations also need to exploit opportunities to work collaboratively to build knowledge bases, skill sets and capacities for delivery. A sound framework of government ministries, civil society bodies and other key organizations provides the underpinnings required for realizing economic, social and political aspirations.

CIDA brings a strong focus to the need for healthy, vibrant organizations in developing countries. Agency programming improves organizational performance directly through institutional capacity building interventions, and more indirectly by promoting the learning experience of partners during development cooperation collaborations. To this end, Organization Assessments (OAs) can play a valuable role in laying the foundations for institutional strengthening and in informing investment decision–making. OAs provide an assessment of an organization's performance, enabling environment, resident capacity and organizational motivation. This information can be then used to build on an organization's strengths – and address its weaknesses – to improve performance. Or OAs can be carried out to decide if an organization should be engaged as a partner and/or as a candidate for Agency funding.

The 'CIDA Organization Assessment Guide' presents a common framework for conducting OAs within the Agency and guidelines for shaping execution. A process is defined that provides a systematic approach to planning and design, implementation, reporting and taking action. The Guide provides the Agency's managers and staff with a framework for employing OAs to advantage, expectations for results and

standards for the preparation of terms of reference, workplans and OA reports. Practitioners are provided with a generic approach to conducting OAs that can be adapted to the task–at–hand. The intent of the Guide is not to be prescriptive, but rather to suggest approaches, methods and practices to facilitate carrying out OAs.

Our thanks are extended to the many individuals who made key contributions to the preparation of this Guide. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the encouragement and support provided by Marie-France D'Auray–Boult (Director General, Performance and Knowledge Management Branch) and Goberdhan Singh, (Director, Evaluation Division). We also acknowledge the work of Dr. Charles Lusthaus from the Universalia Management Group and Dr. Fred Carden and the Evaluation Unit of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in developing the OA framework, and for their continuing research in this area.

This Guide should be viewed as a work–in–progress. Refinements and adjustments will no doubt be required to accommodate 'real life' parameters and limitations, and the realities of working in the development cooperation theatre.

<u>We Welcome Your Comments</u>

Performance and Knowledge Management Branch relies
on hearing from users to improve our work effort.
We welcome any comments and/or suggestions that you may have.

Please contact us at:

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The Agency's websites offer a wide range of information
on CIDA's approach to performance and knowledge management.
In some cases, access may be restricted to internal audiences only.

Acronyms

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
NGO	Non–governmental organization
OA	Organization assessment
OECD	Organization for Economic Development & Cooperation
PBAs	Program–based approaches
PKMB	Performance & Knowledge Management Branch
RBM	Results–Based Management
SAE	"Canada Making a Difference in the World: A Policy Statement on Strengthening Aid Effectiveness" (CIDA)
SWAps	Sector–wide approaches
TBS	Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat
TOR	Terms of Reference

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About this Guide

We are asking more and more of our partner organizations. Donor agencies, in embracing country ownership, stronger partnerships, and comprehensive approaches, are becoming increasingly reliant on their partners in recipient countries for the delivery of development cooperation programming. Broad–based programming modalities are accentuating the value of partnership at a very fundamental level. In effect, donor participation is becoming more about enabling development through the provision of financial assistance, and the management of partner relationships in a government–led, and multi–donor environment.

With dramatic changes in the language of partnership, the Agency is still identifying and learning about the day–to–day implications. CIDA Program Managers are facing fresh challenges that demand new skill sets. A greater emphasis is being placed on in–country knowledge levels, and the ability to network and carry out policy dialogue in the field. The complexities attached to development cooperation programming initiatives can be unprecedented. An in–depth knowledge of partner organizations, both new and established, becomes a vital factor in effective decision–making.

Against this background, the need for departments and agencies to demonstrate accountability, responsible spending – and clear, concise results and directions – is more important than ever before. Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) and government auditors expect the highest professional and ethical values in ensuring the integrity of federal programming.

CIDA is committed to a results–based doctrine that emphasizes management for results. Initiatives to improve transparency and accountability are helping to build confidence that the Agency, in fulfilling its mandate, uses public funds judiciously and responsibly to achieve vital, meaningful results.

Going forward, it is imperative that programming choices are adequately informed and that the Agency consistently demonstrates fiscal responsibility in determining how CIDA invests in development cooperation – and with whom. The dynamics of development cooperation today can imply higher degrees of risk and uncertainty.

Application

It is often critical for CIDA management to know more about an organization and what it is capable of accomplishing. In particular, this can concern an organization's candidacy for funding or partnership, or for institutional strengthening. To this end, organization assessments (OAs) can play an instrumental role in informing the Agency's decision–making processes.

This Guide was 'purpose–built' to guide and facilitate carrying out OAs, providing a common framework for consistent application and guidelines for achieving meaningful, informative results. An emphasis is brought to identifying an organization's capacities, its 'track record' in demonstrating performance, its ability to function effectively within its external environment, congruence with CIDA's strategic interests, and the level of risk associated with partnership.

Organization

This Guide comprises seven chapters:

1 About OAs	Describes the role of OAs, their value, qualities & characteristics
2 CIDA's Approach	Suggests how OAs can be structured to make a contribution to informed decision–making
3 Planning & Design	Focuses on strategic planning, and writing Terms of Reference and OA Workplans
4 Information Collection & Analysis	Describes how OAs are operationalized and information is collected & analyzed
5 Writing Reports	Addresses the Agency's expectations for OA reports (includes tips for preparation)
6 Quick OAs	Provides a process for conducting OAs within minimal time frames
7 Next Steps	Presents strategies to promote informed decision–making, continuous learning and capacity building

Chapter 1: About Organization Assessments

> In this chapter:
>
> OA definition
> Understanding context
> Universalia/IDRC Model

An organization comprises a cluster of people working towards a shared goal. Generally, they are created when a group of individuals are brought together for a common purpose. Organizations can involve a wide spectrum of human activity. They can be categorized as private or public, for–profit or non–profit, governmental or non–governmental, and so forth.

Within all nations, there can be found a myriad of organizations dedicated to their individual agendas – whether they be economic, political or social. Some may be more formal than others. Some may be large and powerful. Others may be smaller and evolving. Agendas may also vary. Some may champion business development. Others may advocate for good governance and/or human rights. Some may perform well, others less well, and some fail altogether. No organization is left to function on–its–own; the interdependency of organizations is a key common factor that determines how individual organizations contribute, grow and meet their objectives.

OAs are also a common feature to all organizations, for every organization in time becomes involved in some sort of assessment (pertaining either to itself or of others). For example, when engaging another organization as a partner, client or for take–over target, it is crucial that going forward that you are confident about the organizations' capabilities, integrity and credibility. Such assessments typically involve due diligence to ensure acceptable levels of associated risk and likelihood for success. Internal OAs can help to ensure that organizations function optimally to stay competitive and meet targeted results. Here the emphasis may be on elevating performance and productivity, and aligning day–to–day activities with primary objectives. Generally, it is the need or desire to change performance that initiates internal OAs.

How such OAs are carried out can vary widely. OAs can amount to nothing more than obtaining referrals about the credibility of an organization ("What were your

experiences with the ABC Foundation?" "How did they perform?"), or they can involve a more intensive exercise involving a structured process for workplans, information collection and analysis, and reporting. Typically the level of formality attached to OAs is a function of financial significance, complexity and the time constraints attached to decision–making.

In this Guide, we address how best to perform OAs for the purposes of advancing development cooperation, and more specifically to optimize CIDA applications. To this end, we have harnessed the extensive work in this area carried out by the Universalia Management Group (with IDRC's support) over the past decade. The Universalia/IDRC Framework is specifically designed for the international development theatre. Its measure is defined by acceptance on a global scale. Testing in the field – and with Southern partners – has been essential in bringing the refinements needed to respond to 'real–life' needs and priorities.

This chapter takes a broad look at OAs, explaining what they are, the complex environment they are carried out in, linkages to overarching disciplines, and the framework for conducting OAs put forward by the Universalia/IDRC Framework. In the next chapter, we look at the potential offered by OAs in the CIDA context, and set out a step–by–step process for conducting OAs, from conceptualization through to the implementation of results and/or the sharing of information.

> ### 'Good' Decisions are made on 'Good' Information
>
> OAs are evidence–based inquiries that employ appropriate methods and techniques while demonstrating the highest technical standards. OAs provide credible findings based on valid information.

1.1 OA Definition

OAs can be defined as:

> "… the process for obtaining systematic information about the performance of an organization and the factors that affect performance in order to diagnose areas of possible investments for change and/or to demonstrate competence."

However, just as there is no one road to truth, in practice there are many combinations and permutations regarding the shape an OA can take. No two can ever be the same.

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1.2 Understanding Context

OAs by their very nature are complex undertakings that require a great deal of sensitivity, tact and understanding. When you are assessing an organization you are challenging in a very fundamental way how and why things are done the way they are. For many, change is a hostile act that threatens their security and well–being.

Think about instances during your career when your worked have been assessed. How did you respond? Likely you glowed with the complements and prickled with the criticisms. At the organizational level, when everyone is involved, the circumstance only becomes more complex. OAs have to deal with organizational insensitivities at a very broad level. Leaders of organizations tend to react badly when there directions are challenged. Ministers can get angry when you criticize their ministries. Managers may be totally incompetent and not know it. Too often, it is easier to shoot the messenger – an all–to–common occurrence. Managing this dimension successfully is never an easy proposition. It is key that your judgment is defensible and that your recommendations are well–supported and pragmatic.

This complexity associated with OAs is also accentuated by the following factors:

◎   OAs do not share the same richness of tapestry that defines program/project evaluations. Simply put, this is because fewer people have been involved in developing OA approaches and methods for a shorter period of time. As result, guidance for conducting OAs is less evolved – and less prescriptive. The Universalia/IDRC Model provides a broad–based menu for designing your OA. Significant judgment and experience is required to ensure that this model is effectively adapted to that task–at–hand to provide meaningful, useful assessment information.

◎   Organizations have unique, complex cultures. OA practitioners are expected to develop a sound understanding of how an organization thinks in a very short period of time. You need to be able to deal with people at their level, understanding their values and perspectives. As organizations tend to be influenced by the cultures that surround them, this condition can be accentuated when working in developing countries that are unfamiliar to you.

◎ Perspective as to what constitutes 'performance' can vary considerably. Each interest group or stakeholder may have a totally different idea of what counts. It can be difficult to obtain consensus on the merits of particular performance data and indicators. That is why a participatory process for planning that involves stakeholders is important.

1.3 Universalia/IDRC Framework

External Environment

- Administrative & Legal
- Political
- Social/Cultural
- Geographic
- Stakeholder
- Economic

Organizational Capacity

- Strategic Leadership
- Structure
- Human Resources Management
- Financial Management
- Infrastructure
- Technology
- Program/Process Management
- Inter-Organizational Linkages

Organizational Performance

- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Relevance
- Financial Viability

Organizational Motivation

- History
- Mission
- Culture
- Incentives & Rewards

When conducting an OA, we try to systematically collect data that will allow us to understand the success of an organization – its performance and the factors that drive that performance. To this end, the Universalia/IDRC approach provides a

framework of analysis, a common language and some systematic tools.

The Universalia/IDRC framework implies that key contextual forces drive organizational performance. This approach sees performance as a function of an organization's external environment, its motivation (underlying traits that define its 'personality'), and the ability to use its internal capacities to achieve results. The schematic representation provided on the facing page lists the many sub–components influencing each factor that may be considered when you carry out your OA. How the framework is applied will be determined by the overall design of your OA and which information needs are most relevant and critical.

A brief elaboration on the four factors that comprise the framework follows:

Organizational Performance

In saying that organizational performance is a function of three dominant variables, there remains a need to define what performance itself actually means. Most organizations view their performance in terms of 'effectiveness' in achieving their mission, purpose and/or goals. For example, NGOs would tend to link the larger notion of organizational performance to the results of their particular programs to improve the lives of a target group (e.g. the poor). At the same time, it is likely most organizations would also see performance in terms of their 'efficiency' in terms of deploying resources (optimal use to obtain the results desired). Finally, in order for an organization to remain sustainable, it must have: 1) an expansive sense of purpose that continues to be 'relevant' to its stakeholders (implying an ability to adapt to a changing context), and 2) 'financial viability' as measured by its ability to raise funds (and generate revenues) to met its functional requirements in the short, medium and long–term. The ultimate test of any organization over time is its sustainability.

External Environment

Organizations exist within certain external contexts that facilitate or impede their performance. They need to get support from the environments that they function in if they are to survive and perform well.

The environment can be the key factor in determining the ease with which an organization can carry out its activities – or the level of available resources. It is unlikely that targeted results will be achieved unless the stakeholder environment is supportive of what the organization is intent on accomplishing. Poor macro economic policies can lead to high interest rates, fluctuating currencies and a host

of conditions that make it difficult for some organizations to operate and perform well. Also, it is difficult to operate if there are poor infrastructure services. Things such as road systems, electricity, phone lines and so forth also influence an organization's performance. It is clear that the characteristics and quality of an organization's external environment can be key determinants in affecting the performance of the organization. The framework, therefore, identifies a number of environmental sub–components that should be considered when carrying out your OA (e.g. administrative/legal contexts, stakeholder environment, economic conditions, technological context, political factors, socio–cultural conditions, geographical context).

Organizational Capacity

Performance has a strong relationship to organizational capacity: performance can be conceived as the tip of the iceberg, with the organization's underlying capacity providing either support or impediments to performance. Organizational capacity exists in a number of basic areas: strategic leadership, human resources, core resources, programming/process management, and inter–institutional linkages. Each of these areas may be described in sub–components, for example strategic leadership capacity in terms of structure, governance, leadership skills, strategic planning and niche management. Human resources and core resources (financial and infrastructural capacity) are seen as resources, as well as the management of these resources. Organizations also have capacities that result from the relations, partnerships and alliances they have established with other institutions – referred to as inter–institutional linkages.

Organizational Motivation

Organizations possess internal dimensions that collectively define its personality and play a key role in motivating members to perform. The culture operating within an organization (and the incentive systems it offers) influences organizational motivation. The framework identifies history as one dimension that you may want to consider – how and why the organization got started, what the milestones are, and so forth. The organization's mission, values and vision may also be assessed to understand what the driving forces working within the organization are. Organizational motivation affects the quality of work, how the organization competes, and the degree of involvement of institutional stakeholders in decision–making processes.

Chapter 2: CIDA Approach

In this chapter:

Role of OAs
Value to CIDA programming
How OAs are carried out

C IDA values its progressive culture where critical analysis contributes to informed development. This chapter keys on how the Agency's investments in OAs can influence effective investment choices, strengthen infrastructure capacity and build stronger partnerships. We identify how OAs can function as a powerful tool well–suited to serving the Agency's commitments to the achievement of results and organizational learning.

The following sections elaborate on CIDA's approach to OAs: 1) the contributing role played by OAs, 2) the value to Agency programming, and 3) how OAs are triggered and carried out.

2.1 Role of OAs

Ostensibly OAs are implemented to assess candidacy for funding and/or partnership, or provide the underpinnings for strengthening infrastructure capacity. Program Managers may undertake OAs to inform programming investments. Or they may be called on to initiate an OA for the purposes of assessing an organization to identify its strengths and weaknesses. OAs help to build sound foundations for developing close collaborations with qualified partners.

OAs can take on many forms:

◎   Investments in institutions in recipient countries to strengthen capabilities, and overcome gaps and deficiencies

◎   Assessments to decide on the continuation of core funding or the implementation of a SWAps arrangement

◎ Assessments to determine the capability/competency of an organization being considered as a CIDA–funded implementing agency

◎ Assessments of large international institutions, or

◎ Self–assessments of organizations.

OAs can be also categorized by: 1) the type of organization being assessed (for profit, not–for–profit, government organization, international agency), 2) location (North, South), or the 3) the intensity of the assessment given the significance/complexity of the exercise and the time frame allowed for completion (formal, informal, quick). When the objective is strengthening an organization, OAs may be defined by a stage in the organization's life cycle (base–line, mid–term, end–of–project). OAs may also be: 1) participatory, 2) joint, 3) external/internal, 4) fully independent, or 5) self–conducted.

OAs are often more intricate, political and complex than evaluations. By their very nature, they address a broader concept than program/project outputs, impacts and outcomes. Institutional and organizational sensitivities when conducting OAs will likely be more pronounced.

> While OAs can be thought of as a key tool within the Agency's broad 'performance management' continuum, unlike evaluations and audits, they aren't 'institutionalized' within the Federal Government of Canada. That is to say, Treasury Board doesn't provide central direction to departments and agencies on OA activities.

2.2 Value to CIDA Programming

> As for any successful relationship, it is always crucial to know, understand – and learn from – your partner

OAs are about effective investment choices, strengthening infrastructure capacity and building stronger partnerships. Achieving these results supports the Agency's key objectives, mandate and strategic directions. When CIDA invests in OAs, they

are more likely to engage credible, capable partners…or they may set the stage for building more effective organizations that advance civil society and good governance.

Consider the following key developments and reflect on how OAs play into this mix:

◎ CIDA's Policy Statement, "Canada Making a Difference in the World: A Policy Statement on Strengthening Aid Effectiveness" (SAE) issued in 2002 addressed the principles for effective development. The 'Millennium Development Goals' highlight the importance of local ownership, stronger partnerships and a results–based approach. Other factors identified as being of central importance to the effective use of aid investments are good governance, building capacity and engaging civil society.

◎ "Results for Canadians: A Management Framework for the Government of Canada" (TBS, 2000) committed departments and agencies to the highest professional and ethical values. Managing for results and responsible spending were identified as fundamental to citizen–focused government, and assessments were linked to the need for a supportive culture of continuous learning and adjustment.

◎ Results–Based Management (RBM), introduced in 1994, committed the Agency to managing for results as an over–arching management approach.

◎ With growing support for Program–Based Approaches (PBAs), informed decisions about programming choices become critical to the mitigation of risk and the demonstration of accountability at all levels

For CIDA, partnerships are essential. The development of strong, dependable and enduring partnerships is fundamental to CIDA's operational framework for the delivery of results. The Agency's partners have increasingly become the front–line delivery agents for development cooperation. Making informed choices about investing in partnerships is becoming more and more crucial. OAs help to ensure that the 'right' partners are engaged. Investing in OAs is tied to more effective and efficient development, and prospects for greater accountability.

Within the Government of Canada, departments and agencies are being held to increasing and evolving accountability requirements, and better management of the relationship between resource expenditures and results. CIDA is directly responsible for managing the development pool of the International Assistance Envelope and accountable to the Government of Canada and Canadians for the results it obtains from its investments in development cooperation programming.

Unless due diligence is attached to partner selection and investment choices, the Agency may become involved in unfavourable situations where practices are challenged and prudence and probity are brought into question. OAs can be an important factor in minimizing the Agency's exposure to unacceptable levels of risk, so important in meeting the challenges inherent in the Agency's new programming modalities.

Improving CIDA's development cooperation programming hinges on organizational learning. The effective management of knowledge gained from the Agency's OAs contributes to the development of new intellectual capital both in Canada and in recipient countries.

2.3 Step–by–Step

> Strengthening development cooperation through informed decision–making and organizational learning

Why OAs Are Carried Out

What triggers an OA? OAs are planned and carried out in response to management's needs. They may be addressed in branch–level workplans, or initiated on an ad hoc basis.

Most often, consideration is prompted by one of two decision–points:

◎   What is the likelihood of success of this funding intervention? Should we carry out an OA to determine this organization's functional capabilities and proven capacities for delivery?

◎   Would strengthening this organization's functional capabilities help to meet national, regional and/or local development objectives and priorities? Would an OA be the best way to proceed?

How is the decision made to proceed? Decisions are reached once management has a clear and precise understanding of the specifics involved, the parameters for implementation, and the value–added to be gained. The final decision likely rests with the Responsibility Centre Manager.

Senior branch management is responsible for bringing a strategic approach to the planning of all development cooperation programs/projects. More formal, complex OAs may be scheduled by the CIDA's Executive Committee in accordance with corporate priorities (as part of the Agency's corporate planning cycle).

Who Does What

For more formal and extensive OAs, the common practice is to contract out assessments to an individual, firm or organization. Contracting out eliminates the corporate costs associated with maintaining a permanent, in–house capacity within CIDA, and promotes creativity/innovation by bringing in external expertise.

Typically, the consultant is responsible for day–to–day management of activities and the preparation of deliverables. The CIDA Program Manager represents the Agency, oversees and monitors progress, and is responsible for the conduct and delivery of the OA. In some cases, the decision may be taken to build an OA team comprising several experts from different organizations, or an advisory committee may be formed to provide overall direction for larger, more complex initiatives (e.g. multi–donor assessments).

> When faced with pressing time and/or financial constraints,
> Program Managers and/or CIDA staff may carry out
> simpler, quick assessments.

Process Followed

The table overleaf provides a step–by–step process for carrying out a formal OA. Planning and design are initiated after CIDA management makes the decision to proceed. Terms of reference (TORs) are prepared to establish broad parameters defining what is to be done –and by whom. OAs are operationalized with the Agency's approval of the consultant's workplan. Assessments may or may not include missions to recipient countries.

When less formal OAs are conducted, all these steps may not be necessary. However, all assessments should respect the need to provide a level of credible information that is adequate to effectively inform decision–making and optimize learning.

As no organization is the same – and each functions within its own distinctive external environment – it follows that every OA is unique. The Universalia/IDRC OA framework provides a 'common' approach for a wide–range of applications that, in practice, has proven both reliable and successful.

CIDA OA Process

Steps	Activities/Responsibilities
Preparation of Terms of Reference	TORs provide the first substantive overview for the OA, articulating management's initial requirements/expectations. CIDA Program Managers are responsible for preparing TORs, and senior branch management is responsible for approvals.
Consultant Selection	CIDA Program Managers are responsible for selecting the qualified candidate who demonstrates best value. Senior branch management oversees the selection process and is accountable for compliance with contracting requirements and authorities.
Preparation of Workplan	Workplans refine/elaborate on the information put forward in TORs to provide more precise and detailed guidance to OAs. Consultants are responsible for preparing work plans. CIDA Program Managers oversee preparation, provide advice and approve final plans.
Information Collection & Analysis	Consultants carry out assessments to identify findings, results and lessons learned. Sources of information can include file reviews, consultations, site observations and focus groups sessions. CIDA Program Managers monitor progress and inform senior branch management.
Preparation of Report	OA reports clearly distill and articulate findings, results and lessons. Consultants are responsible for report preparation. CIDA Program Managers oversee production, and advise senior management on developments. Senior branch management is responsible for approving the final report.
Next Steps	Senior branch management is responsible for ensuring findings, results and lessons are implemented and shared (as appropriate). In this way, OAs contribute to informed development.

Note: In some cases, a CIDA manager (or staff member) may be made responsible for carrying out the OA (without a Consultant being retained). That individual would then be responsible for preparing the workplan and the OA report in addition to the management and oversight activities identified above. In the following chapters, *guidance speaks to the person assigned to carry out the task–at–hand.*

Chapter 3: Planning & Design

In this chapter:

Getting started
Preparing terms of reference
Selecting consultants
Preparing workplans
Rating your workplan

You now have the 'green light' to carry out an OA. What's next? The first step is to bring some scope and focus to the task ahead. Subsequent steps in planning and design will bring elaboration, precision and refinement to why the OA is being done, how it is to be done, who is to do what, and when it is to be done.

This chapter stresses the importance of taking a strategic, results–based approach to framing OAs. Typically, the CIDA Program Manager is responsible for preparing the TOR, and overseeing consultant selection. The consultant develops the OA workplan for approval. Not everything set out in this chapter would have application for all OAs. Simpler assessments, of course, would entail a less involved process.

3.1 Getting Started

Think the 'big picture'. A good OA is measured not only by what is learned about the organization but also by how the findings, results and lessons were arrived at. In the end, success will be determined by the contribution made to informed decision–making and learning.

Key guidelines:

◎ Build value throughout the OA process to make an effective contribution to development cooperation.

◎ Involve – and listen to – the subject organization throughout planning and design. Organizations leaders and managers need to be on–side so as the OA functions cooperatively towards a commonly–held goal.

◎ Early on, ensure you have a clear understanding of the rationale for the OA, the issues to be addressed, resource requirements (including expertise), anticipated costs, and the time frame for completion.

◎ Secure the quality and validity of your assessment by maintaining an impartial, balanced, independent position, and ensuring the credibility and accuracy of the information brought forward.

◎ Share information throughout the OA so that CIDA management stays informed and stakeholder 'buy in' is encouraged (as appropriate).

◎ Frame reports to facilitate decision–making and learning (and minimize the risk of misinterpretation).

◎ Develop a dissemination strategy to optimize the benefits derived.

Initially, it may also be important to bring some perspective to several issues that may have to be addressed. How will expectations for the meaningful participation of stakeholders and the organization itself be covered off? Are there implications relating to gender equality and environmental sustainability? How will they be addressed?

Participatory Assessments

RBM has been instrumental in integrating direct stakeholder involvement in building towards sustainable results. Previously, beneficiaries, local organizations and governments in recipient countries were left without any substantive role. RBM stresses the importance of meaningful stakeholder participation throughout the lifecycle of projects, starting with planning and design. When stakeholders participate, they are more likely to 'buy–into' the directions ensuing from assessments. Each OA requires a unique response that addresses expectations, local context, the capacities/availability of key stakeholders, and financial constraints.

3.2 Preparing Terms of Reference

TORs offer the first substantive overview of the OA. In effect, they frame the assessment, conceptualizing the exercise and identifying broad parameters for implementation. Management's initial expectations for the assessment are articulated, in turn laying the foundations for the next steps in the OA process – selecting the consultant and preparing the workplan. TORs guide assessments until workplans take over to guide execution and provide primary project control.

TORs are expected to: 1) profile the investment being assessed, 2) identify reasons for the OA, 3) establish scope and focus, 4) determine accountabilities and responsibilities, and 5) set out the process to be followed (with deliverables). They also identify consultant qualifications, set scheduling and time frames, and put forward an internal cost projection for conducting the OA. TORs are usually prepared in close collaboration with keys stakeholders, including the organization being assessed. Typically, CIDA Project Managers prepare TORs, and senior branch management is responsible for approvals.

How do you prepare a TOR? Perhaps the best way to start is to go to Appendix A which sets out 'model text' for a fictitious assessment that meets the Agency's essential requirements. This example addresses whether or not an organization should be a candidate for continued core funding over a three or five–year period. You may also want to refer to Appendix B which provides a menu of sample questions for shaping your OA.

CIDA Program Managers can work from this standard and adapt the information to reflect their requirements. After completing a first draft, work through the table on the next page to ensure that your TOR meets expectations. This table suggests an outline for preparing TORs and elaborates on important reporting elements. The 'rating' checklist found later on in this section may be useful for determining if your TOR does the job.

Focus on Results

TORs are to reflect RBM's focus on the achievement of results, incorporating the Agency's results–based principles and practices. CIDA's "Framework of Results & Key Success Factors" (see Appendix C) should be applied to frame what is to be addressed and the OA's operational orientation towards results.

TOR Outline

Section	Content/Comments
1 Title	Short, descriptive (good acronym)
2 Organization Profile	Mandate, history, operational framework, targeted beneficiaries, reach, funding, results achieved
3 Broad Considerations	Global, regional, national context, developments impacting external environment
4 Reasons for OA	Primary rationale, risk management, learning opportunity, other value–added
5 Scope & Focus	Scope indicates broad issues, focus comprises questions central to these issues
6 Stakeholder Participation	Mapping of participation by beneficiaries, ministries in recipient countries, other donors, partners, other stakeholders
7 Accountabilities & Responsibilities	Delineating between roles of CIDA Program Manager and the Consultant
8 OA Process	Broad indication of how assessment to be carried out, workplan and OA report requirements, field mission if any (adequate detail to inform the workplan)
9 Deliverables	Timeframes for workplan and OA report delivery, on–going progress reporting
10 Consultant Qualifications	Experience, expertise, language capacities
11 Internal Cost Projection	Projected level of effort (number of days), anticipated 'consultant–related cost' (remains confidential to the Agency)

Rating your TOR

Are you satisfied with your TOR? Does it meet expectations? Has managing for results, continuous learning and knowledge building been adequately addressed?

Reflect on the following questions to make sure your TOR measures up:

Does your TOR...

☑ Link what you trying to accomplish with CIDA's needs to inform strategic decision-making?

☑ Provide an adequate briefing about organization's function, history, linkages and performance record?

☑ Allow for the successful completion of the OA in time to inform strategic decision-making?

☑ Justify why CIDA is investing in this OA at this time?

☑ Clearly articulate the need for findings, results and lessons learned and explain how the assessment is to be carried out?

☑ Emphasize the importance of exploiting learning opportunities?

☑ Meet the need to identify risk (if required)?

☑ Set parameters for involving the organization itself and key stakeholders throughout the assessment?

☑ Establish qualifications for consultants that would bring together the 'right team' to do the job?

☑ Allow for adequate financing of the OA to meet expectations for results, and establish contingencies for unanticipated developments?

3.3 Selecting Consultants

The selection of a competent, capable consultant is critical to success. No amount of direction and/or control from CIDA will salvage an OA if the consultant selected cannot perform at expected levels (for whatever reason). It is critical that sufficient time and effort is expended to ensure an appropriate choice.

Selecting the 'Right' Consultant

The challenge is to identify a fully qualified candidate who offers the best value to CIDA. The engagement of a consultant essentially involves four steps: 1) deciding on the sourcing option (e.g. open competition, standing offer, rosters of local professionals), 2) selecting best candidate from potential suppliers, 3) notifying the successful candidate; 4) negotiating and signing the contract. CIDA is committed to ensuing transparency, fairness and equality in its selection processes. The Agency benefits when opportunities are made available to a wide range of potential suppliers.

How should consultant qualifications be determined? Requirements for expertise, experience and abilities must respond to expectations for the work to be performed, and the deliverables to be produced. Consideration may be given to: 1) technical, analytical and sectoral expertise, 2) previous experience in conducting OAs (demonstrated capacity for delivery), 3) knowledge of thematic issues, 4) in–country, regional and 'like' experiences, and 5) language skills. Experience in conducting OAs embracing stakeholder participation should also be addressed.

Other considerations:

◎ Working in developing countries often implies difficult working conditions. Ideally, the successful candidate should have demonstrated the ability to function effectively in countries with similar working environments and/or characteristics. Typically this entails understanding the social–cultural environment.

◎ Engaging local professionals promotes 'buy–in' into what is being accomplished, assists in the development of pragmatic and practical approaches and results, and builds capacities in recipient countries.

There may be advantages in engaging a team of individuals. When selecting teams members, leadership and team dynamics should be at the forefront of decision–making. There is no understating the importance of team chemistry, particularly

when operations are being carried in challenging working environments. The assessment team will be expected to function smoothly with authority and conviction, consistently demonstrating a singular outlook and purpose.

It is essential that the successful candidate does not enter into in a conflict of interest position with the awarding of contract. There should be no previous or intended involvement with the initiative being assessed, or any other connection that would be perceived as a conflict of interest.

Rating your Selection

Is the selected consultant or study team capable of doing a good job? Are there any issues that should be addressed before the contract is awarded?

Reflecting on the following questions may help to make you more comfortable and confident with your selection:

Does the Selected Consultant...

☑ Have the knowledge and working experience to plan, implement and report on all aspects of the OA as per management's expectations?

☑ Understand how to apply CIDA's approach to RBM, the "Framework of Results and Key Success Factors" and other performance-related instruments?

☑ Have a track record demonstrating the ability to successfully complete OAs respecting time and cost restraints?

☑ Offer the leadership skills needed for effective team management and successful relations with partners and stakeholders?

☑ Meet the requirements for thematic, technical, sectoral knowledge and expertise?

Does the Selected Consultant...

☑ Have experience working in developing countries, the subject region and/or country that would indicate the capacity to work successfully on this project?

☑ Possess an adequate understanding of local social and cultural issues, and meet the language requirements to function effectively on–site?

☑ Have the capacity to address cross–cutting thematic issues (e.g. gender equality, environment)?

☑ Have the ability to carry out participatory OAs efficiently and effectively?

☑ Understand requirements for engaging local resources? Has this been addressed adequately?

Next Step

CIDA's Program Manager selects the successful candidate and makes a recommendation to the Responsibility Centre Manager for approval. Senior branch management oversees the selection process and is accountable for compliance with contracting requirements and authorities.

A contract is then negotiated to reach agreement on the value of contract, method of payment, and other terms and conditions. Once signed, the consultant initiates preparation of the OA workplan.

3.4 Preparing OA Workplans

> Information brought forward only has value if
> it contributes to informed decision-making
> and/or the learning cycle.

Once approved by CIDA, the workplan becomes the key management document for controlling the OA and guiding delivery in accordance with expectations. In preparing workplans, consultants are expected to build on and refine what was put forward in the TOR, adding elaboration/precision and ensuring practicability.

Consultants are expected to perform a thorough review of relevant information sources to bring a fully informed perspective to workplan preparation. Sources may include: 1) TORs, 2) country, program, project–level documents, 3) literature, 4) the Agency's Corporate Memory System, and 5) consultations with CIDA personnel, key stakeholders and others having relevant knowledge. Requirements to consult with the organization itself will also have to be addressed.

When workplans are being developed, consultants are expected to keep the CIDA Program Manager apprised of progress and developments. Moreover, CIDA's Program Manager and the consultant should strive to develop a good working relationship during OA planning, establishing a dialogue that leads to effective interpersonal communications throughout the life of the project. It is important that both parties surface from the planning process with a clear and single understanding of how the work is to be performed, who is to do what, what is to be produced, and when deliverables are expected. The value of involving the organization itself (and key stakeholders) during workplan development should not be understated.

How long should workplans be? Generally, the level of detail should be adequate to effectively inform and control the assessment. Consultants should endeavor to keep workplans clear, concise and precise in meeting this objective.

> OAs may call for a mission to the recipient country.
> If so, travel logistics will have to be worked out as part of the
> planning process. Protocols for functioning in the recipient
> country are usually handled by CIDA's Program Manager in
> consultation with CIDA's desk officer and post personnel.

Thinking Strategically

During planning, thinking strategically upfront may pay dividends downstream. To this end, an upfront session with organizational stakeholders might help to de–mystify the process.

It may also be helpful for the CIDA Program Manager and the consultant alike to reflect on the following guidelines:

◎ OAs are to inform decision–making and learning. Workplans link the design of the assessment with what CIDA needs to know about the organization (e.g. functional capacities, performance, strengths, weaknesses).

◎ What you are trying to achieve should be clearly articulated, justifiable, useful to CIDA, and workable within operational realities and time constraints.

◎ The Agency's goal is to optimize value–added from its investment in this assessment. Consultants are expected to bring their ideas and insights to planning and design.

◎ Iterative management during implementation should be emphasized to encourage flexibility and responsiveness. Innovation and creativity should be contained but not constrained.

◎ The impact from investments may have to be viewed as a longer–term phenomenon.

◎ Identify unintended results, if any, attributable to the organization (both positive and negative).

> "The costs of initiatives must be linked with results to ensure responsible spending."
>
> "Results for Canadians"
> Treasury Board Secretariat, 2000

Writing Workplans

At the core of each workplan is the methodology to be followed – and more particularly the OA framework matrix. The methodology provides a logical model for assessing the organization that responds to the key issues. The OA framework matrix systematizes what is to be assessed and how this assessment is to be carried out. The challenge is to develop an approach that best achieves this objective given the information available, and what is practical within the imposed time, resource and cost constraints.

The workplan should describe in some detail the methods selected for information collection. Your assessment may include: 1) project sampling, 2) consultations with the organization itself, ministry officials, beneficiaries, civil society, NGOs and partner organizations, 3) expert opinion from other donor agencies and thematic experts, 4) interviews with CIDA managers/staff, Heads of Mission and DFAIT officials, 5) site visits, 6) case studies, and 7) surveys.

It is important to remain strategic and to select sources that will best inform the assessment. New sources of information may be identified during implementation, often in carrying out in–country missions. The workplan should remain receptive to this eventuality.

Information analysis techniques translate raw information into a meaningful and valid response to the assessment issues. Analytical techniques may include: 1) statistical analysis, 2) non–statistical analysis, and 3) projecting longer–term outcomes and impacts. Cost and time constraints will limit what information can realistically be collected.

To facilitate workplan preparation, Appendix D provides 'model text' for a fictitious assessment that meets the Agency's requirements. Consultants can work through this example, making adaptations to reflect their requirements.

The following two figures may also be helpful. The first suggests an outline to guide workplan preparation, while the checklist ensures your workplan addresses expectations from a broader perspective. These tables are designed to cover OAs relating to both funding approvals and capacity building. Not all the requirements will be applicable in all cases – less formal OAs will likely entail a more abbreviated approach.

OA Workplan Outline

Section	Content/Comments
1 Introduction	1) OA purpose, 2) Organization profile: *mandate, mission, history, programming overview: strategies, operational framework, targeted beneficiaries, linkages*, 3) Performance record: *results achieved to date, reach of programming*, 4) CIDA/donor funding, 5) Key audiences
2 Objectives	Key issues (developed from TOR rationale, scope, focus), also address risk management, exploiting learning opportunities, other value–added (as appropriate)
3 Methodology	1) Approach (organization/stakeholder participation), 2) OA framework, 3) File review, 4) Project sampling, 5) Consultations, 6) Information analysis, 7) Limitations
4 Reporting Requirements	Foreword Executive Summary (abstract) 1 Introduction: *OA objectives, organization overview, methodology, study team members, report organization* 2 External Environment: *administrative, political, social/ cultural, technological, economic, stakeholder* 3 Organizational Performance: *effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, financial viability* 4 Organizational Motivation: *history, mission, culture, incentives/rewards* 5 Organizational Capacity: *strategic leadership, human resources, financial management, program management, process management, inter-organizational linkages* 6 Conclusion 7 Recommendations 8 Lessons Learned 9 Future Directions Appendices: *TOR, consultations, documents reviewed, etc.*
5 OA Management	1) OA team, 2) Responsibilities & accountabilities: *CIDA Program Manager, consultant, organization, government ministries, other donors*, 3) Work schedule, 4) Effort analysis
Appendices	I Terms of Reference II OA Framework III Bios for OA Team IV Proposed Field Mission Itinerary

3.5 Rating Your Workplan

Are you satisfied with your workplan? Does it meet expectations to implement and report on the OA as per management's expectations?

Reflect on the following questions to see how your workplan measures up:

Does your Workplan...

- ☑ Link what you trying to accomplish with CIDA's needs to inform strategic decision-making?

- ☑ Clearly articulate how the assessment is to be carried out? Who is responsible for doing what? And when?

- ☑ Provide for a level of detail that is adequate?

- ☑ Effectively address CIDA's over-arching commitments to managing for results, continuous learning and knowledge-building?

- ☑ Allow for the successful completion of the OA in time to met CIDA's needs?

- ☑ Set out realistic timeframes for work scheduling?

- ☑ Identify leadership and explain how the study team will function and complement each other?

- ☑ Meet the need to identify risk (if required)?

- ☑ Provide for involving the organization itself and key stakeholders throughout the assessment?

- ☑ Address the need for successful relations with partners and stakeholders?

- ☑ Establish contingencies for unanticipated developments?

Next Step

The OA workplan should be submitted as a draft by the consultant
to the CIDA Program Manager (and likely to the organization itself).
As well, requirements to provide for the participation of
key stakeholders in workplan approval are addressed.

CIDA's Responsibility Centre Manager has to approve the workplan
before the OA is operationalized. Other approvals by the
organization/stakeholders may also be required. If applicable,
the post is notified of what is expected so that adequate preparations
can be made for the field mission. The final workplan should also
be shared with the organization and key stakeholders.

As the approved workplan governs the rest of the OA,
any major, downstream deviations or alterations to the strategy
for carrying out the assessment are reflected in revisions
that are subsequently approved by CIDA management.

Chapter 4: Information Collection & Analysis

In this chapter:

Organizing field missions
Interviewing tips
When in the field
Collecting & analyzing information

Now we are at the 'heart' of the exercise – executing the OA workplan. How do you actually go about getting sound, accurate information to develop useful findings, results and lessons that respond to stated objectives? Typically this will be a collaborative effort with the CIDA Program Manager overseeing, advising and supporting the consultant in carrying out information collection and analysis.

Undoubtedly, the greatest challenges are faced during implementation. Your approach will require strategic oversight, a reasoned approach, likely some patience, and a healthy measure of good judgment. Any number of diversions and/or complications may occur, often more so in the field. They may be attributed to individual agendas, turf wars, misunderstanding and/or fear brought on by the prospect of change. How you manage the 'human dimension' will become a critical factor in determining the outcome of your efforts. It is very important that obstacles are not allowed to detract from the task–at–hand and the development of meaningful results.

Your OA may constitute a desk assessment only – or it may call for an information–gathering mission to the recipient country or countries. Field missions provide the opportunity for site observations and face–to–face, in–country interviews.

In this chapter, we provide a strategic outlook to information collection and analysis that: 1) stresses the importance of being prepared, 2) identifies challenges that may arise, and 3) offers strategies for overcoming obstacles and realizing expectations. This presentation assumes a field mission component.

Here we build on the information gathering
already carried out during preparation of the workplan

4.1 Organizing Field Missions

> Missions without a clear purpose can lead to wasted time and resources as well as confusion and frustration for stakeholders. Be selective in defining purpose: you can't do everything!

Field missions need to be carefully planned and executed in order to achieve optimal benefit. They should be viewed as a valuable opportunity for enriching your OA. What you expect to achieve should be clearly articulated. While the OA workplan links key issues to information sources, fine-tuning information collection activities at this time may be advisable. Reflect on how stakeholders in recipient countries will respond to the mission – and formulate strategies for dealing with any issues that may surface. Preparing a field mission itinerary will help to translate your objectives into action. Field missions are costly – make sure CIDA's investment is well–spent.

Thinking ahead, the following guidelines may helpful:

◎ Field missions should be used to complement, supplement and/or validate other sources of information already available to you. Conducting a file review will provide content analysis and contextual understanding, identify mandates and results, and indicate what worked and what didn't. It is important to build on what you know rather than starting from scratch.

◎ Simply put, not every tidbit of information needs to be collected to know what is going on. It is important to be selective in order to achieve optimal value, while remaining cost–effective.

◎ Be ready to learn from the information being collected. Better options may surface. Your mind–set should be receptive to intuitive, midstream decision–making that exploits potentially rewarding opportunities. Your thinking should be consistently focused on how best to inform the Agency's strategic decision–making requirements.

◎ Early on, the consultant should develop a strategy for consultations with key stakeholders during the field trip. The mapping of stakeholders helps to ensure adequate coverage and representation.

◎   During field missions, opportunities for sharing what you're learning with stakeholders (during information collection) should be exploited to build credibility and stronger relationships.

◎   Make sure that CIDA management gets accurate, factual, balanced reporting from the field. Often, only 'good news' is received, while developing issues and problems are ignored. This approach can prove costly.

During field missions, it is important to have access to key documentation. Limit what you bring along as you will have limited time for review in the field. To lessen the load, rely on electronic copies and/or executive summaries.

Pre–Mission Checklist

Going through the following checklist may help you to feel more confident before heading out on a field mission:

Checklist

☑   Are information collection opportunities adequate to meet CIDA's needs? Will information collection be affordable? Is the work schedule still doable? Are any revisions needed at this time?

☑   Is mission planning adequate? Have the travel logistics been worked out to your satisfaction?

☑   Does your strategy for stakeholder participation meet expectations?

☑   Has CIDA's Program Manager consulted with the desk officer and post personnel to address protocol requirements in the recipient country?

☑   Has the post been provided with your itinerary and other important documentation (OA workplan, etc.)?

4.2 Intervewing Tips

Interview protocols can be helpful in promoting a structured approach to information collection. In turn, data that is uniform facilitates the development of findings, results and lessons. To this end, interview guides and data recording worksheets may be assistance. Often when collecting information – particularly in the field – you only get that 'one' opportunity for access.

The following interviewing tips are suggested:

◎ In advance, clearly identify what you need to determine (refer to issues), and formulate general, specific and follow–up (prompts) questions.

◎ Provide interviewees with a brief verbal overview of your mission and what to expect during the interview.

◎ Maintain control of the interview process and of the content of the interview.

◎ Interviewing techniques: 1) do not precede questions with a position statement, 2) triangulate data to confirm or refute contentious issues, 3) ask one question at a time and avoid double–barreled questions, 4) vary between open–ended and closed questions, 5) prepare suitable transitions from one topic to the next, and 6) limit the number of questions to the time you have with the respondent.

◎ Respect the time commitments established for interviews.

◎ Thank each interviewee for her/his time.

◎ Be open to the possibility of meetings with additional sources as time permits.

4.3 When in the Field

> Be understanding, yet remain focused & resolute

OAs are hugely invasive, particularly when they target how an organization can be improved. They bring into debate the direction of the organization, its performance and even how individuals contribute. They challenge everyone in the organization – from leadership on down. How the human dimension is managed will be critical to what is achieved. Being able to understanding the human face attached to OAs is a vital management responsibility, both for the leadership of the organization and the OA practitioner.

At a fundamental level, OAs imply change. Many see any form of change as threatening. How people respond and cope when organizations are being transformed will be determinants in how successful the outcome will be. Change must be managed and, to this end, communications are very important. Every effort needs to be to ensure that all members of the organizations understand that an OA is an opportunity for enhancing productivity and sustainability. Leadership needs to consistently demonstrate support for the OA and pro–change champions within the organization should be engaged and nurtured.

The following provides guidelines for functioning effectively in the field:

Respecting local contexts	Understand the context that you are functioning in and always remain cognizant of the dynamics at play (and responsive to their implications). The local economic, social, political and cultural characteristics of the recipient country can be critical in determining what can be accomplished. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and make accommodations for local beliefs and customs.

Minimize disruptive impacts	OAs are intrusive, placing additional demands on individuals and disrupting day–to–day operations. Keep things simple and minimize the burden.
Countering negativity	Reluctance to participate and antagonism in the field is best countered by: 1) emphasizing constructive elements, 2) keeping participants involved and fully informed through regular meetings, and 3) maintaining open and frank communications with the organization, local stakeholders and the post.
Staying on track	Leadership is key in keeping stakeholders/ partners working towards what you are trying to accomplish. Frequent indications of progress are important for motivating the participants, and keeping CIDA management informed. Deal with emerging issues promptly and don't allow interpersonal conflicts to dominate the agenda. Sidestep any such distractions. A focused team effort is critical for success.Address any misunderstandings or misinterpretations quickly before they can cause larger problems.
Value of ethics	Unless ethical standards are respected, the credibility of your OA may be jeopardized. Competency in delivery, integrity in relationships and accountability in performance are key.
Dealing with fundamental differences in values	You may run into conflicts with partners in developing countries due to fundamental differences in values (e.g. gender equality). Your response should negotiate the delicate balance between sensitivity to local practices and respect for international conventions.
Staying disciplined, yet being adaptable	Your workplan provides a path for bringing the OA to a successful conclusion. Yet the realities of fieldwork often embody elements that can ambush the best laid plans. Being adaptive, creative and innovative in overcoming such hurdles will help keep the assessment on track.

	New ideas may come to light during the field mission that could improve the quailty of your assessment. Their value should not be lost.
Information problems that may arise	Your leadership and interpersonal skills may be called upon to deal with: ◎ Denials about the existence of information ◎ The absence of good information for answering questions ◎ Deficiencies in the volume or quality of information ◎ Questionable validity/reliability ◎ Contradictory information ◎ Sensitive information that is difficult to report, and ◎ Evidence of wrongdoing.
Working through difficulties	Consultants are often faced with unanticipated challenges during field work. In some cases, difficulties can be resolved by simply applying fundamental values and ethics, and/or proven management practices. Issues, however, can be more complex with unique dimensions demanding unique solutions. The art of negotiation can be a valuable asset when working in recipient countries. Often, consensus building and compromise may offer the only pragmatic recourse for placating local partners without threatening the assessment. Snap, unilateral decisions usually are not the answer. Working through difficulties to reach the appropriate solution usually involves consulting with partners/stakeholders to discuss what should be done.

4.4 Collecting Information

Document sources can be internal (annual reports, program–planning documents, strategic plans, etc.) or external (country policies, media, etc.). Or data can be obtained through people, either directly through conversation or indirectly using questionnaires. Observation can also serve as a valuable source of information. For example, consultants may visit a project site or spend time at organization headquarters to develop a greater understanding of day–to–day operations.

Be Strategic

OAs are evidence–based exercises. While judgment and intuition should play a role in managing implementation, when formulating findings, results and lessons the consultant should limit tendencies for interpretation. Information collection is about determining the facts. Analyzing information is about determining their implications in responding to the OA issues. In the OA report, we have, in effect, an epiphany of sorts – that moment when recommendations and future courses of action are put forward made based on all that is learned. How best to respond to the OA key issues? What will be your main sources of information? The OA workplan links the issues to be addressed with 'generic' data sources. Fine–tuning your approach to be more specific will likely pay dividends, particularly for more complex assessments. It may be helpful to be more precise in identifying key sources that can provide you with the information you will require to respond to the key OA issues.

Typical Information Sources

Partners & stakeholders	Government advisors or officials, senior managers, administrators, researchers, partner/project staff, volunteers and advisors, beneficiaries, members, etc.
Key documents	Partner organization and/or project files, handbooks, mission statements, annual reports, resource documents, project reports, contextual studies, needs assessments, beneficiary impact studies, etc.
Observations	Meetings, staff interactions and behaviors, procedures and processes in action, physical infrastructure, etc.

Be Organized

Start to develop your findings, results and lessons while the data is still fresh in your mind. This should be done during field missions, as undoubtedly you will face distractions when you return to your office.

The level of detail in your records should be adequate to inform and support your findings, results and lessons. Your primary record of consultations will likely be your notes. Key documents should also be copied and retained for easy reference.

Using work tools to organize what is learned in carrying out information collection activities may be of assistance. Information should be categorized by key issue (and where appropriate by sub–question).In this regard, the following template may be helpful:

Key Issue	Sub–Question	Strengths	Weaknesses	Comments

Be Realistic

Data collection in practice will no doubt be a far cry from what you envisaged when you drew up your neatly laid-out OA workplan. However, it seldom actually takes place in an orderly, sequential manner. Likely complications should be counted on. For example, some interviewees may be traveling and unavailable to meet when you are in the country. Others may simply refuse to be interviewed. Important documentation may be missing or lost.

What to do in such circumstances? The answer lies in demonstrating leadership, flexibility and resourcefulness. Data collection is a human, organic process. It is important to recognize and understand that information collection can rarely be completed as planned and is never perfect. Imperfect yes, but like trial by jury the best approach devised so far.

4.5 Analyzing Information

Analyzing information is about focusing on the key issues, distilling what you have learned from your information collection activities and developing accurate, credible

and useful findings, results and lessons that respond to the Agency's needs for informed decision–making and organizational learning. Think about how your work can best contribute to improved programming and appropriate partner choices. Ideally, the information that you have collected and analyzed will result in recommendations being implemented as appropriate, and key audiences sharing in and benefiting from your results.

It is important to take the broadest view of the value offered by the information collected, yet be strategic in determining what information will be presented in the OA report. Every effort should be made to reduce bias, error and misinterpretation in presenting the facts. Double check contradictory evidence, give more weight to reliable sources, and ensure significant information is not ignored. Credible results are derived from multiple information sources.

A group discussion involving all members of the OA study team (and others as appropriate) can be a very useful technique for data analysis. This provides participants with a forum to discuss/analyze the information collected and then formulate findings, results and lessons that they agree on. To assist, it may be helpful to prepare a list of key issues and indicators, and arrange the data according to this framework before the meeting.

In the following sections, we suggest goals for assessing organizational performance, external environment, organizational motivation and organizational capacity.

External Environment

Organizations are located in countries and regions to which they are inextricably linked. Their external environment is shaped by a number of key contexts: 1) stakeholder, 2) political, 3) social, 4) cultural, 5) economic, 6) technological, and 7) administrative/legal. Although organizations have very few abilities to change their external environment, the better you understand the external context, the better you can adapt to it and develop appropriate strategies. The ability of an organization to function within its external context is directly linked to organizational performance.

Organizational Performance

The performance of organizations is made visible through the activities they conduct to achieve their mission. Organizations perform well when they successfully meet their purpose. Outputs and their effects are the most observable

aspects of organizational performance. Two important questions are: 1) How does the organization define good performance?, and 2) Does good performance help the organization attain its mission? Key indicators of organizational performance are effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and financial viability.

Organizational Motivation

Organizations, like people, have different rhythms and personalities. Each organization has a unique working ambience or climate that is an amalgam of a purpose, history and personality. It represents the complex array of beliefs, values and norms that guides organizational life now and in the future. The main four elements of organizational motivation are: history, mission, culture and incentives or rewards. By gathering this type of information, your goal is to understand the underlying dynamics of the organization – the extent to which organization members are motivated to work towards organizational goals and aspirations.

Organizational Capacity

The capacities of an organization are the existing and potential abilities to perform. The capacities of an organization can be defined by a series of interrelated areas that support organizational performance. Key foci include: 1) strategic leadership, 2) organizational structure, 3) human resources, 4) financial management, 5) infrastructure, 6) program management, 7) process management, and 8) inter–organizational linkages. Knowing the functional capacities of an organization will provide a larger indication of organizational performance.

Helpful Tips

CIDA's "Framework of Results and Key Success Factors" defines what constitutes achievement at the Agency and establishes the foundation for a consistent body of information on development cooperation activities. When conducting OAs, it is critical that information analysis and ultimately the OA report reflect a results–based orientation. The following 'helpful tips' are organized around the developmental results and key success factors set out in this Framework:

◎ Expectations for results will vary with time. At the output level, look for evidence of change in the organization's capacities and systems. At the outcome level, look for change in the organization's performance. At the impact level, look for change in sector performance.

◎ Comment on cost–effectiveness generally. Where possible, indicate the relationship between planned costs and actual costs.

◎ Relevance should be determined by: 1) consistency with needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries/local partners/country/region, 2) consistency with CIDA's poverty reduction and sustainable development policies, and other policies, Branch priorities and programs, including crosscutting goals of gender equality and environmental sustainability, 3) consistency with Canadian foreign policy, including potential benefits to Canada, and 4) consistency with the efforts of local organizations, Canadian organizations and other donors addressing the same needs or problems.

◎ Focus on sustainability at the organizational level. Sustainability should be measured by: 1) local ownership of program/project activities, 2) sufficiency of resources to maintain programming, 3) adequate institutional capacity, and 4) a facilitating external environment.

◎ In assessing partnerships, address: 1) participation by local country partners, 2) clarity of roles and responsibilities, and 3) effectiveness of management partners.

◎ Design elements to be considered include: 1) appropriateness for local context, 2) adequacy of resourcing, 3) appropriateness of goals, objectives, targeted results and performance indicators, 4) effectiveness of risk monitoring strategy, and 5) record in applying lessons learned.

◎ Determine if human, financial and physical resources were suitable and well–used, sound financial management is in place and Canadian funding was applied as intended.

◎ Comment on the organization's capacity to respond to change.

◎ Identify significant unintended results, both positive and negative. Unintended results are sometimes as or more important than intended ones.

Important Debriefings

Prior to departing from the recipient country, the consultant should provide a debriefing to inform the organization, key stakeholders and the post about initial impressions and general observations.

Chapter 5: Writing Reports

> In this chapter:
>
> Meeting expectations
> Tips for effective writing
> Section–by–section
> Rating your report

Down to the crunch. Your OA report will determine what action is taken as a result of your assessment. The decision may be taken to proceed with funding for an institution or its programming. Or it may lead to investments in organizational strengthening. Or recommendations may be considered and overturned. Dissemination to key audiences will contribute to knowledge building. In essence, the OA report represents the enduring value of your contribution – and the Agency's immediate and continuing return on its investment.

The primary objective of OA reports is to inform CIDA decision–making and organizational learning. The report should articulate a comprehensive response to the expectations set out in the TOR and refined in the OA workplan. The reader should be left with a thorough understanding of why the OA was carried out, what was done, what was found, what was learned for future application, and what is recommended.

Consultants are asked to fairly and objectively identify useful and credible findings, results and lessons. Presentation should follow a credible progression in logic, with a basis in fact that ensues from the information collected.

While CIDA does not prescribe a standard format for OA reports, this chapter provides guidelines for their preparation and identifies what should be addressed. Flexibility is encouraged to promote a final product that is most conducive to effective presentation.

> The consultant should keep the CIDA Program Manager informed throughout the preparation of the OA report

5.1 Meeting Expectations

> Meeting CIDA's needs should be at
> the forefront of your thinking

CIDA management, having made an investment in the OA you have carried out, expects to learn what it needs to know. Remember your report is not an end in itself – it serves an ongoing purpose and process. Keeping the organization and key stakeholders informed during preparation may be advisable.

Your task is to you prepare an OA report that clearly and succinctly brings forward key information supported by the evidence that: 1) responds to the assessment issues (questions), 2) is geared towards informed decision–making by senior management (do we invest or not), and 3) extends the value of the assessment by contributing to progressive learning. What is brought forward should eliminate other explanations to determine causal inferences. Consultants are expected to rely on assumption, logical argument and/or empirical analysis in reaching this goal.

Good OA reports are accurate in distilling what is learned from OAs, and are skillful in being strategically informative. They communicate clearly, are factual and balanced, and avoid judgments of individuals. A well–written report is more likely to be read thoroughly, and therefore understood and acted on.

Keep in mind that clarity and succinctness can lead to higher readership as few of us have the time to read lengthy reports. The level of detail should effectively inform key audiences about what was learned, and what is recommended.

Implementing OA Reports

Consultants like to see recommendations implemented and information broadly shared. Sometimes, however, this will not – nor should – happen. CIDA management brings a broader understanding of context, concerns, and limitations to the table that can influence decisions on information dissemination. The prerogative should not be applied to avoid taking difficult courses of action where warranted.

5.2 Tips for Effective Writing

> **Prepare OA reports while information
> is still fresh in your mind**

Before starting to write the report, the consultant should consult with CIDA's Program Manager (and the organization if appropriate) to discuss the structure, contents and timing for the report to develop a mutual understanding about expectations for this deliverable.

The following tips may help with report preparation:

◎ From the outset, think about how the OA report will be used – and by whom. Reflect on the best way to present information to meet needs and priorities.

◎ People will pick up reports that are visually appealing. They will read reports that are interesting, well–organized and informative.

◎ Write for key audiences. Demonstrate sensitivity to differing levels of knowledge and expertise. Your report should be easily understood by readers with little or no technical knowledge.

◎ Keep OA reports focused, concise, and on track in terms of what is important. Avoid overly long, narrative descriptions.

◎ Revisit and revise the report outline as you write the report. As you work through the report, ideas for improving your presentation will likely come to mind.

◎ Keep this Guide, the TOR, the OA workplan and CIDA's "Framework of Results & Key Success Factors" as handy references throughout report preparation. Lay out any information analyzes tools that you may have prepared nearby for easy scanning.

◎ Elaborate on findings, results and lessons to ensure they are linked to and supported by the evidence.

◎ Unless you're sure about what you're writing – leave it out. No room for conjecture.

◎   Articulate key points precisely. Make every effort to minimize the risk of misinterpretations.

◎   If you can't explain something simply, then spend additional time working 'things' through in your own mind.

◎   Recommendations will be of greater value if they facilitate implementation, and are realistic given budgetary and other constraints. Identify who should be responsible for taking key actions (where appropriate).

5.3 Step–by–Step

> The value–added of OA reports is not determined by the number of pages.

The first priority of OA reports is to say what should be said. Contents should reflect the four dimensions of performance – external environment, organizational performance, organizational motivation and organizational capacity. Going forward, the report should provide recommendations and lessons.

Consultants are asked to look at all that has been learned during the course of the assessment in making a fair, objective and accurate assessment. It is crucial that what is presented provides adequate coverage, and that what is brought forward is fully supported by the evidence. A conceptual framework or logic model may be useful for providing systematic coverage and a balanced dissertation that supports the findings, results and lessons reached. The OA framework provides an excellent starting point for organizing what was learned, and aligning what is to be presented with the key issues.

Reports can go to audiences that are often diverse. The difficulty for the author is to write a report that can be used and understood by different audiences. A good report speaks directly to its primary audience, but should also respect the potential for a wider dissemination. There may be advantages to showing a preliminary draft to the organization, for it gives those directly involved a chance to correct incomplete or incorrect data before it becomes public. It also begins the process of softening the blow that a negative report will create. This strategy likely will hold more for assessments addressing organizational development than funding approvals.

Assessments can produce 'report shock', a highly–emotional reaction when first read by the leaders of an organization. Your critical analysis may depict the organization in a way that is perceptually different from what is imagined. 'Report shock' needs to be managed or it can destroy the utility of an assessment report. Too many negatives may call for rewording if the report is to receive a fair hearing,

Typically, the value and complexity of the OA will determine the length of the report. Strategic audiences may be hard–pressed to find the time to review extensive texts. There is little point to preparing a voluminous report that gathers dust on someone's shelf. Make your presentation significant and to the point.

> In getting reports approved, there are always issues with style and the need to conform to expectations. Some agencies and clients want detail, while others want brevity. Some want extensive appendices, while some do not.

The following sections suggest how your OA report could be organized and what could be addressed. Not all the reporting elements identified will, of course, be applicable to every OA. The information presented will largely be a function of the characteristics of the organization you are assessing and the key issues set out in the OA workplan. We suggest a results–based orientation to your report that emphasizes contribution to informed decision–making and organizational learning throughout.

5.3.1 Forward

Explain what the OA set out to do. Acknowledge contributions by key individuals.

5.3.2 Executive Summary

The executive summary provides a concise synopsis of the OA report, addressing all substantive elements. A quick short read should impart a general understanding of what the organization is, what it does, how well it does it, and what it could do in the future to improve.

Only the most significant: 1) findings (affirmations based on the information collected), 2) conclusions, 3) recommendations, and 4) lessons should be highlighted. Executive summaries are used to inform both senior management and the Agency's corporate memory system.

In preparing executive summaries, often the best plan is work through the main body of the report compressing the information down to a succinct presentation of not more than eight pages (even for the most complex OAs). There may be value in organizing the executive summary as a shorter, mirror image of the longer main body. Excessive detail should be avoided and tone should remain consistent throughout the report.

Readership of the executive summary is typically higher and more influential than the rest of the report. Executive summaries are used to inform both senior Agency management and CIDA's Corporate Memory System.

5.3.3 Introduction

Introduce the reader to both the OA and the organization. The introduction should briefly describe what your report is about and what was done.

A logical sequence for presentation would be:

◎   Explain the rationale for conducting the OA, identify its primary objectives and describe in broad terms the contribution to be made (attach the TOR for elaboration).

◎   Profile the organization explaining its mandate, strategies, operational framework, targeted beneficiaries, linkages, etc.

◎   Identify extent of funding provided by CIDA, indicate financial assistance provided by other donors and government ministries, and describe in broad terms the organization's performance record (results achieved to date, reach of programming)

◎   What was done? Explain the OA methodology (approach, framework matrix, sources of information, information collection & analysis) and its limitations. In particular, describe the extent of stakeholder participation. Identify members of the OA study team. Attach the OA workplan to provide elaboration.

◎   Explain how the report is organized, identifying contents chapter–by–chapter.

For the more complex OAs, you may wish to provide separate sections in the report to address Agency programming interventions, organization profile and OA methodology.

5.3.4 Findings

> **Findings are statements
> supported by data & evidence**

Present your findings by responding to the key issues. The reader should be able to link the findings with the evidence gathered, with references being made to identifiable information sources. 'Real life' examples will add credibility and richness to your report (in turn promoting readership). This section is typically the longest of the report.

It may be advisable to organize your findings along the four factors that comprise the OA framework (as appropriate): 1) external environment: (e.g. administrative, political/social/cultural, technological, economic, stakeholder findings), 2) organizational performance (e.g. effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, financial viability findings), 3) organizational motivation (e.g. history, mission, culture, incentives/rewards findings), 4) organizational capacity (e.g. strategic leadership, human resources, financial management, program management, process management, inter-organizational linkage findings).

External Environment

> **Organizations do not exist in a vacuum**

Organizations operate within an external environment that influences and shapes how the organization functions. This section provides a brief review of the context for operations, identifies the resident issues faced and, where applicable, describes sectors of involvement. Moreover, it determines how the external environment either promotes or detracts from organizational performance – a key element is deciding if the Agency should invest in an organization and/or its programming.

How does the organization interface with its external environment? Are the forces at play supportive of what the organization is intent on accomplishing? Are there negatives that need to be addressed? Are any significant changes foreseeable that could significantly impact the organization's external environment?

At a more specific level, there may be value in identifying consistency with needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries, local partners, government, and with the

efforts of local organizations and donors addressing the same needs or problems. You may also want to determine the extent of local ownership of programming activities and the degree of 'buy–in' supporting these activities. The organization's congruence with domestic policies, and the institutional, national, international environments should be addressed.

It may helpful to explain what was learned about the organization's external environment by listing key findings that in turn are supported by the evidence. Findings may be categorized as relating either to: 1) the rules of the game (legal and regulatory frameworks, etc.), 2) institutional ethos (history, culture, etc.), or 3) capacity (resources, access to technology, etc.).

> ### Mapping the External Environment
>
> How well an organization is strategically aligned with its
> external environment can be crucial.
> Partners and beneficiaries need to be on-side.
> Supportive political, economic and regulatory contexts are key.
> Required technologies need to be accessible and affordable.
> Map out how external parties interact with, hold influence over and
> effectively impact the organization being assessed.

Organizational Performance

Ask yourself: What key elements were learned about organizational performance that could be a factor in deciding if CIDA should commit financially? How effective and efficient is the organization in moving toward the fulfillment of its mission? Are targeted objectives and results being achieved? To what extent has the organization adapted its operations and programming to meet the needs of its changing environment? Will it be able to sustain operations and activities over time?

Ideas about the concept of performance vary considerably. Each stakeholder may have an entirely different view about what counts. For instance, administrators might define performance in terms of the amount of money brought into the organization through grants. A donor, on the other hand, might see performance as being benefits realized by targeted groups. University leaders likely would point to educational contributions, research results and services to the community.

> An organization's image is defined by what it stands for
> and what it does. Performance is made visible through the activities
> carried out to fulfill its mission (particularly its
> external activities). Often, outputs and outcomes are the most
> observable aspects of an organization's performance.

The following table suggests how findings on organizational performance could be organized. In this case, we are assessing the Azrae Institute (AI), a fictitious organization dedicated to good governance and building civil society in developing countries. The intent here is to give you 'an idea' as to what may be important.

Factor	Findings
Effectiveness	The absence of a coherent performance measurement framework makes it difficult to assess organizational effectiveness.
	There is little evidence, if any, that AI has been instrumental in influencing national policies (but a longer timeframe may be required).
	Efforts to build civil society indicate mixed results, but outputs and outcomes at local levels are encouraging.
Efficiency	AI's contribution is not being adequately communicated to external clients and partners.
	Cost-efficiency is not being achieved in AI's field operations.
	The checks and balances between AI's Board and management do not ensure judicious investment decisions.
Ongoing Relevance	How stakeholder support is managed going forward will determine if AI's strategic ambitions are realized.
Financial Viability	Historically, AI has demonstrated a considerable capacity for financial survival.
	Implementing a formal revenue generation strategy will become critical with increased competition for donor funding in the future.

Organizational Motivation

> Unless people work as team, they are just a
> bunch of people doing their jobs.

Organizations, like people, have different missions and agendas. A variety of factors may dictate internal motivation. Some organizations may be shaped by a widespread commitment 'to do good'. Others may be centrally driven by the personal ambitions of key leaders. Internal motivation – like an organization's capacity and its external environment – are key contextual factors that help to drive and determine performance.

The organizational concepts that drive your organization may include its history, its mission, its internal culture, its incentives or rewards and the widespread values and beliefs about the role your organization plays in society. Taken together, these factors help to give an organization it personality and direction – and affect its performance and quality of work.

Ask yourself: 1) How do motivational factors affect organizational performance?, and 2) Is the organization committed to ideals, strategies, values and practices that are congruent with those espoused by CIDA?

In responding to the first question, we suggest reflecting on the following:

◎   Is the organization's vision and mandate strategically aligned with targeted objectives and results?

◎   To what extent has 'buying–into' the organization's vision motivated people towards fulfilling its mandate, and targeted objectives and results?

◎   What elements in the organization's history contribute to (constrain) productivity? Prompts: milestones building confidence/reputation, scandal

◎   Does the organization demonstrate cooperation, communication, trust and creativity in forge successful solutions to day–to–day issues?

◎   Does the organization overcome internal negativity/resistance and resolve conflict through timely, progressive corrective action?

◎ To what extent do managers and staff provided with a clear understanding of what they are responsible/accountable for and what is expected of them?

◎ Are managers and staff motivated and inspired by a fair, results–driven approach to employee compensation and incentives?

◎ Does management recognize and praise good work by employees?

CIDA's "Framework of Results & Key Success Factors" provides useful prompts for determining congruence with the Agency's mandate and programming objectives. To this end, assess consistency with: 1) CIDA's poverty reduction and sustainable development policies, and other policies, Branch priorities and programs, and 2) Canadian foreign policy.

Developing an Inspired Vision

An inspired vision motivates people, and aligns efforts towards goals and objectives. Using a participatory process to develop your mission, core principles and values promotes internal 'buy–in' and facilitates implementation.

Organizational Capacity

Leaders influence others to fulfill missions and/or objectives, and direct organizations to be more cohesive and coherent

Here you are to report on the organization's ability to use its resources to perform. Knowing the capacity of an organization is crucial to the making of informed investment decisions. Sustainability can hinge on anticipating and overcoming the greatest barriers to organizational growth. Your assessment should review both current organizational capacity and adequacy going forward.

For OA reports, it is suggested that focii be brought to determining the strengths and weaknesses of the inter–related factors described below. Again, this presentation is designed only to illustrate how information could be organized. Your report would provide substantiation for your findings. The weighting of factors should be relative to CIDA's information needs.

Factor	Findings (strengths/weaknesses)
Strategic Leadership	AI's new strategic plan is needs–driven and pragmatic.

Opportunities to reinforce the organization's vision amongst key audiences are not being exploited. |
| Financial Management | Financial management systems are being upgraded to respond to the organization's anticipated growth cycle.

Plans are in place to improve the AI's annual and multi–year financial planning and reporting systems. |
| Organizational Structure | AI's governance structure is not adequately articulated.

Responsibilities, accountabilities and performance expectations are not communicated to AI's mangers and staff. |
| Organizational Infrastructure | AI's technological resources will not be able to keep pace with the organization's evolution.

Our assessment of the strategic management of AI's capital assets indicated major deficiencies. |
| Human Resources | HR management were actively involved in the development of the strategic plan.

HR organizational planning is not being informed by local levels.

The implications of moving from project–driven to program–driven organization are not being addressed. |
| Program Delivery | Project planning demonstrates a sound understanding of local context, needs and priorities. Risk management is not addressed.

Tasking is not always understood, supervised and/or accomplished. |

Factor	Findings (strengths/weaknesses)
Process Management	Decision–making by management is often not documented. Change management is not being addressed as a vital management responsibility.
Linkages/Networking	Management routinely exploits opportunities to develop and strengthen partner relationships. Networking efforts by staff are paying dividends.

Again, CIDA's "Framework of Results & Key Success Factors" may provide useful prompts for determining operational capacity. Refer to the success factors (partnership, appropriateness of design, appropriateness of resource utilization, informed and timely actions).

5.3.5 Conclusion

> Highlight your most lasting impressions

The conclusion summarizes what was learned about the organization in responding to the key OA issues. The information presented should be significant and strategic to the needs of the Agency's decision–makers. It is also important to be conclusive (for example): 1) 'Our assessment indicates that this organization would be a viable candidate for core funding', or 2) 'Engaging this organization as a CIDA partner is not recommended due to concerns about its financial viability'.

The following sequencing is suggested:

◎   Open with your overall impression of the organization and its value to development cooperation generally

◎   Briefly explain the major characteristics that define the organization

◎   Describe in succinct terms its external environment, operational performance, operational motivation and operational capacity. Emphasize its 'track record',

congruence with CIDA's mandate and objectives, key strengths and weaknesses, organizational sustainability, and ongoing capacity for delivery

◎ Close by responding to the overall reason for the OA. For example, briefly explain how the organization should position itself going forward to achieve its growth potential and to make a larger contribution.

5.3.6 Recommendations

> Individual statements derived from the evidence that prescribe who should do what in the future.

Recommendations should be framed so they facilitate decision–making, are easily understood and limit any potential for misinterpretation. This is best accomplished when messaging is kept simple. Recommendations should be succinct and head–on. Targeting too much information can be unmanageable and counterproductive. Not every tidbit of information needs to be presented to know what is going on. Be practicable – respectful of what is doable – given resourcing constraints. Limiting the number of recommendations to reflect only key considerations may promote wider acceptance and value.

Recommendations should be listed individually and explained, referring to the information collected and supported by the evidence. What is put forward should be evidence–based and accurate, and not betrayed, in any way, by bias, sentiment or orthodoxy. They should be prescriptive, identifying who should be responsible for taking what action (i.e. The organization should…, CIDA should…).

5.3.7 Lessons Learned

> Learning from a specific assessment to develop general principle for wider application

Lessons are general hypotheses based on the conclusions of a specific assessment that establishes or supports a general principle and is presumed to have the potential of being beneficial in other applications. In formulating lessons, consultants are expected to develop a perspective that goes beyond the subject

assessment, and apply their expertise/experience to extrapolate what is learned for general application. The objective is to bring value–added to the Agency (and potentially to the international development community at large). Consultants are encouraged to limit the number of lessons put forward to those that have the greatest potential for useful, generic application.

Lessons generally are of two types:

◎ Developmental lessons pertain to the realization of developmental results, the improvement of development cooperation practices, and programming delivery.

◎ Operational lessons embody a managerial and administrative component. They may relate to performance measurement, donor coordination, resourcing, procurement, planning and reporting systems, logistics, etc.

5.3.8 Future Directions

In this section, the consultant responds to specific requirements, if any, set out in the OA workplan relating to the challenges, opportunities, prospects, etc. of the organization going forward. Or she/he may have to provide commentary on future actions suggested for CIDA for the purposes of strengthening infrastructure, investing in niche opportunities, etc.

5.3.9 Appendices

Typically, appendices are used to amplify, illustrate or embellish your presentation of information, but are not essential to the reader's understanding of the main body. Appended information doesn't interrupt the flow of your presentation and/or the concentration of the reader. Moreover, appendices allow for the inclusion of detailed information without disrupting the 'balance' of your report.

Depending on the complexity of your assessment, you may decide to append the TOR and/or the OA workplan. Other appendices may include: 1) a list of interviewees, 2) documents reviewed, 3) bios for assessment team members, and 4) a bibliography of references (reports, publications). When appendices are particularly extensive or highly technical, they can be bound in separate volumes.

5.4 Rating Your Report

Now's time to put yourself in the place of the decision–makers who are responsible for using what you've learned about the organization to decide on a future course of action, or not. Reflect on the following questions to determine whether the information needs of senior management will be met and opportunities for organizational learning addressed. See your report as a reader would. When conducting your review, compress lengthy narratives and eliminate superfluous issues and detail.

Does Your Report...

☑ Adequately meet CIDA's 'need to know' requirements for taking effective action?

☑ Clearly describe what the organization is all about and what it does?

☑ Create confidence in the OA methodology?

☑ Thoroughly respond to the key OA issues? And all other requirements set out in the workplan?

☑ Accurately assess the organization potential going forward as a candidate for CIDA funding or further involvement?

☑ Bring to light any concerns regarding the organization's external environment, operational performance, operational motivation and/or operational capacity?

☑ Set out well–founded, practicable recommendations that are geared to improving development cooperation?

☑ Bring forward key lessons learned that are well–suited to making on ongoing contribution?

Chapter 6: Quick OAs

In this chapter:

Setting up
Information framework
On–site activities
OA report

CIDA Program Managers may be asked to assess organizations within extremely limiting time constraints. This may involve recommending an implementing agency to carry out development activities. Or assessing an organization as a prospective CIDA–funded partner. Or finding an organization to replace one that didn't work out.

In this chapter, we set out a framework for conducting a Quick OA. We address how to think strategically in planning and designing your assessment, key elements to focus on during implementation, and what your OA report could look like. What level of effort is required? Quick OAs can be carried out within five days – two days for set–up, a two–day site visit and a day for report preparation. Tighter time constraints may dictate an abbreviated approach.

6.1 Setting Up

Keep things simple, focussed & on–track

Given that timing is of the essence, it is critical that a pragmatic and efficient approach is adopted for all aspects of the OA. Planning strategically will allow you to organize and 'visualize' the assessment process from start to finish.

Think the 'big picture'. Develop a strategy that addresses how best can you assess the organization as a viable, reliable performer (within the time constraints) to ensure that any downstream investment by the Agency is not exposed to unacceptable levels of risk.

It is suggested that you work through the following five–point, set–up plan prior to visiting the organization:

◎ Right off, identify what information is most needed to make an informed decision about the subject organization.

◎ From this, select no more than five key issues to be addressed (e.g. leadership, results achieved, financial viability, stakeholder support, organizational culture).

◎ Identify and consult with important in–house resources or contacts who are experienced with or have knowledge of the organization. Briefly document what you learn.

◎ From your consultations, identify key in–house documents and research to collect related information.

◎ Prepare three work tools to guide information collection and analysis: 1) a two–page OA framework matrix linking key issues with information sources, 2) an interview guide, and 3) an information analysis tool to record the organization's strengths and weaknesses by key issue. Keep each work tool short, simple and on–point.

The interview guide will help to ensure that questioning during your on–site visit is aligned with and responds to your information requirements. Going in, you should also identify any key documents that you might need to pick up.

Leading up to your visit, make arrangements to meet with a suitable spectrum of people. Provide as much notice as possible to interviewees in respecting their other commitments and obligations.

6.2 Information Framework

Here we set out a listing of key elements of an organization's external environment, performance, motivation and capacity for consideration. In framing your OA, select only those factors that respond best to the key issues. Remember you can't do everything. Keep your approach simple and limit your foci – or you may not be able to complete your assessment within the time constraints.

Focus	To Assess	Factors/Indicators/Sources
Understanding the External Environment	Administrative & legal framework	Policy, legislation regulations, laws
	Social/cultural environment	Norms, values, beliefs, attitudes in society, literacy
	Economic environment	GDP, inflation, growth, debt, IMF conditionality, wage/price structure, community economics, hard currency access, government funding distribution
	External political environment	Form of government, distribution of power, access to government resources, allocation decisions, political will
	Technological & ecological environments	Infrastructure, utilities, geography, technological literacy, information technology, climate
	Major stakeholders	Clients, donors, beneficiaries, government ministries, other institutions
Measuring Organizational Performance	Effectiveness	Organization performance: *major achievements, general level of organizational productivity defined according to the organization's mission and values, utilization of results* Staff performance: *clients served, quality of services/products)* Service performance: *support to research community, transfer technology*
	Efficiency	Rates costs/services Staff productivity: *turnover, absenteeism, outputs* Administrative system efficiency

Focus	To Assess	Factors/Indicators/Sources
Identifying Organizational Motivation	History	Date and process of founding, major awards/achievements, major struggles, changes in size, program & leadership, other projects and loans through IFI's or funding agencies
	Mission	Evolution of mission statement, organizational goals, role of mission in shaping the organization, giving it purpose & direction, articulating research/research products that are valued
	Culture	Attitudes about working, attitudes about colleagues, clients or stakeholders, values & beliefs, underlying organizational norms that guide the organization
	Incentive & reward system	Key factors, values, motivations to promote productivity, intellectual freedom, stimulation, autonomy, remuneration, grant access, opportunity for advancement, peer recognition, prestige
Determining Organizational Capacity	Strategic leadership	Leadership: *managing culture, setting direction, supporting resource development, ensuring tasks are done* Strategic planning: *scanning environment, developing tactics to attain objectives, goals, mission* Niche management: *area of expertise, uniqueness, recognition of uniqueness*
	Financial management	Financial planning: *operating expenses, forecast future monetary needs and requirements* Financial accountability: *rules for member use of financial resources, transparent/verified system*

Focus	To Assess	Factors/Indicators/Sources
Determining Organizational Capacity	Organization structure	Governance: *legal framework, decision-making process, methods for setting direction, external links* Operational: *roles & responsibilities, coordination of labour, coordinating systems*
	Organizational infrastructure	Facilities management: *adequate lighting, clean water, electricity* Technology management: *equipment, information systems, hardware/ software, library*
	Human resources	Planning: *recruiting, selecting, staffing, orienting* Developing: *performance management, monitoring, evaluation* Career management: *career development, training* Maintenance: *health/safety issues, gender issues, quality of working life*
	Program & service management	Planning: *identifying needs, setting objectives, costing alternatives/ developing evaluation systems* Implementing: *adherence to schedules, coordination of activities* Monitoring: *projects/programs, systems for evaluating progress, communicating feedback to stakeholders*
	Process management	Problem–solving: *defining problems, gathering data* Decision–making: *creating alternatives, deciding on solutions, monitoring decisions* Communications: *exchanging accurate/ vital information, achieving shared understanding among organizational members*

Focus	To Assess	Factors/Indicators/Sources
Determining Organizational Capacity	Process management (continued)	Monitoring and evaluation: *generating data, tracking progress, utilizing information, changing and improving the organization*
	Linkages & networking	Networks: *type, nature, appropriate membership, utility, coordination, cost–benefit* Partnerships: *type, nature, sustainability* Electronic linkages: *communication networks, information equipment, information resources, people of all skills/backgrounds*

6.3 On–Site Activities

Your four–point plan for collecting information when visiting an organization:

◎   Meet key individuals from organization & major stakeholder groups
    (a strategic representation):

  • Board members
  • Organization mangers & staff
  • Managers, project officers
  • Beneficiaries
  • Government officials, donors, other agencies
  • Other stakeholders

◎   Obtain key documents:

  • Charter
  • Mission statement, project loan documents
  • Annual reports, financial reports
 • Services descriptions
  • Performance reports
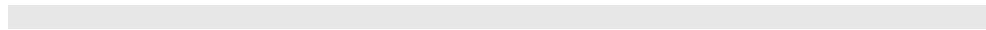
◎ Observe and assess relevant facilities (if applicable):

- Buildings/grounds
- Regional offices
- Program/project sites

◎ Observe and assess human dynamics:

- Nature of your meetings (who attends, who presides)
- How decision–making is carried out (processes)
- Nature of dealings with organization's clients
- How work is conducted (dominant paradigm)

6.4 OA Report

With accountability comes transparency, and the need to document decision–making. It is important to explain in writing both your recommended course of action and the reasoning behind your recommendation.

To this end, Appendix E suggests a reporting format for Quick OAs. This example provides text for an assessment of Valyun Kind, a fictitious organization that specializes in the building of entrepreneurial capacities in developing countries. Here we concentrate on providing a succinct, evidence–based response to senior management's critical information needs. Key issues are addressed through the external environment, organizational performance, organizational motivation and organizational capacity foci.
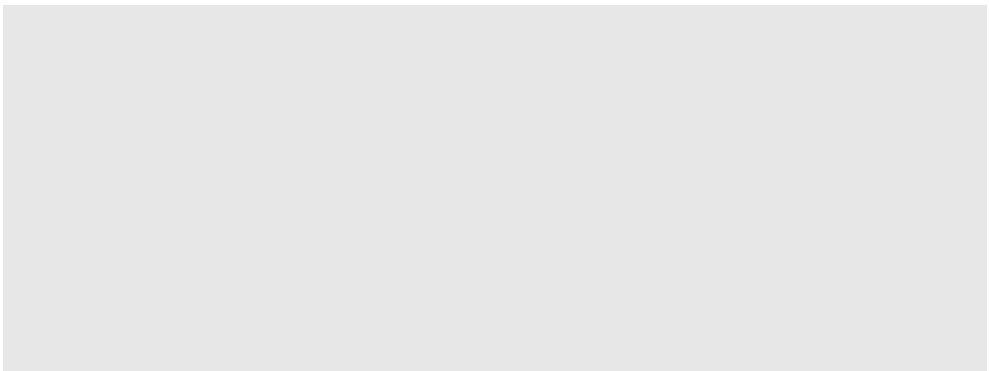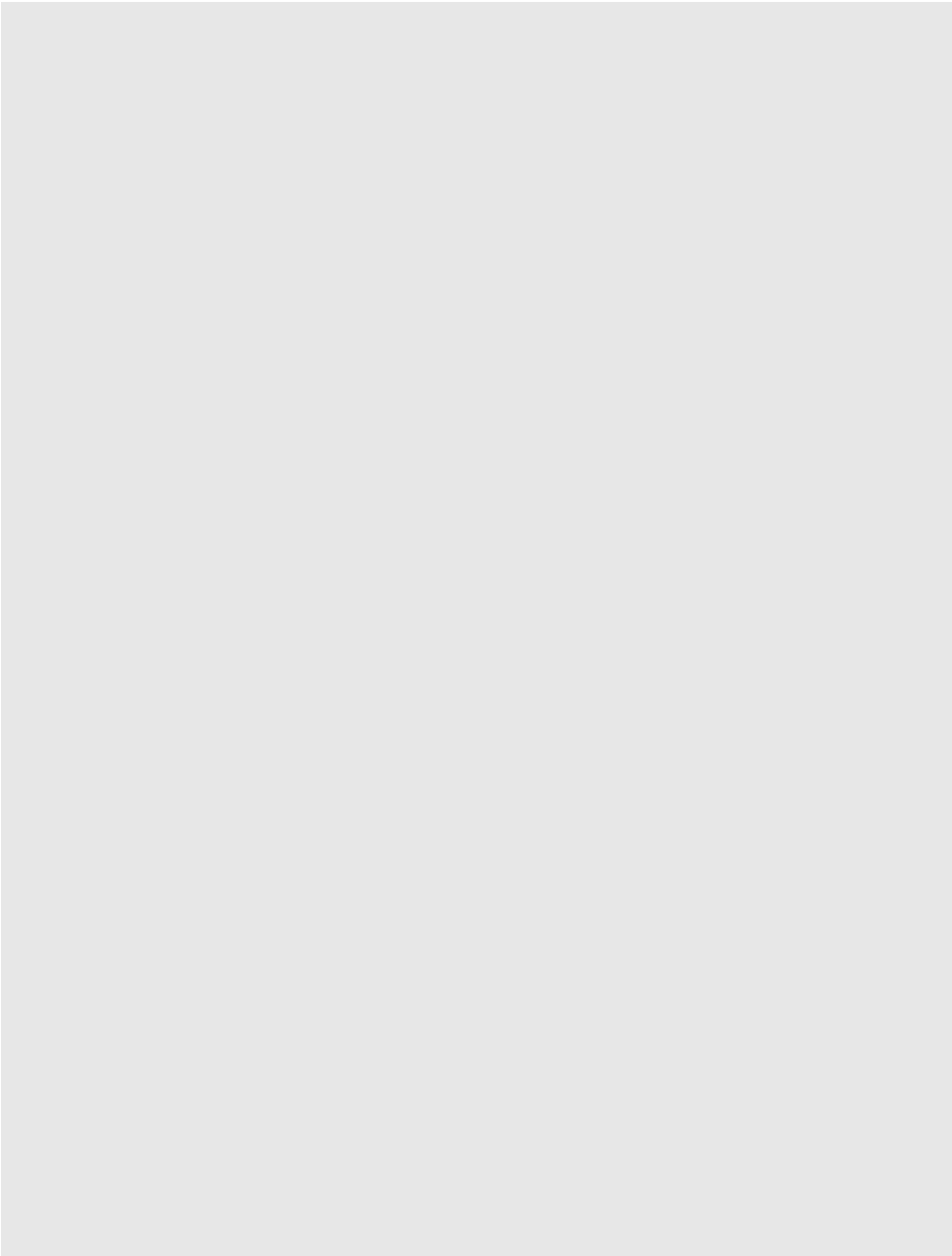
Chapter 7: Next Steps

In this chapter:

Informed investing
Institutional strengthening
Organizational learning

Until now, the value realized from your OA has been largely defined by what participants have learned through their involvement in the process. Now we look at how the value of the OA report going forward is determined. Unless action is taken to implement the OA report, it can be relegated to a dusty shelf. How the report is applied will govern its contribution.

Next steps for OA reports are determined case–by–case. Typically, the Responsibility Centre reviews the approved report before deciding a course of action. The nature of the OA assessment and confidentiality/sensitivity issues will determine the extent of information sharing. Internal audiences may include senior management, the country desk, post–managers and staff. Key external audiences can comprise the organization itself, government ministries, executing agencies, local stakeholders, other donors, etc. In deciding how information is to be communicated, it is important to ask some fundamental questions: What audiences would benefit from this information? What interests cannot be compromised? How are key audiences best reached?

OAs are about investing in informed development. Success is measured in terms of making informed investment decisions, laying the foundations for institutional strengthening, and/or organizational learning. In this chapter, we explore 'next steps' for achieving these objectives.

How Value is Realized

Workplans design an OA's 'value'. Information collection & analysis quantifies that 'value'. OA reports present the 'value'. Report implementation determines the 'value'.

7.1 Informed Investing

OAs carried out to inform investment decisions may be single–purposed (should we invest), or the workplan may identify other applications, including a learning component. A Quick OA may be carried out due to limiting time constraints. Or a more complex approach may be adopted in order to respond to CIDA's 'need to know' requirements. Regardless, the primary objective is to position Agency decision–makers so they have timely, credible information that contributes to informed decision–making.

When the CIDA Program Manager goes forward with the OA report, she/he must be prepared to make the case in recommending a course of action. Messaging should be kept simple and conclusive. It is often best to open with what was determined (for example): 1) the level of risk associated with a SWaps arrangement with this organization is not considered to be acceptable due to foreseeable political unrest, etc., or 2) our assessment indicates that a contribution agreement with this organization would help to advance its mission and broaden effective programming in marginalized areas of the country. Supporting arguments and explanations should be evidence–based and accurate.

CIDA's response to the OA report should be routinely documented. If a decision is reached that overturns the report, the rationale for rejecting the recommendation (e.g. not going ahead with core funding) should be placed on file. If the OA was managed by an independent, third party, a formal management response should be required.
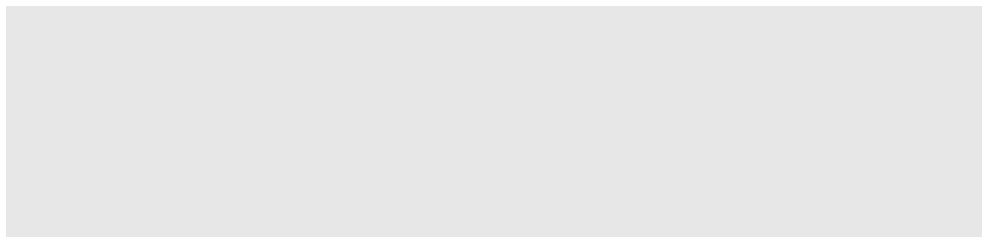
7.2 Institutional Strengthening

> Guiding organizational development

Organizations are key to development discourse, yet historically their value has often being overlooked. Increasingly, we are recognizing the need to invest in organizations in the developing world to strengthen capacity and improve performance. Institutional strengthening is about facilitating change within organizations that will help them fulfill their missions and make a larger contribution. It is about developing a course of action working together with the organization that promotes reaching its potential.

OAs identify functional capacities, and strengths and weaknesses. Logically, the next step would be strategic capacity building. In some cases, the OA workplans identify the next step to be taken. For example, the OA might be one phase in a larger study that embraces organizational development. Or, the workplan may state that the consultant is to recommend what is to be done next.

7.3 Organizational Learning

> Learning extends to all OAs

Effective knowledge management can contribute to the development of new intellectual capital both in Canada and internationally. CIDA is committed to developing a culture where critical analysis and organizational learning are systematically employed to make a valued contribution to development cooperation wherever possible. When information is shared openly, credibility is enhanced and greater pressure is generated for recommendations to be implemented.

Every OA offers learning potential. Yet deciding on what can be shared requires tact and judgment. Not all information can or should be shared. It is critical that communication strategies function in the best interests of the Agency and demonstrate total respect for the organization itself.

How is information communicated? Oral briefings can represent the best option for communicating results. They typically bring together people with a shared interest in the assessment, and provide a fertile opportunity for discussion, feedback and generating 'buy–in' into the recommendations. Busy decision–makers are more inclined to attend a briefing session than to sit and read a lengthy report. Conducting workshops for the organization itself allows participants to benefit from what was learned.

Other options for organizational learning include:

◎ Presentations at Executive Committee, Audit and Evaluation Committee, senior management meetings and other information opportunities (seminars, peer review sessions, conferences, references in speeches, articles in professional journals)

◎ Distributing information to country desks, responsibility centres, recipient governments, NGOs, other donors, local stakeholders

◎ Summarizing lessons on CIDA's Web sites (Internet, Entrenous)

◎ Cataloguing in the Agency's International Development Information Centre information holdings and DAC's Evaluation Inventory

◎ Executive summaries (or abstracts) informing CIDA's Corporate Memory System

◎ Loading what is learned on the Agency's e–Lessons Database

◎ Feeding results into the CIDA's planning and reporting systems

> "Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world."
>
> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Model Text: Terms of Reference

The 'model text' below offers a quick and easy way to prepare TORs. Practitioners can work from a standard for a fictitious assessment that meets the Agency's essential requirements. This assessment addresses whether or not an organization should be a candidate for continued core funding over a three or five-year period.

Organization Assessment of the GrahMar Women's Health Foundation

Terms of Reference

1 Organization Profile

Founded in 1992, the efforts of the GrahMar Women's Health Foundation are directed towards promoting the accessibility to health services that are responsive to women's needs and priorities at national/regional/community levels, and ensuring that gender equality is integrated into health and nutrition programming. The Foundation focuses on enhancing the capacities of key health providers, conducting awareness campaigns against tuberculosis, polio and malaria, and empowering women to advocate for 'health for all'. Although health services are considered above average for the region, delivery is hampered shortages of well–trained medical personnel, inadequate facilities in some rural communities and the need for systems and technical capability to improve sector management.

The strategy for allocations is largely iterative, to achieve maximum results and accommodate changing dynamics. Disbursements encourage complementary and cumulative actions to advance women's interests and rights across complex health issues. Women are the main participants and beneficiaries.

Project planning is carried out in conjunction with stakeholders both government ministries and civil society. Project funds provide a quick and flexible response to local requests and priorities. The average project cost is approximately $30,000.

Allocations for project funding are routinely discussed with CIDA's resident Head of Aid.

At present, CIDA is the sole international donor agency contributing financially to the GrahMar Women's Health Foundation, having provided $3.2 million over a five–year period extending from 2002 to 2006. Allocations were $0.8M for 2006; and $0.6M in each of the years 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005. Over the five–year period some 100 projects were assisted through Agency funding.

Indications are that results achieved by the Foundation have been in–line with expected results. A mid–term evaluation of investments carried out in the Summer of 2003 conducted by Performance and Knowledge Management Branch found the Foundation had: 1) made significant interventions in health that were very responsive to compelling needs and clearly aligned with government and local priorities, and 2) contributed to cost–effective interventions to combat malaria and tuberculosis. Programming by Foundation–supported partners delivered access to reproductive health care services to approximately 25 percent of the rural female population. The Foundation also contributed to the construction of a number of clinics and health care centers. Targeting high rates of infant/maternal mortality has produced mixed results. The evaluation noted that achieving gender equality outcomes and impacts are a long–term process.

2 Broad Considerations

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) included a series of specific health–related targets that were agreed to by the world community. In support, CIDA's "Action Plan on Health and Nutrition" (APHN) issued in 2001 provided for investments totalling $1.2 billion over five years that doubled spending on basic health, nutrition and water/sanitation (from $152M in 2000 to $305M in 2005). Measuring progress to date, the World Health Organization report "Health and the Millennium Development Goals" (2005) indicated that without urgent investments in health systems, current rates of progress will not be sufficient to meet most MDGs.

The World Health Organization (WHO) stresses that locally–run services are often more efficient and more responsive to the needs of the poor. WHO attaches equal importance to country ownership and leadership, underscoring the need to strengthen government institutions and management structures.

A recent review carried out for CIDA to assess health programming for the years 1995–2005 determined that embracing local 'ownership' that is responsive to

country needs/priorities and ensuring strong institutional capacity (led by skilled management) are key foundations for effective programming and long–term sustainability.

3 Reasons for Organization Assessment

This assessment of the GrahMar Women's Health Foundation is being carried out to help determine if continued core funding for a further three or five–year period is advisable (current funding provisions terminate December 15, 2006). This was discussed at the Gender Fund Team meeting in January 2006, and the decision was taken shortly thereafter to proceed with an organizational assessment (OA).

To ensure that continued funding is justifiable and advisable, decision–making will be informed in a number of key areas. For example, the assessment will determine if the Foundation has the mandate and support, reputation, organizational capacity and resources needed to achieve targeted results going forward. Also, any possible risks associated with investing in this partner and areas for future collaboration with this partner will be identified. Value added from this assessment will result from the sharing of what is learned from this investment, leading to more efficient and effective allocation strategies for downstream investments.

4 Scope & Focus

The OA will be founded on the premise that performance going forward will be a function of the Foundation's enabling environment, functional capacity and organizational motivation.

Sub–components for each of these factors may include (for consideration):

◎ External context: administrative & legal, political, socio/cultural, economic, technological, economic, stakeholder, geographic

◎ Performance: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, financial viability

◎ Motivation: history, mission, culture, values, incentives/rewards, priorities

◎ Capacity: strategic leadership, structure, human resource management, financial management, program/process management, infrastructure, technological capacities, inter–institutional linkages

Refer to the "CIDA Organization Assessment Guide" for elaboration on the Agency's approach to OAs.

Focus will be defined by the following key questions:

◎ Is the Foundation's external environment conducive to and supportive of the organization's mandate, programming and practices?

◎ Are any significant changes that would impact the Foundation's external economic/political environment foreseeable?

◎ Has the Foundation contributed to women being better positioned and equipped to champion health issues?

◎ Is the Foundation committed to building local capacities that will produce sustainable results?

◎ Are the results being achieved by Foundation–funded projects being identified adequately? What negative results were identified?

◎ Will the Foundation continue to be able to implement more strategic, effective programming for the increased benefit of client populations going forward?

◎ Are the Foundation's priorities, commitments and convictions still congruent with CIDA's strategic interests?

◎ Does the Foundation have in place the systems and controls need to ensure sound, cost–effective management of its programming?

◎ What strengths are evident and what deficiencies should be addressed?

The OA will include an examination of a sampling of projects carried out within the last three years to identify key findings, results and lessons learned.

The Consultant will assess the level of risk associated with CIDA of providing continued funding to the Foundation. For example: What is the risk that funding will not be used for its intended purpose?, What is the risk that targeted programming will not be implemented as planned due to constraints (e.g. limited capacities, insufficient funding)?, What is the risk that achievements attained may not be sustainable?

The OA will exploit every opportunity to optimize the learning potential offered by this exercise – for the benefit of the Foundation and the Agency, and more widely for the international cooperation community at large.

5 Foundation/Stakeholder Participation

Foundation representatives will be involved throughout the OA and consulted at important milestones during the process. It is intended that all decisions from the selection of the consultant through to finalization of the OA report will be made in full consultation with the Foundation. Early on, consultations will clarify the commitments, responsibilities and expectations of CIDA, the Foundation and the Consultant. Both CIDA and the Foundation will aporve the OA workplan. The final report will be provided to the Foundation as a draft for comments.

Stakeholder participation is fundamental to this assessment. The OA will provide for the active and meaningful involvement of key stakeholders as considered appropriate (e.g. beneficiaries, representatives of ministries of health at national, regional and local levels, NGOs, civil society.

6 Accountabilities & Responsibilities

The CIDA Program Manager will oversee the OA and be responsible for accountability and guidance throughout all phases of execution, and approval of all deliverables. The Canadian Consultant will be team leader and have overall responsibility for: 1) the day-to-day management of operations, 2) regular progress reporting to CIDA, 3) collecting credible, valid information, 4) the development of findings, results and lessons, and, 5) the production of deliverables in accordance with contractual requirements. The team leader will report to the CIDA Program Manager.

7 OA Process

The OA will be carried out in conformity with the principles, standards and practices set out in the "CIDA Organization Assessment Guide".

7.1 Preparation of Workplan

The Consultant will prepare a workplan that, once approved by the CIDA's Program Manager, will serve as the agreement between parties on how the OA will be carried out. The workplan will refine and elaborate on the information presented in this TOR to bring greater precision to the planning and design of the assessment.

The workplan will address the following reporting elements:

◎ Foundation Profile
◎ Expectations of the OA
◎ Roles & Responsibilities
◎ Methodology
◎ Framework
◎ Information Collection & Analysis
◎ OA Reporting
◎ Work Scheduling (level of effort)

7.2 Field Mission

The Consultant will conduct a field mission to include a visit to Foundation headquarters and several project sites. Consultations will be carried out with CIDA field personnel and project stakeholders. Information will be collected as stipulated in the workplan. The mission is expected to be no longer than three weeks in duration. CIDA field personnel are to be briefed by the Consultant on arrival and before departure from the field.

7.3 Preparation of OA Report

The Consultant will prepare an OA report that describes the assessment and puts forward findings, results and lessons learned. The presentation of results is to be intrinsically linked to the key i ssues, establishing a flow of logic development derived from the information collected. Results are to be linked to CIDA's "Framework of Results and Key Success Factors".

8 Deliverables

The Consultant will prepare: 1) a workplan, and 2) an OA report in accordance with requirements identified in the "CIDA Organization Assessment Guide". These deliverables are to be prepared in English only, and submitted in both hard copy and electronic (pdf.doc) formats.

8.1 Workplan

The Consultant is to submit a draft workplan to the CIDA Program Manager and Foundation representative within four weeks of the signing of the contract. Within one week of receiving comments, the Consultant will produce a final workplan.

8.2 OA Report

The Consultant is to submit a draft OA report to the CIDA Program Manager and the Foundation representative for review within four weeks of returning from mission. Within two weeks of receiving comments, the Consultant will submit a final OA report (including an executive summary).

9 Consultant Qualifications

A Canadian Consultant will lead the OA. The OA will be carried out by a team of two senior consultants, with one individual being a resident national.

The Canadian Consultant is expected to be:

◎   A reliable and effective project manager with extensive experience in conducting OAs and a proven record in delivering professional results

◎   Fluent in English and local languages

◎   Fully acquainted with CIDA's RBM orientation and practices

◎   Experienced in the region and/or in the country

The local consultant should have a good working knowledge of health issues locally, be fluent in English and local languages, and have experience with donor–funded health programming.

10 Internal Cost Projection

The basis for payment and payment scheduling will be determined during contract negotiations. Options for method of payment include: 1) fixed–price, or 2) cost plus on a fixed per diem basis.

CIDA's projections for the 'level of effort' required for this OA and the anticipated 'consultant–related costs' for carrying out this project are set out overleaf:

Projected Level of Effort		
Activity	Number of Days	
	Canadian	Local
Workplan preparation	9	5
Data collection/field work/travel time	19	15
Debriefing, analysis, report preparation	13	3
Total:	41	23

Projected Cost			
Type of Cost	Cost		
	Canadian	Local	Total
Professional fees	$32,800	$9,200	$42,000
Travel and other out–of–pocket expenses	$10,000	$2,500	$12,500
Total:	$42,800	$11,700	$54,500

Notes:

1. Canadian professional per diem of $800. Local professional per diem of $400.
2. Costs are exclusive of GST.

Appendix B

Key Issues

When assessing organizations, you have a great number of key issues
to choose from. This appendix provides a menu of sample questions and
sub–questions for consideration. Sub–questions bring a deeper,
more detailed concentration to your assessment.
These examples can be used to focus on areas you wish to explore.

A. External Environment

Question: Does the stakeholder environment support the organization?

Sub–Questions
◎   To what extent are the community and partners involved in the organization?
◎   Does the government value and support the organization's efforts?
◎   Do donor agencies support the organization?
◎   Do organizations involved in similar work support the organization?

*Question: How is the organization affected by political and governance issues
         in the country?*

Sub–Questions
◎   Does the political ideology of the government support the kind of work the
    organization does?
◎   Does the organization have access to government funding?
◎   Does the organization play a role in influencing national or sectoral
    development policies?
◎   Do government policies and programs support the organization?

Question: How is the organization affected by the social/cultural environment?

Sub–Questions
◎   Has the organization effectively integrated cultural norms into its operations
    and programming?
◎   Are equity and diversity in the workplace an accepted social value?

Question: How is the organization affected by the economic environment?

Sub–Questions
- Does economic policy and the general economic situation support the organization's ability to acquire needed technologies and resources?
- Is adequate support provided by the government and donors to the organization and the sector?

Question: Are the technology and resources needed to carry out the organization's work available?

Sub–Questions
- Is there adequate physical infrastructure for the organization to carry out its work (e.g. power, telecommunications, transport)?
- Does government facilitate the acquisition of technology?
- Is there an adequate level of human resource development to support the implementation of new technologies?

Question: How is the organization affected by existing rules, regulations and legal requirements?

Sub–Questions
- Is the organization able to function appropriately within the existing sectoral rules and regulations?
- Does the organization have administrative and legal autonomy from other organizations and groups it is involved with?
- Are the organization's objectives and activities unduly influenced by government, donors and other organizations?

Question: How is the organization affected by ecological and environmental challenges?

Sub–Questions
- Will the organization be severely impacted by the occurrence of a natural phenomena?
- Are environmental conditions workable or do they represent a constraint?
- Do pollution issues impact on the organization's work?

B. Organizational Performance

Question: How effective is the organization in achieving its objectives, commitments and targeted results?

Sub–Questions
- What performance indicators are identified in the organization's mission statement, mandate, charter, other documents, etc.?
- Is data available that can be used to measure effectiveness?
- Are programming priorities identified?
- What indications demonstrate that the organization is achieving its objectives, commitments and targeted results?

Question: How efficient is the organization?

Sub–Questions
- Does the organization identify ways to assess its efficiency?
- Are there adequate indicators and data available to assess the efficiency of the organization?
- What indications demonstrate that the organization is utilizing its human resources, financial resources and physical facilities efficiently?

Question: Is the organization relevant and will its relevance be maintained over time?

Sub–Questions
- Are the key stakeholders satisfied with the way the organization is performing?
- Are there adequate indicators and data to assess relevance?
- Has the organization adapted to changing political, economical or societal dimensions?
- Do key stakeholders agree with new and/or proposed programming?

Question: Is the organization financially viable?

Sub–Questions
- To what extent is the level of funding suitable for the mission and priorities of the organization?
- Has there been continued and sustained support from existing sources of revenue?
- Are there adequate funds to support existing programs, operating costs and capital requirements?
- To what extent has the organization obtained the funds it has requested?

C. Organizational Motivation

Question: What are the memorable milestones, successes and/or crises in the organization's history?

Sub–Questions
◎ How has the organization's history affected performance?

Question: To what extent does a mission and vision drive the behaviour of the organization and its members?

Sub–Questions
◎ Does organizational behaviour demonstrate alignment/congruence between mission/vision and goals?
◎ To what extent have staff 'bought–into' the organization's mission and vision?
◎ Is the mission and vision updated?

Question: What aspects of the organization's culture contribute to the mission execution?

Sub–Questions
◎ Are the organization's values defined and applied?
◎ Is morale good?
◎ Is there high commitment to performance? A positive attitude towards change?
◎ Does training reinforce the organization's values?

Question: Does the incentive/reward system encourage or discourage the performance of the organization's members?

Sub–Questions
◎ Do people feel rewarded for their work?
◎ Are people adequately compensated?
◎ Do non-monetary rewards support good organizational behavior?
◎ Is the incentive system managed adequately? Reviewed regularly?

D. Organizational Capacity

Question: To what extent does strategic leadership affect the organization's performance?

Sub–Questions
◎ Do people feel goal–oriented?
◎ Is leadership concerned about getting significant activities done well?
◎ Is leadership respected?
◎ Are people willing to express new ideas to those in positions of power?
◎ Does leadership welcome change?

Question: To what extent does strategic planning affect the organization's ability to achieve its goals?

Sub–Questions
◎ Is there a strategic plan?
◎ Is the strategy known by the board, senior managers, and staff?
◎ Is the strategy generally accepted and supported in the organization?
◎ Is the strategy used as a way of helping to make decisions?

Question: Is the organizational structure facilitating or hindering movement towards the mission and goals?

Sub–Questions
◎ Are the organization's mission and goals supported by its structures?
◎ Are the roles within the organization clearly defined, yet flexible enough to adapt to changing needs?
◎ Is structural authority used to further issues of equity?
◎ Are there clear lines of accountability (individual, group, and organizational)?

Question: To what extent does governance affect the organization's performance?

Sub–Questions
◎ Does the governing structure both clarify and support organizational direction?
◎ Does the charter provide an adequate framework for carrying out the mission of the organization and for dealing adequately with the external forces challenging the organization?
◎ Does the governing body scan the external and internal environment in order to understand the forces affecting the organization?
◎ Does the governing body operate effectively and efficiently?

Question: To what extent does the organization's ability to plan for its human resources needs affect its performance?

Sub–Questions

◎ Are the right people in the right jobs in the organization?
◎ Does the organization have the ability to forecast current and future demands for human resources?
◎ Does the organization know how and where to identify people with the skills needed to fill its needs?
◎ Is the organization able to link its mission and goals to its human resource planning?

Question: To what extent does the organization have effective human resources relations?

Sub–Questions

◎ Are there appropriate grievance procedures inside the organization?
◎ Are labour management relations constructive?
◎ Are there measures and procedures inside the organization to deal with people in emotional or physical distress?
◎ Does the organization promote loyalty and the commitment of staff?

Question: Is there adequate financial planning to support performance?

Sub–Questions

◎ Is there adequate budgetary planning?
◎ Are members of the governing body involved in financial planning and monitoring?
◎ Are human resources adequate to ensure good financial planning?
◎ Are the finances of grants or loans properly managed?

Question: Are financial systems appropriate to support performance?

Sub–Questions

◎ Is there an adequate bookkeeping system?
◎ Is there adequate staff to record financial information?
◎ Are balance sheets and income and expense statements prepared at least quarterly?
◎ Is there a procedure to control and record the assets of the organization?

Question: Is infrastructure adequate to support performance?

Sub–Questions
◎ Does the organizational strategy identify the opportunities and constraints regarding infrastructure?
◎ Is there an adequate transportation system to and from work for employees?
◎ Are communications systems functioning at the level required?

Question: To what extent do technological resources affect the organization's performance?

Sub–Questions
◎ Is there adequate planning for technological requirements?
◎ Overall, is the organization's level of technology appropriate to carry out its functions?
◎ Is access to international information provided to all units through library and/or information management systems?
◎ Are there adequate systems and training in place for managing the organizational technology?

Question: Is program planning adequate?

Sub–Questions
◎ Is there a written plan for each program and services area and each major project?
◎ Are program, services and project plans linked to the organizational mission?
◎ Are the programs, services and projects consistent with the mission, needs, strategies and priorities of the organization?
◎ Are there adequate timelines? Adequate budgets?

Question: To what extent does the organization implement its programming appropriately?

Sub–Questions
◎ Is there support for staff getting programming results, and products and services to clients/beneficiaries?
◎ Does staff work well together to provide good products and services?
◎ Are resources used efficiently to provide the product or service?
◎ Are schedules adhered to in a reasonable fashion?

Question: To what extent does the organization monitor its program and services appropriately?

Sub–Questions
◎ Are there monitoring and evaluation systems in place?
◎ Is staff given feedback on program/services performance?
◎ Are there adequate opportunities to review program and services indicators to measure progress against plans?
◎ Are timelines monitored to reduce overruns? Budgets reviewed?

Question: Are there problem–solving and decision–making processes supporting the organization's capacity to carry out its functions?

Sub–Questions
◎ Is the implementation of work at various levels of the organization smooth–flowing?
◎ Are decisions made in a timely manner?
◎ Are performance gaps and opportunities identified in sufficient time to resolve them, and to the benefit of the individuals involved and the productivity of the organization?
◎ Are there problem-solving and decision-making mechanisms in place?
◎ Are there adequate organizational problem-solving and decision-making skills on the governing board and within the ranks of senior managers?

Question: Are communications effective in supporting performance?

Sub–Questions
◎ Do people in the organization feel there is adequate, ongoing communication about the organization's activities?
◎ Do staff members receive information related to the organization's mission and about progress in fulfilling the mission?
◎ Are there corrective mechanisms to remedy rumors?
◎ Is there adequate written communication?

*Question: Are monitoring and evaluation linked to improved performance?*

Sub–Questions
◎ Are there policies, procedures and planning that guide evaluation and monitoring activities?
◎ Are resources assigned to monitoring and evaluation?
◎ Is data gathered through organizational monitoring and evaluation activities utilized?

Question: Are external linkages adequately established or pursued to support performance?

Sub–Questions
- ◎ Does the organization have adequate formal and informal linkages with like–minded organizations?
- ◎ Are organizational linkages adequately supported?
- ◎ Are there fruitful, ongoing partnerships with external organizations that bring new ideas and/or resources to the organization?
- ◎ Is the organization communicating information about its work to external stakeholders, including the general public?
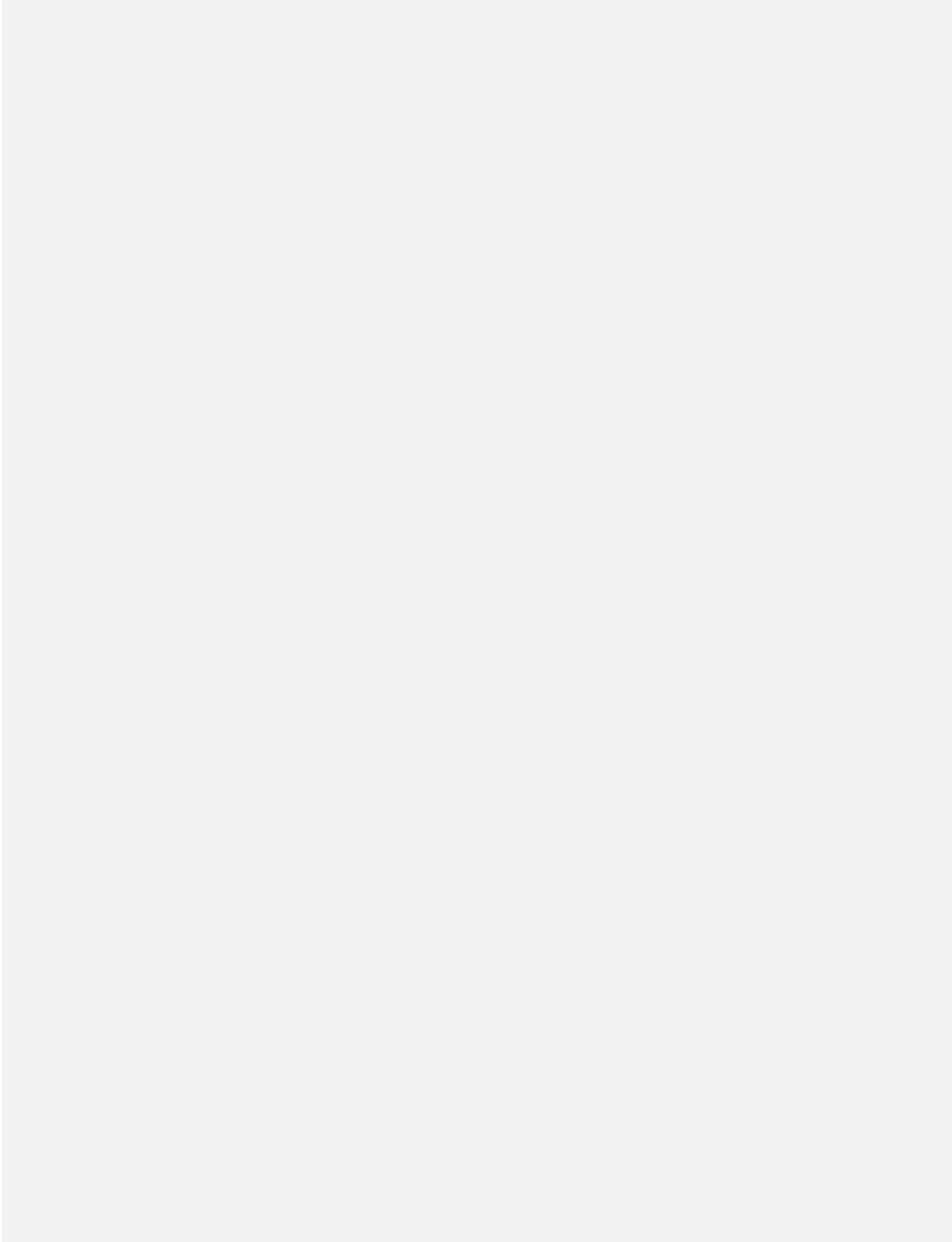
Appendix C

Framework of Results & Key Success Factors

A. Development Results

1. Achievement of Results

What progress is being made toward achievement of results at the output, outcome and impact levels? Do these results contribute to the Agency's overall goals of poverty reduction and sustainable development, and/or to efforts to support democratic development and economic liberalization in Central and Eastern Europe?

a) Actual vs. intended results in the partner country.
b) Actual vs. intended results/benefits to Canada.
c) Unintended results.

2. Cost–Effectiveness of Results

Is the relationship between costs and results reasonable?

a) Comparison of costs with relevant benchmarks, where feasible, taking into consideration results achieved.
b) Actual expenditures correspond to planned expenditures or significant variances fully justified.

3. Relevance of Results

Does the initiative make sense in terms of the conditions, needs or problems to which it is intended to respond?

a) Consistency with needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries/local partners/ country/region.
b) Consistency with CIDA's poverty reduction and sustainable development policies, and other policies, Branch priorities and programs, including crosscutting goals of gender equality and environmental sustainability.
c) Consistency with Canadian foreign policy, including potential benefits to Canada.
d) Consistency with the efforts of local organizations, Canadian organizations and other donors addressing the same needs or problems.

4. Sustainability of Results

Will results/benefits continue after CIDA's involvement ends?

a) Local ownership of project/program activities, with commitment for results and methods chosen to achieve them.
b) Commitment of sufficient resources to maintain benefits/results, where applicable.
c) Adequate institutional capacity and ongoing relevance to maintain results.
d) Domestic policy and institutional environment conducive to maintenance of results.
e) National and international environment conducive to maintenance of results.

B. Success Factors

5. Partnership

Is there shared responsibility and accountability for results?

a) Active participation of local country partners, recipients and beneficiaries (including women) in project/program design, implementation and monitoring/ evaluation.
b) Clear definition, understanding and acceptance of roles and responsibilities of project/program participants.
c) Partners in management have the appropriate authority and tools they need to make decisions and take action.
d) New partnerships to achieve results.

6. Appropriateness of Design

Is the design appropriate and based on sound understanding of local context? Were risks identified and assessed and strategies developed for ongoing monitoring? How were innovative and creative ideas and approaches explored to achieve results?

a) Goals, objectives, results and performance indicators meet Agency's standards for Results-Based Management, were defined using participatory approaches, and are based on sound understanding of local context, including gender and the environment.

b) Resources and services designed to effectively respond to conditions (including risks), needs or problems identified.
c) Risk analysis in planning phase leads to strategies for ongoing monitoring during implementation.
d) Experiment with new project/program design and procedures.
e) Application of lessons from development experience, and lessons learned from innovations recorded, reported and disseminated.

7. Appropriateness of Resource Utilization

Are suitable human, financial and physical resources involved and used well? Is financial information complete, accurate, and reliable? Are prudence and probity adequately exercised?

a) Sound financial management policies and procedures, including budgeting, accounting and reporting systems and practices.
b) Contracting and contract management in accordance with sound contracting policies and practices.
c) Canada's capacity to provide goods and services required to achieve intended results.
d) Good match between needs and knowledge, expertise and personal skills of all major project/program participants.
e) Adequate management of project/program personnel and physical assets.

8. Informed and Timely Action

Did we anticipate and respond to change based on adequate information? Did we take appropriate action to manage risks?

a) Effective networks and processes to identify and assess important trends and events in the project/program environment.
b) Effective monitoring and reporting systems for internal and external risks and appropriate and timely response to manage risks and opportunities.
c) Adequate strategies and practices respond to the nature and level of internal and external risk to project/program funds and assets.
d) Resources and services delivered in a manner that effectively responds to conditions, including risks, needs, opportunities or problems.
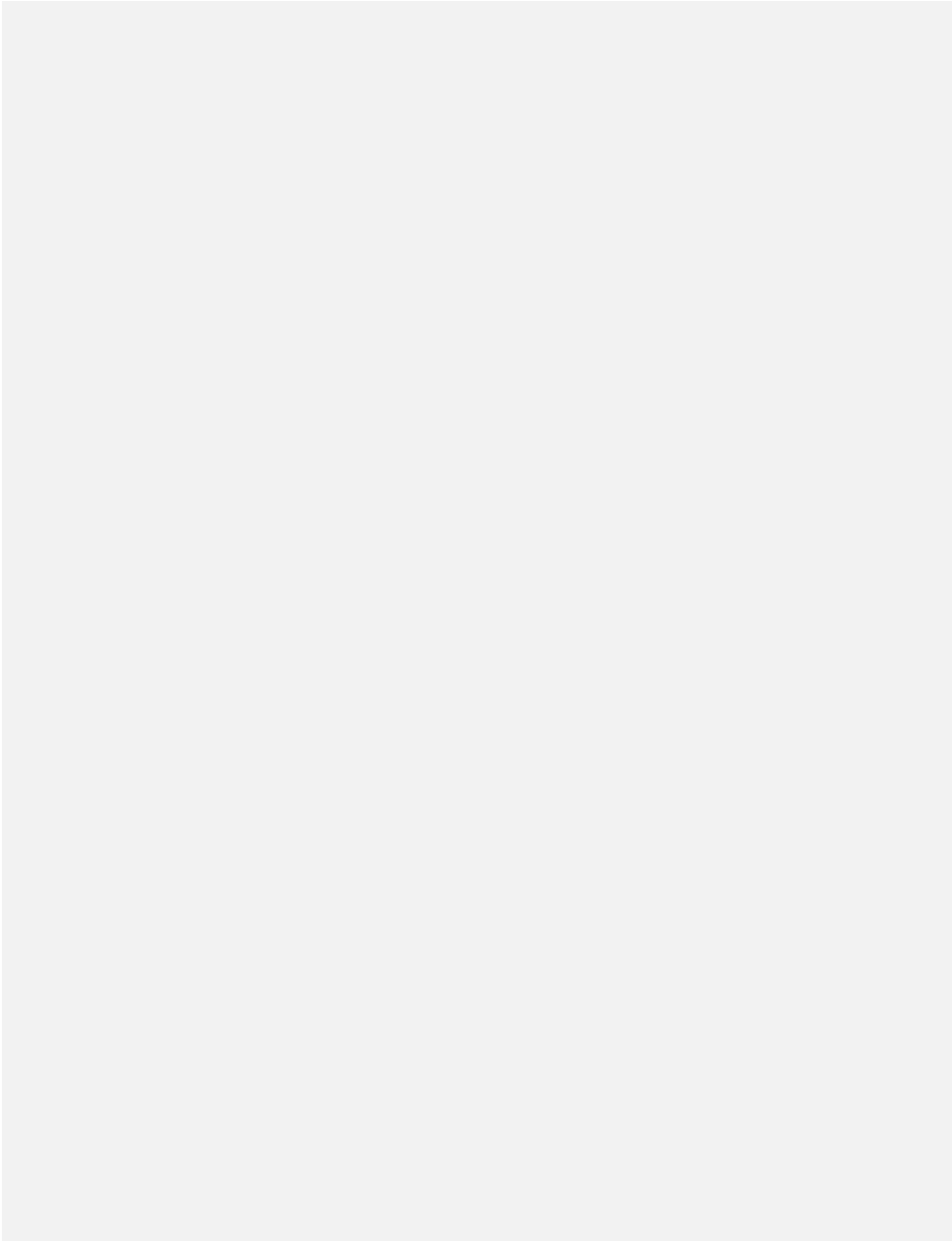
Appendix D

Model Text: OA Workplan

Below we set out a workplan for assessing the fictitious
Grewnal Governance Institute. In preparing your workplan,
this tool can be referred to section–by–section to
ensure that expectations are met.

Organization Assessment of the Grewnal Governance Institute

OA Workplan

1 Introduction

Purpose

In early 2006, the Institute's multi–donor support group agreed to invest in institutional strengthening as a means to promote growth and meet the challenges ahead. It was decided that CIDA would lead this initiative, working jointly with the organization's leadership, the national government and bilateral donors.

To this end, a two–phase process is being implemented. First, an organization assessment (OA) will identify strengths/weaknesses, and areas for potential improvements. The second phase will focus on institutional strengthening and the development of a strategic plan going forward. The OA is to be completed by August 1, 2006, and the strategic plan is targeted for October 15, 2006.

Organization Profile

The Grewnal Governance Institute was formed in 1995 by interested benefactors (and supported by fledgling civil society organizations) with the dismantling of government control after well over 45 years of socialist ideology. Democratic elections in 1997 saw the end of one–party rule. Since, development has been characterized by significant progress in achieving deep and fundamental structural

reforms, the emergence of a vibrant and inclusive multi–party political system, and a continuing economic struggle that impacts most greatly on the country's most vulnerable people – women, and the poor and disadvantaged.

The mandate of the Grewnal Governance Institute is '...to develop an enabling environment for all citizens to participate freely and effectively in the establishment and delivery of good governance nationally, regionally and locally'. After 1997, the Institute contributed significantly to the country's democratization and political liberalization reforms. Recently, Institute programming has focused on promoting political rights, civil liberties, rule of law and ethics in government. Interventions have contributed to the strengthening of the functional capacities and improving the organizational performance of many NGOs and community–based organizations, establishing ethical standards within government ministries, and increasing media coverage of human rights and legal processes. Governance projects tended to focus on national level initiatives at the outset, but now training/education projects in particular are being implemented at regional and local levels.

Grewnal managers/staff work together with civil society organizations and a network of donor agencies to further the Institute's objectives. A respectful, cordial and productive relationship is maintained with the national government (albeit with some contentious issues).

CIDA Involvement

Canada implemented bilateral development cooperation programming shortly after the first democratic elections were held. Opportunities were identified for CIDA to work with the recipient government and other donors in building the foundations to facilitate transition during this challenging period. The Agency functioned as a 'niche' donor within the overall development cooperation framework, supporting constitutional development, and the strengthening of government and civil society institutions at all levels.

From 2001 to 2005, CIDA contributed a total $12.5M in core funding to the Grewnal Governance Institute, averaging $2.5M a year. Disbursements progressively increased from $0.9M in 2001, to $1.2M in 2002, $2.9M in 2003, $3.2M in 2004 and $4.3M in 2005. Assistance from other donors amounted to $11.7M in 2005.

Key Audiences

Primary clients are: 1) Grewnal Governance Institute, 2) Executive Director, National Treasury (responsible for coordinating development cooperation), 3) CIDA senior management (desk, country), and 4) bilateral donor support group. Information will be shared with other external audiences as appropriate.

2   OA Objectives

The primary objective is to identify the Institute's strengths/weaknesses, and areas for potential improvements. An emphasis is to be brought to the development of clear, credible information that facilitates informed decision–making.

The following key issues are to be addressed:

◎   To what extent has the Institute been successful in fulfilling its mandate?

◎   To what extent has the Institute contributed to improvements in the capacity of: 1) government institutions to deliver good governance, and 2) civil society to effect real changes on governance issues? What unintended results, if any, were attributable to the organization (both positive and negative)?

◎   To what extent is the stakeholder environment supportive of what the organization is intent on accomplishing?

◎   What major strengths contribute to the organization's ability to fulfill its mandate and achieve targeted results?

◎   What key improvements should be introduced to improve Grewnal's structural organization, processes and systems going forward? What other deficiencies should be addressed?

◎   What opportunities will influence the Institute's growth over the next three–to–five years? Comment on sustainability and financial viability over this period.

◎   Under what conditions, if any, should CIDA and the donor group approve core funding at this time?

CIDA expects to optimize value–added from its investment in this assessment, and to this end expects learning opportunities to be fully exploited and key lessons learned brought forward for consideration.

Note: Terms of Reference can be attached.

3 Methodology

The OA is to be carried out as a collaborative partnership between CIDA and the Grewnal Governance Institute. Both entities have worked together to develop the Terms of Reference and select the consultant responsible for carrying out the assessment. This collaboration will continue in the finalizing of the OA report and the sharing of information. Throughout, this assessment will emphasize the participation of all key stakeholders, and the mutual sharing of experiences at all levels.

The methodology adopted for this OA is designed to meet the requirements and expectations set out in CIDA's Terms of Reference. Information collection will focus on developing a better understanding of the performance of the Institute – and the factors that drive performance. Organizational performance is perceived as a function of the Institute's external environment, its motivation (underlying traits that define its 'personality'), and its ability to use internal capacities to achieve results.

The OA will comprise:

◎ Reviewing literature and documentation available at HQ and in the field

◎ Assessing a selected sample of Grewnal–assisted programs/projects, and

◎ Interviewing key informants (organization managers/staff, government officials, representatives of civil society and other donor agencies, thematic experts, executing agencies).

The Evaluation Team will carry out a three week, in–country mission in April 2006.

Note: The proposed field mission itinerary can be attached.

3.1 Framework Matrix

The OA framework attached as Appendix A systemizes the methodology, identifying the key issues to be addressed, sub–questions to provide elaboration, matters to be considered, sources of information and methods of information collection. The OA framework addresses historical performance, as well as forward–looking issues that relate to future directions.

Documentation Review

The process of identifying and reviewing available documentation began with the awarding of the contract and facilitated preparation of this workplan. To date, an emphasis was brought to understanding and documenting the evolving political context from 1997 on. Research has also been carried out on the Institute's mission, policies, processes, and systems. More detailed information will be collected on the selected projects during the in–country mission. This will include reviewing project files made available by other donors.

Program/Project Assessment

The assessment of projects will be based on a representative sample germane to the 2001–to–2005 period. The Grewnal Governance Institute was actively involved in the selection process, and with CIDA jointly approved the final listing.

Project selection was based on: 1) strategic nature/importance (within the overall programming portfolio), 2) financial significance, and 3) the potential for learning and identifying lessons. The following seven projects will be assessed, representing a total donor investment of $22.4M in the period from 2001–to–2005 (27 percent of total):

◎   Constitutional & Legal Strengthening Project (2002–2005)

◎   Justice Linkage Project (2003–2004)

◎   Governance and Policy Support Project (2002–2004)

◎   Local Leadership & Priority Setting Training Program (2004–2005)

◎   Local Government Support Program (2001–2005)

◎   National Government Financial Management Systems Program (2002–2004)

◎   Women's Empowerment Project (2005)

All available project documentation will be reviewed for each of these projects. Then a series of interviews will be carried out with the organization staff and in–country project staff, beneficiaries and involved stakeholders (as appropriate). Interviews will focus on each project individually. In total, more than 30 interviews are planned for the mission.

In–country site visits will be carried out to provide opportunities to observe projects that are still ongoing, collect 'on the ground' information about results and carry out in–depth consultations with project implementers and beneficiaries. If possible, field level discussions may also comprise mini–workshops with implementers and beneficiaries.

Note: Interview guides can be attached.

3.2 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews will be conducted to obtain qualitative information on the OA issues. These interviews will provide in–depth information that will allow the OA Team to assess the Institute's success in fulfilling its mandate, contributions to capacity building, support amongst stakeholders, strengths and weaknesses, sustainability over time, etc.

In total, some 30 interviews will be conducted with: 1) government officials involved in ODA and/or with thematic–specific experience, 2) experienced representatives from other donor agencies, 3) thematic experts, and 4) businesses and civil society organizations, and 5) CIDA managers from the program branches (both HQ, post).

Note: Interview guides can be attached.

3.3 Information Analysis

Information analysis will be results–oriented in responding to the key issues. CIDA's "Framework of Results and Key Success Factors" will help guide presentation. For example, the sustainability assessment will consider: 1) local ownership of program/project activities, 2) sufficiency of resources to maintain programming, 3) adequate institutional capacity, and 4) the degree of support in the external environment. Relevance will comment on congruency with Canada's and CIDA's development cooperation mandate, policies and strategies. An information analysis tool will be prepared to record organizational strengths and weaknesses by key issue.

The OA Team will meet to refine the preliminary findings and develop conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned. These will be communicated to and discussed with CIDA's Program Manager. Preliminary indications will then be discussed with the organization's leadership, post–staff, other donors and key stakeholders at the end of the field mission.

3.4 Limitations

Foreseeable limitations of the OA methodology are identified as being:

◎ The outcomes of capacity building interventions and changes in the enabling environment can take a long time to manifest themselves and may be difficult to measure quantitatively.

◎ Interviewing local partners, beneficiaries and other stakeholders may be problematic in cases where programs/projects were completed some time ago.

4   Reporting Requirements

The consultant will: 1) provide regular progress reporting to CIDA's Program Manager, and 2) keep her/him informed of any developments and/or issues that require immediate attention without delay. A draft OA report will be submitted to CIDA's Program Manager and the Grewnal Governance Institute within three weeks of returning from mission. Within two weeks of receiving comments on the draft report, the consultant will finalize the report and submit ten hard copies to both CIDA's Program Manager and the Institute.

The final report will be prepared in English only, with the executive summary being made available in both official languages. The executive summary in both French and English will be prepared as pdf.docs (for loading on CIDA's 'Entrenous' and publicly accessible Web sites).

A preliminary draft outline for the OA report follows:

◎ Forward
◎ Executive Summary (abstract)
◎ Introduction
◎ Findings: 1) external environment, 2) organizational performance, 3) organizational motivation, 4) organizational capacity
◎ Conclusion
◎ Recommendations
◎ Lessons Learned
◎ Future Directions
◎ Appendices: TOR, list of consultations, documents reviewed

5   OA Project Management

The following sections address the make–up of the OA Team, the accountabilities and responsibilities of key players, a projected effort analysis (person–days required), and the work schedule for taking the OA to completion.

5.1 OA Team

The OA Team reports to CIDA's Program Manager who is ultimately accountable for delivery. The team comprises two Canadian consultants (one leader, one senior), a representative of the Grewnal Governance Institute, and an observer from the national government. The involvement of local beneficiaries, and other donors and stakeholders during the field trip will augment local 'content'.

> *Note*: Bios for each OA team member can be attached.

5.2 Accountabilities & Responsibilities

The following table outlines the accountabilities and responsibilities of key participants involved in OA delivery:

Individual	Accountabilities	Responsibilities
CIDA Program Manager	• Delivery & conduct of the OA project • Appropriateness of design, resource utilization, etc. • Value realized (usefulness, credibility) • Compliance with Agency, professional, ethical standards • Adequate resourcing	• Guiding the OA project • Overseeing contract negotiations • Providing advice on approaches, techniques, practices • Providing technical support (as required) • Overseeing implementation • Approving all deliverables • Ensuring that contractual requirements are met
Representative, Grewnal Governance Institute	• Representing the Institute	• Informing planning & design, implementation, reporting • Facilitating access to key documentation & key informants

Individual	Accountabilities	Responsibilities
		• Providing senior management's perspectives on key issues • Overseeing information sharing with partners, donors, stakeholders, etc.
Organization Leader (consultant)	• Producing the OA report • Meeting professional and ethical standards	• Planning, scoping, conducting the OA project • Day-to-day management of activities • Meaningful stakeholder involvement • Informing CIDA's Program Manager about developments (progress reports)

5.3 Work Scheduling

The following schedule sets out time frames and delivery dates to guide execution:

| Activities & Deliverables	Time Frames (delivery dates)
Pre–Mission (May 1–15)	
Strategic planning (preparation of workplan) Finalization of field trip logistics	May 1–14 May 15
Phase I: Field Mission (May 23–June 9)	
Briefing sessions Site visits & project interviews Key informant interviews Debriefing sessions	May 23–24 May 25–31 June 1–7 June 8–9
Phase II: OA Report (June 12–July 7)	
Preparation of first draft Editing & delivery of final report	June 12–23 June 23–July 7

5.4 Projected Level of Effort

The following table provides an indication of how OA Team consultants will be deployed going forward, and the estimated level of effort calculated in person–days:

Tasks/Deliverables	Number of Person–Days		
	TL	SC	Total
Pre–Mission (May 1–15)			
Strategic planning (preparation of workplan)	7	5	12
Finalization of field trip logistics	1	1	2
Phase I: Field Mission (May 23–June 9)			
Briefing sessions	1	1	2
Site visits & project interviews	7	5	12
Key informant interviews	7	5	12
Debriefing sessions	1	1	2
Phase II: OA Report (June 12–July 7)			
Preparation of first draft	9	7	16
Editing & delivery of final report	3	2	5
Total:	36	27	63

Legend

TL	Team Leader
SC	Senior Consultant
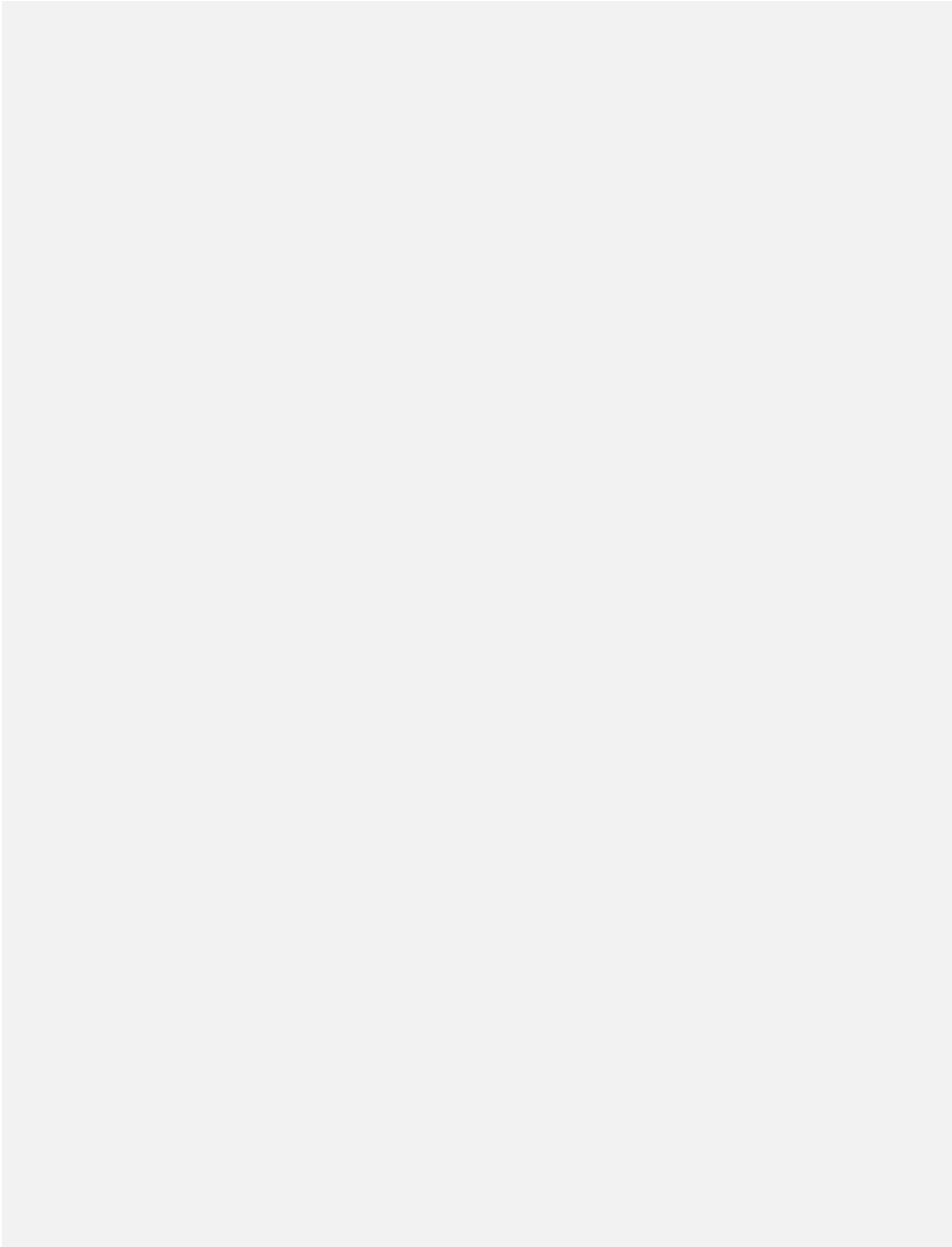
APPENDIX A

OA FRAMEWORK MATRIX				

Key Issues	Sub-Questions	To Be Considered	Sources of Information	Information Collection
To what extent has the Institute been successful in fulfilling its mandate?	Has the enabling environment for good governance been improved?	Democratic reforms Degree of political liberalization Extent of citizen participation	Documentation review Stakeholder consultations	Qualitative, statistical analysis
To what extent has the Institute contributed to improvements in the capacity of: 1) government institutions to deliver good governance, and 2) civil society to effect real changes on governance issues? Identify unintended results, if any, attributable to the organization (both positive and negative).	What results are attributable to the Institute's capacity building interventions?	Changes in organizational capacities (government, civil society) Ability of civil society organizations to influence government ideology, strategies, policies	Documentation review Stakeholder consultations	Qualitative analysis

Key Issues	Sub-Questions	To Be Considered	Sources of Information	Information Collection
To what extent is the stakeholder environment supportive of what the organization is intent on accomplishing?	To what extent are the community and partners involved in the organization? Does the government value and support the organization's efforts? Are donors supportive?	Alignment of interests, needs, priorities Degree of information sharing with communities and partners Financial support from government, donors	Documentation review Stakeholder consultations	Qualitative analysis
What major strengths contribute to the organization's ability to fulfill its mandate and achieve targeted results?	To what extent does strategic leadership affect performance? Are human resource levels needs adequate to meet performance expectations? Are the individuals in key jobs capable and wellsuited to the challenges ahead?	Leadership strengths & weaknesses Human resource planning capacities Resident expertise & experience	Documentation review Stakeholder consultations	Qualitative analysis
What key improvements should be introduced to improve Grewnal's structural organization, processes and systems going forward? What other deficiencies should be addressed?	Is the organizational structure conducive to growth and productivity? Are there adequate financial systems? To what extent do technology resources affect performance?	Alignment of mission/ goals with structures Lines of accountability & responsibility Adequacy of systems/ processes Adequacy of technological planning	Documentation review Stakeholder consultations	Qualitative analysis

Key Issues	Sub-Questions	To Be Considered	Sources of Information	Information Collection
What opportunities will influence the Institute's growth over the next three–to–five years? Comment on sustainability and financial viability over this period.	Has strategic planning identified needs and priorities? Is current programming expected to be sustainable in the near to medium term? Will Grewnal's revenue generation strategy be adequate going forward?	Policy commitments Targeted results at national, regional, local levels Stakeholder/financial support for programming Government, donor funding levels	Documentation review Stakeholder consultations	Qualitative, statistical analysis
Under what conditions, if any, should CIDA and the donor group approve core funding at this time?	What foreseeable events could impact on Grewnal's capacity for delivery? What factors are key to ensure acceptable levels of risk management?	Political developments Global and national economic trends Environmental conditions Civil stability (national, regional, local) Donor support levels	Documentation review Stakeholder consultations	Qualitative analysis
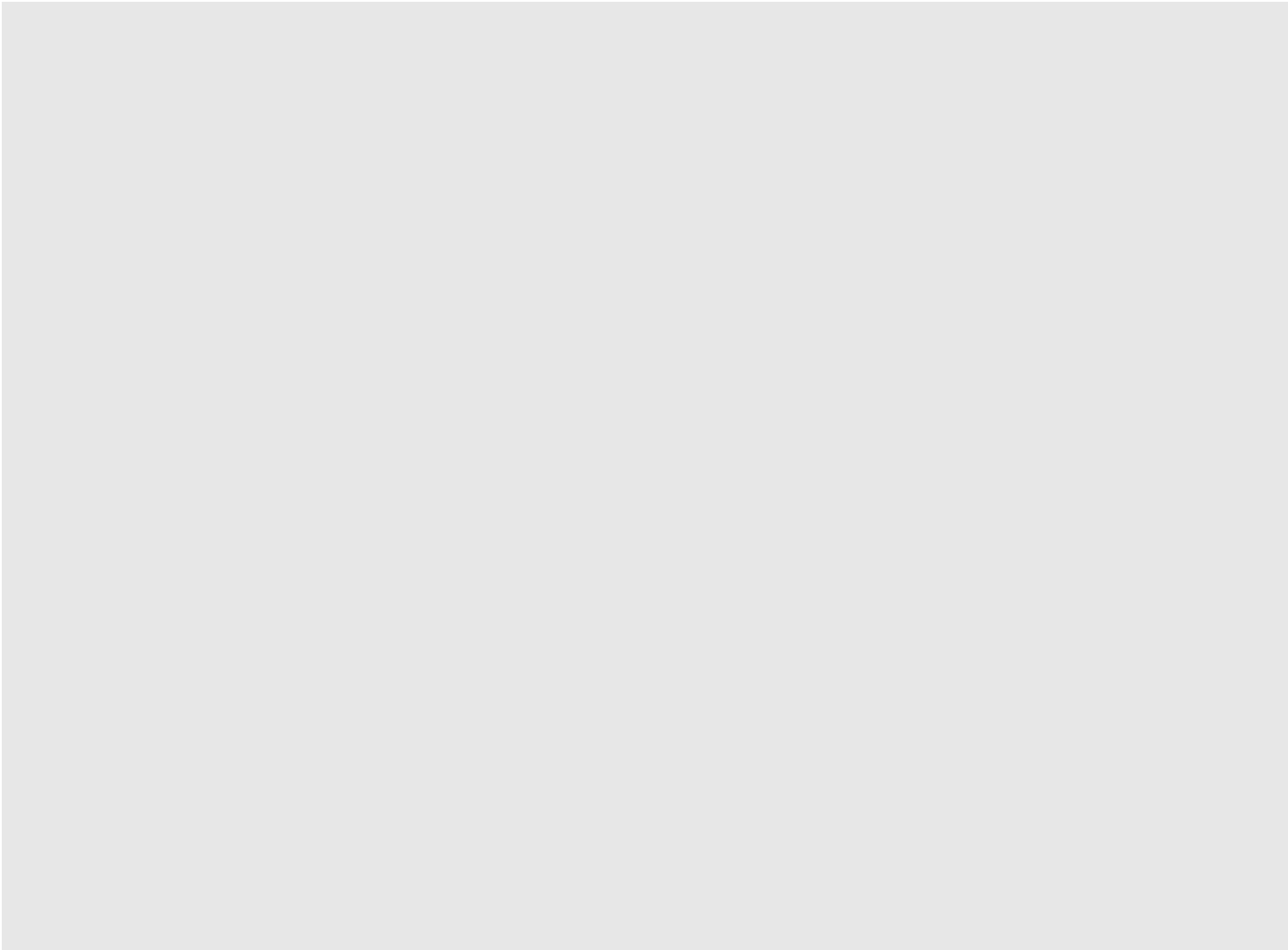
Appendix E

MODEL TEXT: QUICK OA REPORT

The 'model text' below offers a quick and easy way to prepare Quick OA Reports.
Practitioners can work from a standard for a fictitious assessment that meets the Agency's essential requirements.

Organization Assessment of Valyun Kind

FINAL REPORT

OBJECTIVE: To identify the strengths/weaknesses of this organization for the purposes of determining candidacy for: 1) core funding for entrepreneurial-focussed programming, and/or 2) organization development through CIDA infrastructure strengthening programming.

Key Factors	Assessment			Strengths/Weaknesses
	Exemplary	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	
External environment		✔		On balance, the stakeholder environment is supportive of Valyun Kind (VK) and the work that it does. The government values VK programming and projects appear well-aligned with national and local priorities. Attempts to coordinate with similar efforts by donor agencies have generated mixed results. On occasion, government ministries have been critical of IFIs favouring VK.
Operational Performance	✔			VK has achieved significant results that clearly responded to the needs of the local populations. Entrepreneurial training can be linked to close to 250

Key Factors	Assessment			Key Factors
	Exemplary	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	
Operational Performance (continued)				new business start-ups from 2002 to 2005. Interventions in microfinance improved accessibility and led to capacity building results. VK's role is expected to grow appreciably with greater recognition of its contribution to private sector development. Revenue generation appears sound for the next three years. Investments in technological training are required at this time.
Operational Motivation	✔			The human resources dynamic is inspired and energized. Managers and staff are supportive of VK's mission, and typically expend whatever effort is required to meet challenges and resolve issues.
Operational Capacity		✔		Leadership is focused on results, competent and organized. VK's organizational structure facilitates productivity. Strategic planning, human resources and financial management appear sound.

Recommendation

This organization has earned its well-deserved reputation as an important contributor to private sector development. Our assessment found no indications that VK operations were unsustainable. It is recommended that CIDA consider VK as a viable candidate for core funding over a three-to-five year timeframe, with financial assistance being directed towards entrepreneurial-focused training within communities. In parallel, efforts to strengthen in-house technological capabilities should be initiated. Exposure to risk is considered to be at acceptable levels atthis time (although unforeseen developments may have a significant, negative impact on this organization).