

## **Assessment of the Centre for Global Studies (CFGs) NePAD Capacity Building Initiative**

Record of the discussion at Bellagio on 11 December 2003

This meeting had been called to review the NePAD Capacity Building Initiative which had been led by the CFGS and supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the IDRC. It had been initiated at a meeting in Bellagio in April 2002 and was aimed at developing practical initiatives to support the NePAD objectives. The background to the review had been set out in the paper “Effective Strategies to Realize the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NePAD): Lessons Learned” by Barry Carin and Gordon Smith.

The NePAD documents and the G8 Action Plan had produced a long, encyclopedic list of things that needed to be done. Nothing had been left out (aside from some quibbles whether there was adequate attention to the problems of HIV/AIDS), but there had been little guidance on priorities.

The aim of this CFGS project had been to select specific, concrete initiatives, and demonstrate how they could be worked up and implemented. The intention was to be pragmatic, aiming to influence real decisions, rather than simply producing more papers and recommendations. The project had also deliberately been set up as a rapid process—and one lesson learnt was the limitations on how quickly work such as this could in practice be carried out.

Since the project aimed to influence decision-makers, the use of “mapping” techniques had been introduced, so as to make sure that adequate thought was given to how ideas might be promoted and implemented. In particular, Richard Hodapp’s “Decision Mapping®” process had been used, and taught to those participating in developing individual projects. One of Hodapp’s insights was how much time was often spent on design and how little time on promotion. His methodology provided clear ways of targeting “owners”, evaluators and implementers of the decisions we desire to influence in appropriate ways. This methodology had meshed in with other models for influencing governments, for example the IDRC’s action mapping process.

The original intention had been to select the proposals to be “mapped” through a competition, with a jury of prominent Africans doing the selection, with the Centre for Global Studies helping to make sure the successful proposals were plugged into the decision makers. In the event, it had not proved possible to secure funding for drawing up the full range of proposals, so the process had had to be scaled back.

Pages 7-9 of the Carin/Smith paper set out the sequence of meetings and the proposals selected. Parts of the process had gone well, and there had been enthusiasm for the selection process at the Johannesburg meeting in September 2002. But it had subsequently had become clear that some of the participants had not fully appreciated the nature of the task, or the commitment needed. This had led to the list of projects being scaled back further, before the final meeting in Addis Ababa in February 2003. That

meeting had established concrete ideas for how the remaining projects should be taken forward.

From the perspective of the Centre for Global Studies, some of the lessons presented to this meeting were:

- a process like this would not work unless the mappers were really committed and ready to act as evangelists. The process might have been more successful if more time had been built in for recruitment. In addition, more focus was needed on building larger teams led by well-known people.;
- there had been confusion whether it was institutions or individuals who were being recruited to the process. In some cases, CFGS had thought it was recruiting institutions, only to find the individuals intended to work independently;
- the planning process had not left enough time for tutoring the mappers in the techniques and processes;
- CFGS itself had not engaged properly in decision mapping, in particular in planning how best to communicate effectively with CIDA and secure their support;
- the timetable had been grossly over-optimistic.

Some points were then made about the state of play on individual projects, both from the proponents and from others at the meeting.

### **African Tertiary Institution Consortium on HIV/AIDS**

This project had arisen because of a recognition that little was being done to address the interface between students and tertiary institutions in handling the huge problems of HIV/AIDS. The project had deliberately proposed a consortium involving grass-roots ownership, rather than involving Vice Chancellors and university bureaucracies. A

Institutions were often difficult interlocutors, with shifting staff and varying objectives. The focus that had been put on process, and on setting up networks, had been a commendable feature. But the real test would come in actually running and expanding the project over, say, five years.

The project itself was ongoing. UNDP was supportive, but substantial co-financing was needed. To do this would require assistance, guidance and lobbying, and the chances of success would be improved if efforts were combined. To get through the AfDB bureaucracy needed pressure both from donors and from those on the ground.

The issues were not all about money. It would be helpful to continue to work together to deal with other substantive issues. Proper monitoring and evaluation was needed—not the routine end-of-project evaluation carried out to satisfy auditors, but a real analysis of what worked and what didn't. The IDRC work on poverty at village level was a good example. The basis for a successful approach to NePAD and to donors had to be a clear and convincing proposal that set out the costs and the expected results, based on good analysis and research.

### **West African MicroCredit Fund**

This project had had its roots in proposals from the field—from Benin, Mali and Senegal for example—which PlaNet Finance had decided to support. The process had been useful, but had had its weaknesses. It had been hard at first to understand the nature of the mapping process, and six months had been a very short time to draw up plans for the size of project that was contemplated. Nonetheless, a clear product had been developed, along with a clear strategy to sell the product to sponsors.

It had not proved possible to implement this in the way envisaged, but two other related funds had been established. Even where funding approaches had not been directly successful, there had often been spin-off benefits. One of the problems had been that the IFC had been very interested but had wanted to see a different structure covering all of Africa. That was not the aim of the project, which saw a real need to establish a specifically West African fund first.

2005 had been identified as the year of microfinance. The objective was to make a start in West Africa and then to present to the G8t in ifunds had bepactive was to 5a 0 12 293.5559 3e way ep of the



on capacity building more generally, there was an important agenda in improving the skills of policy entrepreneurs, independent of action taken with governments. It was in any case perhaps too ambitious to evaluate the program in terms of its success in capacity building. What the Mott Foundation had asked the CFGS to undertake was a pilot program to test whether the ideas would work in practice, rather than a fully-fledged program of capacity building.

- The process had produced a very useful contribution to the academic literature, and it would be worth conducting a more formal review of the methodology used, and the obstacles that had prevented all the objectives being achieved.
- Many of those at the meeting encouraged the CFGS to write an op-ed article for suitable publications which could explain what had been achieved and what issues had emerged. It was important to share experience, and many would be interested in this process.
- It was disappointing that it had not proved possible to get the projects endorsed by the G8 Summit in Evian, as had been hoped. But in the event, the Evian Summit had not focused on specifics in the way that the Kananaskis Summit had. The 2005 Summit in the UK had now been set as the time when the G8 would formally review progress on the G8/NePAD action plan.
- It had proved very difficult to engage with the NePAD secretariat, whose resources were very stretched. They did not have the capacity to be an operating partner. But it was nonetheless important that projects had some sort of o2 34

problems, but there were also more positive points. Zimbabwe, for example, now had a better educated population, with six universities compared to one at independence.

- At the same time, it was right to look to NePAD to produce concrete results. It was not just a political initiative to demonstrate that Africa was taking responsibility for its future. People in Africa wanted to see change, with new ways of delivering services and a real se