



**SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOP ON POVERTY  
ALLEVIATION AND SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT: EXPLORING THE LINKS  
23 JANUARY 2001**

The workshop on Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development: Exploring the Links was held on 23 January 2001 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. This one-day workshop was organized by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and was attended by 50 high-level participants representing government agencies, academic institutions, United Nations bodies, the World Bank, business and industry, and international and non-governmental organizations.

The workshop aimed to address strategies and approaches to deal with the ongoing problem of widespread poverty, within the context of sustainable development. During the morning session, participants heard keynote speeches and engaged in discussions on three issues: social capital and sustainable development – the role of market and non-market institutions in a developing country; poverty alleviation and sustainable development – the implications for the management of natural capital; and the World Bank/International Monetary Fund Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and sustainable development. During the afternoon sessions, workshop participants considered an overview of a sustainable development framework elaborated by IISD and engaged in plenary and panel discussions on key issues raised during the meeting.

Discussions and conclusions from this meeting are expected to contribute to ongoing efforts to address poverty alleviation and sustainable development issues in relevant organizations and agencies both in Canada and internationally, as well as international processes such as the Financing for Development initiative and the Ten Year Review of the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 2002 ("Rio+10").

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

Widespread poverty is an enduring problem and poverty alleviation has been a key component in development strategies over the past 50 years. During this period, however, the strategies and approaches to tackle the problem have changed. In the 1950s and 1960s, efforts often involved investments in large-scale physical infrastructure projects, while in the 1970s the focus shifted to the development of human capital. During the 1980s, the emphasis moved toward decentralized decision-making, trade liberalization and economic reform. In more recent years, there has also been an increased focus on good governance.

However, in spite of some progress in addressing poverty, the problem remains. Almost half the world's population currently lives on less than two dollars a day. In recent years, tackling such widespread poverty appears once more to have become a priority issue for many aid agencies. The issue was highlighted by Joseph Stiglitz of the World Bank in his Prebisch Lecture at the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1998. In this lecture, Stiglitz called for a major change in strategy that emphasizes development as a transformation of society. His proposal focused on the need for cooperation among stakeholders and for the development of appropriate institutional structures. The idea of social capital – comprised of both formal and informal institutions and interactions – was a major component of his approach. In September 1999, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund adopted a new framework for achieving sustainable poverty reduction that requires nationally-owned poverty reduction strategies – contained in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) – to serve as the basis for concessional lending and for debt relief within the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

This recent focus and debate on poverty alleviation is taking place more than a decade after the publication of the Brundtland report, which established the concept of sustainable development. The Brundtland report defined this concept as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It was in the light of these events that this high-level workshop was organized to consider the linkages between poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

**REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP**

Jacques Gérin, Chair of the Board of Directors of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), welcomed participants and introduced the topic of poverty alleviation and sustainable development. He said IISD had invited participants to encourage consideration of the linkages between these issues and to provide a forum for discussing new approaches to fight poverty in a sustainable way. He stressed that renewed interest in poverty alleviation should not create an "either/or" approach whereby such work takes priority over sustainable development, and highlighted that genuine development is by definition sustainable. He said the workshop would stimulate and focus debate and expressed the hope that it would benefit not only those involved in discussing these issues, but ultimately those living in poverty.

Workshop Chair Maurice Strong, Senior Adviser to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, noted that poverty is an "ancient" and enduring problem, but one that need no longer be accepted as inevi-

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table given the unprecedented prosperity and opportunities for wealth creation available today. Noting progress during the past century in addressing structural and infrastructure obstacles to poverty alleviation, he said the challenge now is to develop strategies to employ the immense wealth creation potential developed in western society and being emulated elsewhere to eradicate poverty. He stated that the ongoing deterioration and destruction of natural ecosystems is a barrier to tackling poverty and achieving sustainable development. He called attention to the impact of the new US administration, noting that it had "a lot of hard edges, a lot of good people with prejudices we have to respect but do not share." He added that the incoming administration would create a new situation and possibly some new opportunities.

Highlighting the necessity for incorporating sustainable development considerations into achieving poverty reduction, Maurice Strong suggested that this workshop could provide new insights and ideas that could assist the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the World Bank, the United Nations and other organizations and agencies involved in this field. He drew attention to several upcoming high-level meetings, including the Summit of the Americas, the G-8 meeting, the Ten Year Review of the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the OECD Development Assistance Committee and the Financing for Development initiative. He said the workshop should not necessarily seek consensus, but should identify key issues, possible solutions or approaches and act as a catalyst for discussions and dialogue.

### SESSION ONE: KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

#### **SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF MARKET AND NON-MARKET INSTITUTIONS IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY: Keynote speech:**

The keynote speech on this issue was presented by Kanchan Chopra, Institute of Economic Growth, University Enclave of Delhi, India. Introducing the concept of social capital – the networks and relationships that shape the quality and quantity of social interactions in a society – she said it adds a new dimension to the dialogue on development and noted that considering only traditional institutions does not suffice when grappling with the problems of development. Highlighting three cases in poverty alleviation at the grassroots level and their links to sustainable development, she said a "reaching out between agents" across traditional sectors in the context of creating development processes can result in successful outcomes. She said policy implications could be drawn from the case studies, emphasizing that sustainable development should not be approached from a macro-level perspective, but should be based on micro-interventions. She challenged the notion of substitution between different types of capital, stressing that certain critical stocks of natural capital have to be kept intact.

On the first case study, regarding a project focused on social capital for sustainable development in a poor rural community in Eastern India, she said the project led to the pooling of land and water resources to achieve an appropriate scale for development. She outlined the contributions of stakeholders from different sectors in driving change and the creation of a system with outputs at different time intervals to ensure on-going commitment by the community. She noted that non-governmental organizations had facilitated initial agreement on mechanisms for collaborative management of resources, which then evolved through the interactions of different stakeholders. She highlighted the need for: integration of the project to fit local needs and aspirations; the creation of possibilities for scaling up; and linkages with external markets.

On the second case study focusing on breaking the link between environmental degradation and migration in a community in Western India, she outlined an initiative to create property rights to common resources. She said this resulted in higher incomes and less out-migration. Again, she highlighted the coming together of stakeholders from

different institutional sectors of society as the key to success. She said limitations were encountered in replication of the initiative and noted the need to create links with national institutions as part of a second phase.

On the third case study focusing on livelihood/common property linkages in the context of soil conservation and water management in Northern India, she stressed the need to look at the totality of a system. She said the case study involved giving a community user rights to upstream forest land and making the community responsible for its protection. However, after a period of 15 years, the fact that the law had not been changed to acknowledge this arrangement resulted in the deterioration of the system.

Kanchan Chopra concluded by highlighting issues for further discussion, including: whether a meaningful definition of social capital for poverty alleviation needs to distinguish between formal and informal institutions; what the appropriate degree of decentralization is; what the role of human capital formation is; how social entrepreneurs emerge; why there is a dearth of informal social capital in the urban context; and what role formal legal, financial and market institutions can play in sustainable urban development.

**Panelist's comments:** Workshop panelist Roy Culpeper, President of the North South Institute, welcomed Kanchan Chopra's emphasis on local initiatives in the current context of increasing global integration and local disintegration. He said local initiatives should form the basis of sustainable development interventions, and noted that Chopra provides useful insight into how local initiatives can be sustainable by deconstructing essential elements and agents. He emphasized trust as fundamental to sustainability both at the local and national levels. He noted that poverty is a wider concept than just lack of income, and stressed local conditions relating to rights to resources and participation in decision-making as vital to poverty alleviation. On ownership of development processes, he said it is a dynamic and complex issue, and questioned whether it is realistic to assume ownership in urban areas and at the national level.

**Discussion:** In the ensuing discussion, one participant commented on the need to take community priorities as the starting point for poverty alleviation and sustainable development initiatives and to build on local traditions. She stressed the role of the international donor community and local non-governmental organizations as brokers in the vertical integration between the micro- and macro-levels and said elements enabling scaling-up should be built into demonstration projects. Another participant called for recognition of the community security dimension and cautioned against striving for an ideal model without recognizing unique local conditions. One participant noted that trust building and continuity requires the capacity of communities and the government to renegotiate as circumstances change.

In response to a question on democratic institutions and the success of the projects presented, Kanchan Chopra said democratic institutions are one necessary pre-condition. One participant made the point that poverty alleviation is fundamentally bottom-up and situational, while another commented on the evolution of the formal and informal sectors, noting that they may merge, or may develop independently in a way that leads to tensions or conflict between the two sectors.

One participant cautioned against the assumption that decentralization is good, questioning to what degree social capital exists at the local level and emphasizing that poor people do not trust institutions. Another speaker highlighted that the costs and time required to set-up institutions are high. There was also a suggestion relating to the fact that the cooperative model described by Chopra is in conflict with the current overriding global economic model, which is based on competition.

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**POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL CAPITAL: Keynote speech:** Anil Markandya, University of Bath/World Bank, delivered the keynote speech on this issue. He said his aim was to consider how the concept of sustainable development fits into the vision for development articulated by Joseph Stiglitz of the World Bank in his Prebisch lecture at UNCTAD in 1998.

Reviewing the literature on real wealth and sustainable development, Anil Markandya said indicators need to look at the trends in all types of capital, including human and natural capital. He provided a detailed examination of some of the hypotheses contained in relevant studies on linkages between poverty and natural capital. He concluded that the literature does demonstrate some linkages, but that the connections are complex and that some commonly held views are not proven. In particular, he said evidence that the poor are more damaging to their environment than the wealthy is not conclusive. He said there is a lack of evidence to support the view that an increase in poverty always results in further environmental degradation. However, he did note support for the view that when changes occur in institutions that result in a breakdown of common management systems for natural resources, these can cause increased poverty and degradation. He highlighted the need to understand better the process of adaptation of institutions to cope with such changes, and suggested there are common grounds with Stiglitz's proposed strategy for development. In addition, he noted some evidence to indicate that when there is a loss of natural capital – such as through natural disasters – the poor suffer disproportionately more than the rich. Thus, policies that prevent such losses will benefit the poor.

Anil Markandya outlined the vision for development outlined by Joseph Stiglitz. He noted Stiglitz's call for a greater focus on culture and institutional development, with attention paid to stakeholders – the individual, family and community, as well as the public and private sectors. Stiglitz notes that these groups must be involved in decisions on how society responds to economic and technological changes. He also calls for: a strong, competitive, stable and efficient private sector through a sound legal and regulatory environment; a stable macroeconomic framework that reduces vulnerability to inevitable shocks associated with global engagement; public provision of health, infrastructure and education services, as well as an enabling environment for private sector involvement in providing these services; and openness of developing country markets to developing country exports.

Markandya stated that Stiglitz's vision requires fleshing out with detailed operational guidance. He supported further development of natural capital indicators, as well as guidelines for evaluating policies and programmes with respect to natural capital and poverty. He also noted the need to introduce the poverty dimension in negotiations on international environmental issues such as climate change and biodiversity. He concluded by stressing the need to mainstream poverty and environmental issues in day-to-day economic decision-making, as well as to include poverty issues in environmental policy making and vice-versa. He supported these steps and the economic management reforms proposed by Stiglitz as effective ways to move forward.

**Panelist's comments:** Workshop panelist Jim MacNeill, World Bank, thanked Anil Markandya for his comprehensive treatment of the literature on this issue. He noted some reservations by Markandya on evidence that poverty causes environmental degradation and greater confidence that environmental degradation harms the poor more than the wealthy. In response, Anil Markandya agreed with this summary, noting divergence in the literature on the impact of the poor on the environment. He said a case-by-case approach to poverty alleviation was required and said a "one-size-fits-all approach" was not appropriate. Jim MacNeill also noted the vast subsidies in areas such as agriculture and stated that subsidies are often economically perverse, environmentally destructive and primarily benefit the rich.

**Discussion:** In the ensuing plenary discussion, Anil Markandya responded to a participant who commented on the increasing impact of natural disasters, agreeing that development strategies and projects need to focus more on reducing vulnerability. Participants also discussed the impact of the poor on the environment, with one intervention noting the role of multinationals in causing degradation, for example in clear felling mangrove forests for shrimp farming. Another speaker noted that where the poor do cause degradation, it is not an issue of blame but rather that those in poverty have no alternatives, as wealth is necessary to create options. Discussions also addressed the need to tap into local knowledge and the views of those living in poverty in addressing environmental issues.

**POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPERS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: Keynote speech:** Daniel Morrow, Lead Adviser, Poverty Reduction Strategy Program, World Bank, highlighted the 1999 Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) approach, developed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to provide development assistance to low-income countries. He noted the consistency of the PRSP approach with Joseph Stiglitz's development paradigm. He said governments seeking concessional funding are required to prepare PRSPs, which are intended to make operational the principles of the Comprehensive Development Framework, including: country ownership; a comprehensive and long-term perspective; and participation and strengthening of social capital. He noted the role of the now completed interim PRSPs (I-PRSPs), which include information on the current situation in countries and future plans, and the function of the annual progress reports and PRSP updates every three years. He stressed the need for "homegrown strategies" and visions for societal transformation in developing countries as well as buy-in from other development partners to enhance aid coordination. While noting that results relating to implementation are not yet available, he expressed some optimism based on I-PRSPs submitted to date and noted support for the PRSP principles within the development community.

On how to implement the PRSP approach, he identified the need to find a balance between speed of implementation and quality of the strategy papers as one challenge, noting the need for low-income countries to develop sufficient social capital for implementation as well as incentives for countries to move quickly in order to achieve interim debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative. He said the right balance should be found on a country-by-country basis and stressed that the PRSPs will be continually updated.

He further identified the challenge of achieving a balance between country ownership and the desire on the part of donors to ensure that funds are used effectively, and underscored that donors need to recognize that country ownership is critical to success. He stressed that conditionality has not been eliminated, as funds will be transferred only under credible PRSPs and governments will be held accountable to undertakings contained in PRSPs. On community participation, he said governments will design the processes and noted the importance of designing them to enhance emerging democratic institutions and create social capital.

On links between the PRSP approach and sustainable development, Morrow noted the absence in Joseph Stiglitz's Prebisch lecture of reference to the sustainable use of natural resources. He said studies by the World Bank Environment Department had found very limited inclusion of considerations relating to natural resource management and environment in the I-PRSPs submitted to date. He suggested this might be due to a focus on health indicators and the complexity of the rural poverty/natural resource management nexus, which involves context-specific and situational factors. He said ownership and participation are key requirements for effective natural resource management solutions and sustainable development, and suggested that countries with PRSPs that

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neglect the environment should be encouraged to find consistency between sustainable development and country ownership. He suggested supporting partners in developing countries that can become domestic advocates, as well as community groups in order to build social capital at the local level.

**Panelist's comments:** Workshop panelist Keith Bezanson, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK, noted the need to draw historical lessons when considering PRSPs and sustainable development. He cautioned against convergence around one model within the PRSPs, noting that guidelines and international consultants compromise their purpose.

He cautioned against a focus within the PRSP process on short-term goals, as they may distort long-term investments needed for sustainable development and crowd out other investments. Pointing to divides among the poor and the need for security at the community level, he stressed that participation and ownership are difficult to achieve.

On conditionality, he suggested that previous conditions still remain and the PRSPs may become the "new high conditionality," and called instead for "co-conditionality" and new partnerships. He further stated that a significant amount of time needs to be devoted to the development of PRSPs, and the current time pressure on the process falls short in terms of supporting local capacity and participation. He questioned whether growth is a sufficient condition for poverty reduction, stressing other factors such as distribution.

On the links between PRSPs and the HIPC process, he expressed concerns regarding possible trade-offs and a possible lack of incremental funds. He further cautioned that the focus is solely on external rather than domestic debt, and stressed that most PRSP/HIPC initiatives are concessional, which may not be the best way to achieve poverty alleviation and debt relief. He commented on the PRSPs' lack of focus on sustainable development and called for more research on relationships between PRSPs and their compatibility with securing long-term needs.

**Discussion:** In the ensuing discussion, several participants expressed disappointment and concern at the lack of environmental requirements in the PRSPs, stating that they ignore existing initiatives. Daniel Morrow responded that this reflects the fact that the issues are not well embedded in the targeted countries and stressed the need for a better dialogue between governments and civil society. One participant noted that ministries of environment and non-governmental organizations will become marginalized in the process by finance ministries. Another participant stressed that the World Bank's focus on relationships with governments in the aid process through the PRSPs was fundamentally flawed and called for cooperation with non-government institutions to build trust and effective strategies.

One speaker said the focus under the PRSPs should be on processes by which governments include other institutions, cautioning that governments have their own objectives that are not compatible with a bottom-up approach. He said the prevailing economic model puts pressure on governments to cut back on policies for poverty reduction and investment in social and environmental issues. Another participant cautioned against rushing the development of PRSPs and against a simultaneous speeding up of lending.

Morrow responded that the PRSP guidelines are of a general nature, which is one reason they do not mandate a section on sustainable development and do not dictate how civil society should be involved, only that it should be involved. On the relationship between the HIPC process and PRSPs, he said the development of poverty reduction strategies has been agreed as a prerequisite for faster debt relief. He stressed that the programme should not be judged based on the preliminary reports and first impressions.

**SESSION OVERVIEW:** Workshop Chair Maurice Strong and the workshop's panelists provided an overview of key issues raised during the meeting's first session. Maurice Strong noted comments that there was no one-size-fits-all solution. He stressed that the link between sustainable development and poverty alleviation has to be made to ensure that steps to address poverty will be sustainable. He called for a focus on practical ideas that are useful to policy makers and practitioners.

Panelist Roy Culpeper highlighted the message of creating trust at the local, national and international levels. He emphasized the need to ensure that all key stakeholders are identified and involved. Jim MacNeill noted that the Brundtland report considered sustainable development as a process to achieve a more sustainable world by addressing a number of key issues, which include poverty alleviation. Keith Bezanson underscored the need to identify the gaps in our understanding on these issues, particularly in terms of how to operationalize valuable concepts such as participation and ownership.

### **SESSION TWO: OVERVIEW OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

Anantha Kumar Duraiappah, Senior Economist and Director, Economic Instruments, IISD, noted a drop in the percentage of people living in poverty worldwide from 28% to 24% between 1987 and 1998. However, he added that during the same period the absolute number living in poverty remained constant at 1.23 billion, while world GDP rose by over 50%. He said this workshop aimed to explore the case for using a sustainable development framework in addressing poverty alleviation.

He considered Joseph Stiglitz's call for a major shift in development strategy, including an emphasis on both formal and informal institutions that link the various stakeholders: private sector, public sector, community, family and individual. He expressed support for Stiglitz's call for a new development strategy, adding that sustainable development should be incorporated as the guiding principle or framework for this strategy. He said a sustainable development framework for poverty alleviation should place the individual, family and community in the center of the equation. This means the problem would be addressed from the perspective of the stakeholders. The public and private sectors would also play key roles.

Anantha Kumar Duraiappah noted that an e-conference on poverty alleviation and sustainable development was also being held. The e-conference, which began earlier in January and would continue into February, was facilitated by IISD and involved about 750 participants. He outlined participants' comments so far, noting statements on donor agencies having their own agendas, concerns that those in poverty need access to information, and an emphasis on the role of institutions within communities.

### **SESSION THREE: PLENARY DISCUSSION**

In the plenary discussion, participants considered the issue of progress on tackling poverty during the past half century, stressing the need to make the current agenda more operational. One participant said lessons learned, particularly over the past 15 years, include the importance of country driven/owned strategies, inclusion of civil society, and coordination between all partners. He said these principles require a comprehensive model, and that PRSPs are one instrument for implementing them. He also noted that development issues are expanding into areas such as trade, multilateral environmental agreements and market access, and said government departments need to work together on these issues. One speaker noted linkages between poverty and population growth and stated that having 2.5 billion people on less than two dollars per day was unacceptable. In addition, participants considered the focus during the past two decades on market liberalization and free

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market policies, with several questioning the extent of this shift. One participant noted that the market – and indeed the capitalist system itself – can come in many different forms and said a “human face” was required, while another said that any system could be harmful if taken to extremes. Another participant noted a shift in governance that has increased the power of the private sector and transnational corporations, and called for stronger regulations and constraints for the sake of the environment.

Some participants considered whether two sets of objectives related to aid, which are not necessarily compatible, exist – those of poverty alleviation and development and those related to foreign policy interests. Disagreeing with the suggestion of an aid/foreign policy dichotomy, one participant stressed that foreign policy today is about global issues such as environmental degradation that cannot be solved by one country alone. In addition, one speaker stressed that the macro-economic policies employed in some countries of Southeast Asia have made it possible for businesses in those countries to support poverty reduction. He called for further consideration of why poverty levels have declined so significantly in that region.

On the role of donors, one speaker said donor countries still play an active role in implementation of strategies and the greatest challenge is for donors to not take action in order to provoke local action. On the timing of reaching poverty reduction objectives, one participant highlighted the importance of resolving the tension between accountability in the short-term with the essentially long-term nature of objectives

Participants also highlighted: the need for community participation; the importance of tailoring solutions to meet specific local needs; the harmful consequences of the rise in military conflicts and the need for stability in tackling poverty; the benefit of a strong judicial system in ensuring good governance; the positive experience of using micro-financing to allow those in poverty to become agents for change; the negative role of donor coordination, which one speaker described as a “self-serving club”; and the need to increase the capacity within developing countries to deal with aid coordination.

On IISD’s role with regard to poverty alleviation, sustainable development and the aid agenda, one participant stressed the need for policy relevant research for use by policy-makers and practitioners. He emphasized the need to build trust and capacity among people at the village level, and said sustainable development is a simple concept that encompasses efficient resource use, equity, environmental harmony and empowerment, and supported the concept of sustainable livelihoods as an effective operational approach.

### **FINAL SESSION: CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

In the workshop’s final session, keynote speakers Kanchan Chopra and Anil Markandya reviewed some of the issues raised during the workshop. Following this, panelists Keith Bezanson and Roy Culpeper offered closing remarks and CIDA President Len Good presented his observations on the workshop. Finally, participants heard concluding comments by IISD Board member Angela Cropper.

Keynote speaker Kanchan Chopra stressed the need for empowerment of people at the local level in order to achieve poverty reduction. She said social entrepreneurs bring together different forms of capital that can result in successful experiences on the ground and cited the example of micro-finance initiatives in Bangladesh. On poverty and sustainable development, she said the issues are linked through the concept of sustainable livelihoods. She said sustainable development encompasses poverty intervention in developing countries as well as lifestyle issues in developed countries. On the role of the private sector, she said it can support sustainable development if success is measured in a multidimensional way. She said institutional factors can enable this as a next step and called for institutions that empower people.

Keynote speaker Anil Markandya called for a focus on what external agencies can do to link poverty alleviation and sustainable development, while noting that there are no “magic solutions.” He supported developing appropriate indicators and making aid more targeted toward sustainability by focusing on straightforward, simple actions. On the PRSP process, he said it is too early to evaluate it, but care should be taken to ensure that civil society has a say in how the process moves forward. On the role of the private sector and capitalism, he noted that it takes time to develop capitalist institutions with a human face and that the process needs support. Regarding donor coordination, he said it is not always positive.

Workshop panelist Keith Bezanson suggested that Canada could learn from a UK initiative involving an off-the-record roundtable for participants largely from developing countries with key UK officials that resulted in a white paper. He applauded the current international development targets as a useful way to focus the agenda, even if they may be difficult to achieve. He said the components of PRSPs needed to be carefully considered. He added that there is a need to refocus development strategies on key basic economic infrastructure. He also suggested that achieving the principles of sustainable development means filling gaps in what we know and what we need to deliver.

Roy Culpeper noted participants’ statements that each country is unique and has its own individual circumstances. He said PRSPs are instruments that have some promise in that they can lead developing countries to achieve goals equitably and effectively in their own way. He said a long-term framework from donors that is not subject to short-term political change is required, as development is too important to be affected by frequent policy shifts. He suggested revisiting an idea developed by the Nordic states of a compact between recipients and donors around an agreed set of policies. He noted that a more effective aid policy could involve a narrower focus on fewer recipient countries, and concluded by noting that several Asian countries’ experiences in recent decades provide success stories in tackling poverty.

CIDA President Len Good emphasized three points: the need for a new relationship between developed and developing countries, because their agendas are converging and all major issues are now global; the need to recognize that the principles of aid are not yet being universally embraced or realized; and the importance of retaining both sector-wide strategies and grassroots level implementation that serve to complement one another.

Angela Cropper, IISD Board Member, suggested possible directions for future IISD activities. She said IISD should move beyond the issues of causality between poverty and environmental degradation and definitions of sustainable development. Noting that poverty is situation-specific, she suggested IISD might undertake analyses to create a typology of situations in which specific policies and economic instruments work effectively. She supported research on why some interventions work and others do not. She also called for consideration of how to link PRSPs and the sustainable development framework, suggesting that IISD should provide balanced policy advice on PRSPs. She recommended that IISD assist the development of participatory processes. She concluded by supporting initiatives within the framework of the existing network of organizations to which IISD belongs and endorsed a focus on sustainable livelihoods, as it builds on previous IISD work.

Jacques Gérin, Chair of IISD’s Board of Directors, expressed his appreciation to IISD Vice President/Chief Operating Officer Bill Glanville and Senior Economist/Economic Instruments Director Anantha Kumar Duraiappah for their work in organizing this workshop. He thanked participants for their involvement in these discussions and closed the meeting at 5:20 pm.

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### THINGS TO LOOK FOR

**WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ANNUAL MEETING:** The 2001 annual meeting of the World Economic Forum is scheduled for 25-30 January 2001 in Davos, Switzerland. The meeting's theme is "Bridging the Divides: Creating a Roadmap for the Global Future." For more information contact: Maude Lichtenstern, World Economic Forum; tel: +41-22-869-1210; e-mail: [maude.lichtenstern@weforum.org](mailto:maude.lichtenstern@weforum.org); Internet: <http://weforum.org/> or [http://www.ac.com/ideas/wef/Davos\\_2001.html](http://www.ac.com/ideas/wef/Davos_2001.html)

**THIRD INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF ECONOMISTS ON GLOBALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES:** This meeting will be held in Havana, Cuba, from 29 January- 2 February 2001. For more information contact: Asociación Nacional de Economistas de Cuba, Calle 22 No. 901 esq.9a, Miramar, Playa Ciudad de la Habana, CP 11300, Cuba; tel: +53-7-249-461; Internet: <http://www.unchs.org/unchs/english/calendar/>

**WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION MEETINGS:** The WTO's General Council will meet several times in 2001: 8-9 February, 7-8 May, 18-19 July, 10-11 October and 12-14 December. The Committee on Trade and Environment is scheduled to meet from 13-14 February, 27-28 June and 30-31 October. The Committee on Trade and Development is scheduled to meet on 22 May and 19 October. The Sub-Committee on Least Developed Countries will meet from 12-13 February, 17-18 April and 27-28 November. For more information contact: WTO, tel: +41-22-739-5111; e-mail: [enquiries@wto.org](mailto:enquiries@wto.org); Internet: [http://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/meets.doc](http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.doc)

**18TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS:** This meeting will take place from 12-16 February 2001 in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information contact: UNCHS, P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: +254-2-62-1234; fax: +254-2-62-4266/67; Internet: <http://www.unchs.org/>

**39TH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:** This meeting will take place from 13-23 February 2001 in New York. More information is available online at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/2001.htm>

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT:** The Commission's 34th Session will take place from 2-6 April 2001 in New York. The theme for the meeting will be "Population, environment and development." The special theme for the 35th Session, to be held in 2002, will be "Reproductive rights and reproductive health, with special reference to HIV/AIDS." The 36th Session in 2003 will focus on "Population education and development." For more information contact: Population Division; fax: +1-212-963-2147; Internet: <http://www.undp.org/popin/unpopcom.htm>

**CSD-9:** The Ninth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development will convene in New York from 16-27 April 2001. This session will focus on: atmosphere; energy/transport; information for decision making and participation; and international cooperation for an enabling environment. The topic of the multi-stakeholder dialogue segment will be energy and transport. Prior to CSD-9, intersessional meetings will be held. For more information contact: Zehra Aydin-Sipos, Major Groups Focal Point, Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1-212-963-8811; e-mail: [aydin@un.org](mailto:aydin@un.org); Internet: [http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd9/csd9\\_2001.htm#](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd9/csd9_2001.htm#)

**CSD-10 (PREPCOM):** The Tenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development is expected to convene in New York from 30 April – 2 May 2001 to serve as the Preparatory Committee for the Ten-

year Review of UNCED ("Rio+10"). For more information contact: Zehra Aydin-Sipos, Major Groups Focal Point, Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1-212-963-8811; e-mail: [aydin@un.org](mailto:aydin@un.org)

**THIRD UN CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES:** This meeting will be held from 14-20 May 2001 in Brussels, Belgium. An Intergovernmental PrepCom for the event will be held from 5-9 February 2001. For more information contact: Office of the Special Coordinator for Least Developed, Landlocked and Island Developing Countries, UNCTAD, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: +41-22-907-5893; fax: +41-22-907-0046; Internet: <http://www.unctad.org/en/subsites/ldcs/document.htm> and <http://www.un.org/events/ldc3/conference/>

**"ISTANBUL+5" - SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR AN OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HABITAT AGENDA:** This Special Session of the UN General Assembly will convene in June 2001. It will review and appraise progress made on the implementation of the outcome of the second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), which was held in Istanbul, Turkey in 1996. The 18th Session of the Commission on Human Settlements will meet in Nairobi, Kenya from 12-16 February 2001. The 2nd Session of the PrepCom for Istanbul+5 will follow this meeting, from 19-23 February 2001. For more information contact: Axumite Gebre-Egziabher, Coordinator, Istanbul+ 5, UN Centre for Human Settlements, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: +254-2-623-831; e-mail: [Axumite.Gebre-Egziabher@unchs.org](mailto:Axumite.Gebre-Egziabher@unchs.org); Internet: <http://www.istanbul5.org/meetings/>

**SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON CHILDREN:** The Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Children will take place from 19-21 September 2001 at UN Headquarters in New York. This meeting will be held ten years after the World Summit for Children. For more information contact: Secretariat for the Special Session on Children, UNICEF House, 3 UN Plaza, New York NY 10017, USA; Internet: <http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/>

**HIGH-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL EVENT ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT:** This high-level international meeting on Financing for Development will be held in February/March 2002. It will bring together senior representatives from governments, the United Nations and other leading international trade, finance and development-related organizations. The Preparatory Committee is scheduled to meet in New York from 12-23 February and 30 April - 11 May in 2001, and from 14-25 January 2002. For more information contact: Financing for Development Coordinating Secretariat, United Nations Headquarters, New York, Harris Gleckman, tel: +1-212-963-4690; e-mail: [gleckman@un.org](mailto:gleckman@un.org) or Federica Pietracci, tel: +1-212-963-8497; e-mail: [pietracci@un.org](mailto:pietracci@un.org); Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd>

**WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (RIO+10):** This UN Summit for the 10-year review of progress in implementing the outcome of the UN Conference on Environment and Development will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002. The Summit will aim to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development at the highest level. More information is available online at: <http://www.un.org/rio%2b10/>