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**Chair**

Mr. Navdeep Bains

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## Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Development of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Wednesday, June 22, 2005

• (1535)

[*English*]

**The Chair (Mr. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.)):** Good afternoon, everyone.

I want to welcome the minister and her staff and thank them for coming out and speaking to the committee.

Today we'll be talking about the evaluation of the NGO project facility fund. I'd like to again thank the Minister of International Cooperation, Aileen Carroll, for coming in, and thank as well our two witnesses from CIDA. They are Ric Cameron, the senior vice-president, and Jennifer Benimadhu, the vice-president for Canadian partnership branch.

I know that the minister has opening remarks prepared. Basically, I'll let her start off this meeting by presenting opening remarks.

Minister, you have the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Aileen Carroll (Minister of International Cooperation):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'm very pleased to be here. The standing committee to which this subcommittee reports used to be my committee, as you know. Thank you as well for your invitation.

[*English*]

I'm very pleased to be here today to discuss my agency's work with Canadian partners, particularly the partners that are small and medium-sized non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, as we acronym them. This is specifically what I was asked to come and chat with you about.

Indeed many Canadians across the country are actively involved in international development efforts. Many of you may even know some personally. There are farmers here in Canada who are helping farmers. Farmers I've met down in Sussex, New Brunswick, are doing amazing things; farmers in Prince Edward Island have just presented CIDA—through me—with the most wonderful bowl brought back from Africa, built on a base they made out of birch from the island.

Then there are teacher volunteers who, during their summer vacations, go to other countries we are trying to assist, to share their skills.

Very importantly, we have health care workers who regularly take their expertise to communities in desperate need. Young people, in order to get a start on their careers, often do internships all over the world.

Canada delivers effective aid with the help of its Canadian partners, large and small. We must make sure our efforts to fight global poverty are just that—effective.

[*Translation*]

In order to remain innovative and to ensure best practices, we need to assess our policies and practices on a regular basis.

The recent review of the NGO Project Facility and the Environment and Sustainable Development Program is part of that continuous process of reassessment and renewal. The evaluation that we have undertaken is good business practice. It is one step in a longer process to ensure the effectiveness of our programming in the delivery of aid.

We want to make sure that we are providing developing countries with the best skills, support, and expertise that we can so that we can make a lasting difference.

[*English*]

The NGO project facility and the ESDP are just two of 14 different ways in which we work with Canadian NGOs through the Canadian Partnership Branch. Like many others, they are funded through the agency through this branch. Just to draw the attention of my colleagues around the table and to give a sense of perspective, these two programs in particular amount to less than one-half of 1% of the agency's total aid budget.

Our work with Canadian NGOs did not halt with the deferral of these two funding mechanisms. On June 13, CIDA received the final evaluation report for the NPF and the ESDP funding mechanisms. Through regional consultations, an electronic survey, and written submissions, Canadian NGO stakeholders—125 out of 170, to be exact—provided input to this evaluation. I commend my colleagues at the agency and the team that was employed to undertake this evaluation for getting to that many of the NGOs involved in those programs.

The finalized report will be published on CIDA's website on June 28 of this year. I have been briefed by my officials and have read through the report on the findings of the evaluation team. We have learned some tough lessons about CIDA's role in these partnerships. In fact, the evaluation concluded that changes must be made to both programs, and that retaining the status quo is not an option. We have gained valuable information from this exercise on how we can improve the management and the funding mechanisms to make them more effective to address weaknesses in these systems.

Our partners are contributing to the agency's goals of poverty reduction and sustainable development, and to the millennium development goals. In fact, the evaluation confirms that initiatives funded through the NGO project facility and the environment and sustainable development program are complementary to CIDA's country program strategies.

So what does this mean for CIDA? Let me be perfectly frank: our management efficiency must improve. The agency has a lengthy and burdensome process for selection, increased administrative burdens for our staff and for partners, frequent staff changes, and stakeholder complaints. We must address these fundamental issues.

● (1540)

[*Translation*]

A major area for improvement at CIDA lies in the lack of capacity of program staff to monitor performance and identify lessons from the NGO/civil society experience. This capacity has been undermined by a heavy workload and excessive demands, and a lack of time for overseas visits and evaluation.

There is agreement that the administrative processes need to be simplified in order to reduce the burden on both stakeholders and staff. We agree that we must be more transparent and more inclusive in dealing with our partners. We need to review staff workload to address staff turnover.

In addition, the evaluation found that there is no mechanism to identify other funding sources or programs for organizations and to transfer them to those mechanisms they might seek. Nor are there long-term options for them once they have demonstrated the capacity to deliver sustainable international development.

[*English*]

Some management concerns will be addressed by the Canadian Partnership Branch in its continuing efforts to establish a new program framework, a renewed cost-sharing policy, revised and streamlined desk procedures, and increased transparency. Other concerns will be addressed through additional upcoming reforms that are aimed at making CIDA even more efficient and effective.

The evaluation also identified a number of broader fundamental issues. They reflect the concerns that led to my decision to ask for a comprehensive review of partnership programming.

As minister, I can assure you that I am committed to changing some of the ways in which we work. There are changes to be made, both by CIDA and by partners. We only respond adequately and effectively to the needs of our developing country partners when we are freed from onerous red tape here in Canada.

What does this mean for partners and a new call for proposals? Firstly, we're taking a very good look at the evaluation, and reviewing the program guidelines, admissibility, and eligibility criteria for funding in the context of the international policy statement, which was released subsequent to the start of the evaluation process and provides a new lens through which to view partnership programming. I had the opportunity yesterday to meet with your committee of the whole to discuss as best I was able the international policy statement.

It is important that we strengthen the mechanisms to ensure that they make good use of taxpayers' dollars, and that as development tools they are as effective as possible. While this will be done as expeditiously as possible, we must also make sure that we have the time to do it right.

This evaluation has confirmed that small NGO partners in particular offer many opportunities for Canadians to get involved through volunteerism, by participating in overseas missions, and as donors. Often in small communities, NGOs are indeed the face of development in Canada and overseas.

We do not want to lose the added value our partners bring. The evaluation shows, however, that partners must make a greater effort in identifying results and in building their own sustainability, and that of their southern partners, to be less dependent on CIDA.

● (1545)

[*Translation*]

On April 12 last, I announced close to \$25 million for new initiatives with Canadian partners.

We have set aside up to \$10 million over four years to respond to proposals from Canadian civil society for tsunami reconstruction efforts in Sri Lanka. These funds are reserved for groups not receiving support under the Matching Funds program.

Furthermore, we have put \$8.5 million towards a new Canada Corps Project Fund, which will support governance projects that deploy Canadian experts and youth to developing countries and promote exchanges between countries.

[*English*]

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we established the innovation fund, a \$5-million stand-alone fund that provides opportunities for NGOs to demonstrate innovation in the following priority sectors: basic education, private sector development, governance, health, and environmental sustainability. Since its launch we have received 86 inquiries, resulting in 16 proposals that account for less than half of the available funding. Nevertheless, if these funds were to be exhausted before the renewed NGO project facility were in place, I would consider replenishing them.

It is also important to keep in mind that we have already committed \$8 million to current NGO projects under the NPF and the ESDP, some of which will come to an end in the year 2007. This funding has not been interrupted, and I am committed to maintaining the same level of funding for similar activities. However, as the evaluation pointed out—I would draw your attention to this—the status quo is not an option, and this commitment will be implemented through revamped mechanisms.

As I have said, CIDA has a number of NGO funding mechanisms in the Canadian Partnership Branch alone. Across the agency, we do approximately \$600 million of work with Canadian partners through various channels every year. These new and existing initiatives demonstrate the value we place on our partnerships with Canadian NGOs. They have a very important and a very particular role to play in Canada's aid programs. That is why we are fulfilling another one of our international policy statement commitments by establishing a panel of experts of Canadian and international representatives from the voluntary, private, and public sectors. This panel will provide guidance and recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness of CIDA's partnership programming. This panel will promote excellence and innovation in development cooperation. It will be charged with some of the issues raised in the evaluation.

As we continue to focus Canadian development efforts on key sectors in countries, it is important that our relationship with our partners continues to evolve accordingly. The relationship between my agency and small and medium-sized Canadian NGOs is an important one.

I'm pleased that this committee has shown an interest in CIDA and its partnership programming. I also look forward to receiving—and I tell you this most sincerely—advice and recommendations from the panel of experts, which will inform us on new approaches, strategies, and implementation mechanisms.

I would be happy to continue this discussion with you at this point.

[*Translation*]

Thank you for your patience, Mr. Chairman.

• (1550)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Minister.

We'll now open up the floor to members of the committee for any questions.

Mr. Goldring.

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC):** Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Minister, for your presentation today.

I'm not very familiar with the project, but earlier in your statement you said it was approximately 1.5% of the agency's total aid project. It would appear to be—

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** No, half of 1% of the total.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** Okay.

What is your total aid project funding? I thought here it had said something like \$600 million. Is that the total?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Approximately, for NGOs.

I was asked to come; you know why.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** Yes, okay.

I think it's an interesting funding program, and I'd like to discuss whether it includes other certain aspects as well. You'd mentioned teacher exchanges, and maybe health care workers regularly. Is this kind of an exchange, or is it envisioned that the NGO would come up with a project in a particular region to have teachers coming over to work with other teachers? I'm thinking of countries like the Ukraine, for example, where perhaps it wouldn't just be teachers going there to teach in and experience that country but it might very well be an exchange, with them coming here and learning from us.

So is it a two-way exchange or a one-way program?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** I'll let Jennifer answer that, but I don't think it's an exchange, per se.

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu (Vice-president, Canadian Partnership Branch, Canadian International Development Agency):** No, it's not an exchange, Mr. Goldring. We do responsive programming, which means that we respond to proposals and suggestions for activities that NGOs put forward. We cost-share their ideas and work with them to carry out certain activities in line with CIDA's objectives and in line with the IPS. But it's not an exchange program.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** So if a particular NGO group were doing work on the streets with the homeless in Kiev, for example, in the Ukraine—and they may very well have a project there, doing work within the community, as Ukraine is one of the listed countries—that would reasonably be looked at as a proposal?

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** Certainly it would be looked at to see whether or not the results projected fell within the international policy statement sectors in countries. We have a number of criteria against which we analyze it. It would certainly be considered.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** Now, with the results criteria, or the results statement, that would be, I would think, helping the poverty situation and the poor on the streets. Is there something that may not meet the criteria?

Just within an overall application like that, what types of problems might they face that would make it not acceptable under the criteria?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** We're struggling just a little bit, Mr. Goldring, only insofar as.... In my opening remarks, I was attempting to describe the work CIDA does with NGOs, with non-governmental organizations, both here in Canada...which was the main purpose of the committee's request for me to visit.

One example that might help here is the work we do with CARE Canada, a larger NGO, and with CARE Thailand. When I visited Bangkok, I went out to visit some of the most disenfranchised and poorest of all, the Burmese fishermen and their families. They are being cared for, through programs dealing with, for instance, HIV/AIDS—they are a very high-risk group—by CARE Thailand. They were being funded by CIDA through a CARE Canada connect. So they are the poorest on the street, and the relationship is with an NGO. The funding moves through into an NGO.

On the other hand, you may have situations where groups are receiving development dollars but it's coming through the Canada Fund amounts that each of our legations has. The aid personnel, or in some cases the ambassadors, are able to move quickly to respond, within their envelope of Canada Fund, to assist more local projects, because they are on the ground and are able to see just what the results would be.

I don't know if that helps.

• (1555)

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** Well, you mention that you've received 86 inquiries, and 16 proposals have been approved. This is being done, I would imagine, without any advertising or promoting. These are just people within the system internationally and nationally who have come forward with ideas.

What is the nature of those 16 proposals that have been approved? And if it were well known or better known on a broader scale throughout other organizations, how many proposals could be looked at?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** You may want to ask Jennifer to give you an example of some of the proposals that have been approved, but let me go back and clarify the mechanism.

The moneys made available for NGOs to access this by submitting their proposals was done through a call, if I can put it that way—it's very well published on our website and throughout all of our communication vehicles—that this amount of money would be available, as I've described. There were three sectors. One was for Canada Corps proposals. One of the sections in that particular call was the opportunity for non-governmental organizations in Canada who had not been able to meet the criteria to be recipients of the matching funds—as you recall, we created that list with strict criteria—but who have projects that would meet our bar to come forward with those projects for the reconstruction works being done in tsunami-affected countries. The third fund that was announced at the same time was a \$5-million one-time innovation fund, again allowing the same NGOs who might have participated in this NGO project facility to come forward with proposals.

The proposals now must be seen through the lens of our priority sectors. We're also attempting to cluster such proposals in our countries of concentration. They then come in and are processed. But these are widely advertised, well put out on the Internet.

Let me turn to Jennifer to give you an example of a couple of projects that have been accepted.

**The Chair:** We're running out of time, so perhaps you could make your example very brief.

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** One example is in the area of health. The innovative aspect is that a number of the mechanisms and techniques used to help HIV/AIDS victims is being applied to help people suffering from blindness. A number of the ways in which they dealt with people with HIV/AIDS are being transported over to other health issues.

So it's looking for solutions that you can transport to other areas.

**The Chair:** Sorry, Mr. Goldring, but you'll get an opportunity in the next one. Is that okay? You can continue on with this discussion then. Thank you very much.

Madam Bourgeois.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon, Ms. Carroll.

Last March, NGOs were dismayed when you announced that the call for proposals in connection with the NGO Project Facility was being deferred while the two programs were being evaluated. Subsequently — I believe it was in April — you announced three new initiatives aimed at strengthening partnerships with NGOs.

If I understand your remarks correctly, the process was halted and a re-evaluation of the projects requested because — and you correct me if I'm wrong — the realization dawned that CIDA's administrative process was inefficient. At least that's what I understand from your comments on page 3 of your statement.

Therefore, I'd like to know if the problem was administrative in nature or if, as you informed us at the time, the real reason for the deferral was that small NGOs needed to restructure their operations.

• (1600)

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** I'll answer your question in English, because it's easier for me and I want my response to be very clear and succinct.

[*English*]

There never was a desire on my part to compel a reorganization of NGOs. I had concerns about the ability of the NGOs to access funding from CIDA, the mechanisms we were employing, whether or not we were being efficient and using the right kind of process, and whether both we and our objectives were being served, as well as the NGOs themselves. What triggered my asking for an evaluation was the concern that this program was not reaching its objectives in a manner in which I thought it could. I don't think I ever felt it was in dire straits; I just thought it could be run better and there was greater potential to be realized there.

I chose the timing for a renewal of calls. That's when I said, wait a minute, before we go out with a new call, let's take a look at this program.

Now, first of all, I think it's important to underline that the program is \$15 million total. The amount that was going to be put out for new calls was \$7 million. The other \$8 million was already invested in ongoing programs. None of those were impacted by my request for an evaluation. They continue, because many of the projects that the NGOs bring forward are for two or three years. But I had heard, as I say, sufficient evidence, and I wanted an evaluation. So I called that.

I would say that the evaluation took longer than I had anticipated. I certainly received, both from this committee, colleagues of mine, and co-workers of mine in the agency receiving calls, an indication of grave concern on the part of the smaller NGO communities of what this meant. I think I could have communicated better at the time. When I met with them since that call for an evaluation, I acknowledged to them that I could have communicated to them better why I had done this and what my objectives were. It might have ameliorated considerably the sense of concern.

The evaluation shows me that it was worth doing. Of the calls I made for proposals for the moneys that I mentioned, two of those, one tsunami-related and the other Canada Corps, were the types of programming or projects we would be doing anyway. But I did keep in mind that it could partly serve, if I got these calls out now, to help some of the NGOs bridge the gap until we came out with a possibly restructured NGO project facility.

Interestingly enough, in spite of the hue and cry that I would suggest followed my call for an evaluation, they are not anywhere near fully subscribed—hence my reference to the number of proposals that have come in vis-à-vis the amount of money we have on hand to fund.

[Translation]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Madam Minister, I want to start by congratulating you for having the courage to do an investigation to uncover the source of the problem between NGOs and CIDA.

Your comments put everyone in a flap, but I think that in the end, everyone was pleased by your call for an evaluation. However, when you say that a continuous process of reassessment and renewal is underway at CIDA, I understand this to mean that you came to the realization that CIDA's administrative processes needed to improve from an efficiency standpoint. Are you saying that this continuous process of reassessment and renewal was not in fact taking place at CIDA and that it was time to pause and reassess, or re-evaluate approaches? I find that hard to fathom, because all of this had quite an impact on Canadian NGOs.

• (1605)

[English]

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Well, I would agree it had a large impact, but I would harken back that this is less than 0.1% of what we do in delivering aid, so I do think we need to keep a sense of perspective.

I do thank you for your opening remarks. They were very kind. I don't think everything at CIDA needs to grind to a halt and be re-evaluated. We do evaluations in an ongoing manner. We do auditing and all of the accountability processes you would expect; they're ongoing. Nevertheless, CIDA has come to a point where we've engaged an international policy review, and we have done a

tremendous job, I think, in what we did and the product that we've produced. In the process of that, and in the years leading into that, there was an acknowledgement from senior personnel and others within the agency that there was an unevenness, if that's the fairest way to put it, of what's working exceptionally well and what's not working as well as it might.

So what I guess we have accepted among ourselves is that we do need a more holistic look at this, particularly with the lens of the IPS.

This one was coming up for renewal. I'd heard criticism. Although you heard a great deal of push-back, I heard quietly from NGOs that were not happy campers with that program. I didn't, nor would I, identify that, but there were concerns on many fronts.

I was very concerned, for one thing, that with this particular program the degree of dependency on the part of some NGOs on CIDA was not a useful or healthy product. I was advised at the time that I did this, "Well, if you do that, some NGOs will immediately implode". Well, if you think about it, this program or project facility operated as competition.

**The Chair:** We'll go to the next speaker.

Could you hold your remarks for the next round, Madam Bourgeois? Thank you very much.

Mr. Khan.

**Mr. Wajid Khan (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and welcome, Minister.

I have several questions, but I will try to keep them brief. I'll give you all three of my questions and wait for an answer.

What will be the effect of the strategy outline in the IPS on NGOs involved in projects outside the 25 development partners?

Second, how flexible will the list of these 25 development partners be, and what sort of an engagement...how many years will they remain development partners?

And last, can you comment on the evaluation methodology used to assess program relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency? The NPF and the ESDP funding mechanisms are being evaluated, but not individual NGOs.

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** You're right. No, we aren't evaluating individual NGOs within this setting. That's the answer to your last one.

While we don't presume to evaluate NGOs, they have to come forward and convey that they are viable and have resources and sufficient experience to convince us—I'm sure you would want it to be difficult to convince us in that regard—that they can undertake the project they're putting forward and they can carry it out, so that when I use government moneys to fund them, I'm not going to see them get halfway through a project and be unable to complete it. Certainly, how viable they are is tested with the criteria we apply.

I'll go to your second question, on development partners, the 25 partners. One of the criteria that were used to choose those development partners was a level of poverty. We looked at the UN human development index. We looked at a variety of criteria. We determined, finally, that the countries in which people earned less than \$1,000 per year would meet, in our view, the level of poverty that warranted a special relationship with Canada. So the level of poverty was one.

The second criterion was the ability of the countries to use the aid effectively. How much capacity had been built? How far had they come? With regard to the money coming from Canada for health, education, private sector development—all within our five priority sectors—how would they be able to use it effectively? Within that criterion we wanted to see a commitment on the question of governance. That's not to say, as I've said elsewhere, that they had to have arrived in every sense, but they had to be in fact committed to getting there.

The third criterion was the special role Canada would bring to the table. In other words, was Canada the fifteenth or sixteenth donor to that country, or had we over the years become the third or fourth donor and therefore, obviously, had created a very special relationship with that country? It was an ability to bring the value-added of Canadian expertise, and frequently the linkages with Canadian diasporas. It was where we, as a Canadian development agency, were coming from, vis-à-vis where the Dutch were coming from or the Brits or others.

So those were the three criteria. If you look at all the countries that Canada has assisted with aid programs in the past—155 approximately, which is far too large a list, for we were far too dispersed—and you apply the three criteria, those 25 countries emerge. There are none left outside.

How flexible is that list? That's a list we will revisit, because a country that at this point one might put in the failed and fragile state category, a country whose security or situation hardly allows for development.... Obviously, we're very hopeful and are spending a lot of money with Haiti, Afghanistan, and other countries. The day will come when they will have achieved the level at which we can start to see them as development partners. That's coming on the inside. We look forward to the day when we graduate those countries, if that's an acceptable word. Thailand was pretty happy with the use of the word "graduation" in the spring.

Am I in trouble?

So there is flexibility. Don't let me mislead you. I'm not going to change every six months—obviously development is a very long-term prospect and investment. I'm not going to be doing that, but it definitely is not engraved in stone.

The other thing is that two-thirds of our bilateral aid will be going to those 25 countries. The other one-third will be used for other countries to complete programs, to make strategic interventions, to assist in ways that are not full development partnerships but that are very important to the country and to Canada.

So that, I think, gives you a rough idea. Of course, there are other categories, such as the failed and fragile states I made reference to.

You asked me a question, Mr. Khan, on the effects of NGOs, and I've lost it.

• (1610)

**Mr. Wajid Khan:** Well, I can come back to that. What is the effect on the NGOs outside these 25 development partners? Is there any impact on their operation or their funding?

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** The partnership branch in fact will operate in the poorest of the countries. The bilateral branches of CIDA will focus particularly on the 25 development partners, but partnership will focus on the least developed countries and on MDGs, the millennium development goals. So we in fact will be in more countries than our colleagues in the bilateral branches.

**Mr. Wajid Khan:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** I have a quick question for the minister. When we talk about the 25 countries, was that a predetermined number, or was that a natural fit for the criteria you just described?

• (1615)

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** When we determined and worked through the process—it was a long and very seriously engaged one—of developing the right criteria and we applied it to the countries with whom we have been doing development assistance, those were the countries that met the bar.

We had it prior to engaging the IPS, the international policy statement. CIDA had already been working with nine countries of focus, countries where, even though no one had been determined, these particular three criteria, the kind of relationship and aid effectiveness, had begun there. Not surprisingly but not in a contrived fashion, those nine countries did meet the criteria and are members of the full development partner category.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Madam Guergis.

**Ms. Helena Guergis (Simcoe—Grey):** Thanks very much.

Good afternoon, Minister.

I have expressed many times, as many have, concerns about the fund being suspended with virtually no notice.

Taking a look even as recently as April 13, where comments were made at the committee that the fund was well run and that there was good accountability and transparency, and indeed even a conclusion of the 2000 review that it was performing well, judging by many of the comments that you've made today, it appears as though, from what I've heard so far, you are correct in making a decision to request a review, and I do look forward to reading the finalized report in full detail. But many of the witnesses and the few I've actually met with in my new position here have expressed some concern that they believe this is leading to their termination, that the government intends to push for more funding towards the larger bureaucratic multilateral organizations, as well as more government-to-government funding. I wonder if you could perhaps ease their concerns.



**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** As my colleague was pointing out, Ms. Guergis, it was the evaluators who were contracted to undertake the evaluation for us. They said that the status quo was not an option. I thank you for the compliment, but I'd have to share it with the people who followed the process and undertook that task.

You asked me whether we are going to be doing more government-to-government funding, as in the relationship that I described for the 25 development countries.

Let me again come back to the use of the word "bilateral". Even though I've shared with you the criteria whereby we created this list, we will put two-thirds of our bilateral aid versus our multilateral aid into our development relationships, but not all of the money will go to the governments. In more cases than not, the governments are not at a level where direct budgetary infusion is an appropriate method of proceeding. Many different programs that are undertaken and implemented by partners will be within the bilateral programs in those countries. We've had that discussion before.

It's done within a bilateral framework. For instance, we are doing a number of projects in Tanzania. We are funding clinics that were actually started by a British woman. It's an incredibly effective system for providing women's reproductive health in remote areas. We have funded them and will continue to do so. What they accomplish for a small amount of money would impress you all hugely. At the same time, I'm doing a direct budgetary infusion for education in Tanzania. Both of those two conveyances of funding would appear under the bilateral program between Canada and Tanzania.

To your question on whether this means I'll do less with partners, not at all. Perhaps I didn't emphasize that enough in my opening remarks. We hugely value our relationship with partners. We don't feel that we have a monopoly on creativity at CIDA. We very much need all that the NGOs bring to the table, and in some cases what the private sector brings to the table. We need a number of vehicles to effectively deliver aid.

I hope I made it clear that this is one evaluation, but it will be part of the larger evaluation of all our partnerships. That is why I have now asked that a list or a panel of experts be put together in the summer. There are some Canadians; some are international. They'll begin their work this summer and leave in the fall.

• (1620)

**Ms. Helena Guergis:** I'm sorry to interrupt, but I don't have much time left.

Would you be able to get us a little more information on exactly who the experts will be? When will we know who will be making these recommendations?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Their task will be to assist me and to be adjuncts to my office and to senior management offices in looking at the whole partnership. As I mentioned, we spend \$600 million a year working with partners. This is a massive amount of money.

As part of the implementation of this international policy statement, I want to work to bring in people with fresh ideas and good clear analysis, from a good experience basis, on how they think we could do better in relationships with our partners.

Their names will be out, but it's not a complete list. As soon as it is, be assured that I'll share it with you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Are there any other questions?

Madam Torsney.

**Hon. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.):** Thank you.

I think, Minister, it's been very helpful to have you explain this small project within the larger envelope of projects, the way we fund NGOs, and more particularly how we deliver aid. Some other members have talked about and my colleague Mr. Khan has mentioned the situation of an NGO that is not one of the 25 countries we're partnering with or the four countries we have a special cross-government focus on. Clearly, NGOs in Canada that wish to work in any country in the world are welcome to do that. They just may not be getting funding through the partnership branch.

Could you perhaps elaborate on that? You mentioned the kinds of things that are being done in your opening statement at the very beginning. You've highlighted another project that you're pretty excited about in terms of women's health care. In other areas Canadians are out there building support and delivering aid to individuals who need our assistance and expertise. They may or may not be getting funding, but these things are important to the world. It's exciting for all of us as Canadians to be supporting those projects as well.

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Thank you, Ms. Torsney.

What triggered my invitation today was one particular project, primarily smaller NGOs. We've at least spoken about that to some degree. Of course we partner and fund with larger NGOs, such as WUSC and CUSO and CESO. Seniors, people who finished a career with marvellous expertise, are able to offer that to developing countries. Many quite outstanding projects are being done in Central America by CESO, some in countries that... In fact, Honduras is one of our developments, but other countries there, while not full development partners, are countries in which we are doing very effective aid delivery.

The Canadian Bar Association is also an excellent partner of CIDA's that we use in building judicial process, legal training, and women's legal aid clinics in China, dare I say, where women and the poorest have access to the kinds of legal services they're not getting—so there's a full range.

In addition, we work with the justice department and have done a number of programs there.

Jennifer, would you add from your expertise to enhance my answer for Ms. Torsney?

• (1625)

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** I'll go back to some of the examples I gave Mr. Goldring. There's potato farming in Bolivia. They're using indigenous plants and supporting health through access to more food and the selling of these potatoes. This work is being undertaken with a Bolivian university and the Order of Malta, which is a Canadian NGO.

There's also a project in Kenya involving farmers helping farmers. Farmers from P.E.I. are assisting three local groups to improve agriculture and the economy, milk production, water systems, and women's groups with the innovative coordination council. We have a myriad of projects in the five sectors and in the cross-cutting theme of gender equity.

**Hon. Paddy Torsney:** To both of you, there are times when people come up with brilliant ideas that may not fit within CIDA programming exactly. It's ironic that I have this jacket on, because there's this great NGO called Light Up the World. They produce these lights. A few of these little lights will light up your entire house, and in lots of parts of the world, that's a pretty important source of light. They don't get any CIDA funding at this point. How do they go through the process, and what if they don't qualify? Clearly these guys are raising money. They've got a website; they're doing interesting things. Obviously the government can't fund all the brilliant ideas that Canadians have to help the world, but what is the process? If I've got this idea, how do...? They approach your group; they look on the websites; then, what happens if they do or don't qualify?

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** Well, they look on the websites. As the minister mentioned earlier, for the most part we like to deal with organizations that are viable and sufficiently stable, financially, to carry something through to completion—so there are eligibility criteria. As I say, we help people along; we don't necessarily want them to remain dependent on us. Lots of activities are going forward that... If they're emerging and can't stand on their own two feet, they're welcome to partner with more stable or more settled NGOs. Often organizations twin with each other and come forward together, in order to get experience and sustainability.

**Hon. Paddy Torsney:** I have one final comment, though. I gather in some places we actually may introduce them, through our CIDA folks in the developing country, to another NGO, perhaps even from another country that's being funded that may be delivering a program that meets their requirements.

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** That's correct. We can put them in touch with other groups working in similar areas.

**Hon. Paddy Torsney:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Madame Bourgeois.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Madam Minister, perhaps you can respond further to my earlier question.

You talked about transparency. You mentioned the need to streamline administrative processes and to ensure greater transparency.

How do you intend to make CIDA more transparent? CIDA has three funds for programs. If memory serves me well, funds of this nature are not subject to Parliament's scrutiny. How can you speak of transparency when you have the Matching Funds, Canada Corps Project Fund and Innovation Fund programs?

[*English*]

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Every fund I have, every cent I spend, comes to you in the form of my estimates, whether it's a \$15-million

project going on over seven years to build a judicial system.... For the legal system of Vietnam, I believe it was \$12 million.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** That wasn't quite the question I was asking. My question was about NGO funding. How can you talk about transparency when the source of the financing is a fund?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Most likely it was my choice of words. I'll ask my colleague to respond to your question and then, I can provide some additional details.

[*English*]

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** We hope to be transparent by putting the criteria for the fund up on the website. For example, for the Innovation Fund, all of the eligibility criteria are on the website for everybody to access. And we are transparent with regard to the amount for the project. The Innovation Fund projects are accepted up to \$200,000.

Transparency means the partners are aware of what they're applying for, what the criteria will be, what they will be evaluated against, when they're entitled to get the results. That hasn't always been the case in the past. We're committed to being more forthright and more forthcoming and transparent in the future, so that everybody knows exactly the rules of the game and just what the objectives of the fund are.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Excellent. Thank you.

Do I have time for another question?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** All right, thank you very much.

Do you want to ask another question?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** The Minister had started to answer my question earlier, but didn't have time to respond fully.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Oh, by all means. You still have a couple of minutes.

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** I was saying that one thing that was giving me some concern was the fact that this NGO project facility was being run as a competition, and I wanted us to take a look at whether or not that was the best way to proceed.

It has, in fact, come out rather well, that a competition isn't at all a bad vehicle. However, that said, at the time I was getting some of these rumblings, one of the things that gave me concern was that I was hearing if we didn't put out a new call for proposals, a number of these NGOs would go under.

Well, I ask you, Diane, if they had to win a competition each year, how could they have become so dependent? How could one know whether one is going to win or not? If the call didn't go out, and the conclusion was that an NGO was going to fail as a result, there was something inherently wrong with this. That was one of a number of things that gave me pause.

What came out of it is that some NGOs were putting in many proposals, so that mathematically, as the luck of the draw would have it, most of the time something was connecting. But it was one of a number of dimensions of the project.

As I say, this is one evaluation we've done. You've heard me describe the much broader one we're getting into, which is taking a look at the entire way we do business with partners. It was mentioned, I think, by Ms. Guergis—she's left the room now—if I recall. She was expressing concern that we're doing way more government-to-government and way less partnership, which statistically just isn't borne out.

Nevertheless, there's no doubt, while I value hugely relations with the NGOs, that the direction and administration of Canada's aid programs and where we're going has to be with CIDA. It has to be the government's; it cannot be driven by innumerable sources or innumerable triggers. It has to fit into an international policy statement.

We've made some tough decisions. We've created what we think is a pretty exciting focus and coherency now at CIDA. We've chosen, with a lot of good research and built on the experience of CIDA way before I came into that office, what the best sectors are for Canada. We've chosen those sectors; we've chosen a methodology to create a list of countries where we can be the most effective, where we can truly have an impact and do something about getting to the millennium development goals.

It certainly seems incumbent on me and fair of me to say to all the partners with whom we work and with whom we treasure working: you need to come along with us; your proposals and projects that we join together on have to be a part of it. They have to be a part of those countries' focus; they have to reflect those sectorals. I want to benefit from all the creativity you can bring, but I can't herd cats and deliver an international policy statement.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Madame Bourgeois.

Mr. Goldring.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** Thank you very much.

Madam Minister, I have a question on the description here of the countries. It says "geographical program spending by the 25 developing partners". I know you've explained it a little bit, but I'm taking it that what you mean by "partner" is not necessarily the country, the government, but an NGO located in the country that has the blessing or approval of the government. I would imagine it would have to have approval from the country, from the government.

Would governments come under your criteria? Would you be getting approval from governments for projects before approving projects for specific countries? Would there still be a forum under your own criteria here to be sure that the government of the country finds the project acceptable to be done in the country?

• (1635)

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** That's a good question.

I've said before—and I hope I'm not boring you, if I've said it to you—40 years ago I worked at CIDA. It was the External Aid Office then, and we were all—countries like Canada, France, and the Dutch—into development. We weren't learning a lot, because most countries had not done a whole lot in development.

But we did learn a lot, and we do things differently now. Mostly it's built on experience and best practices. If there's one thing we learned—and my colleague Mr. Cameron, I'm sure, can articulate it better than I can—it was that the first step to effective aid in a country is the development by that country of a poverty reduction strategy. They need to go through that process. They need to understand what their priorities are, where they have strengths and where they have weaknesses, where donor countries can fit into those priorities and help them in the reduction of the poverty of their country and not overwhelm them. First and foremost, that has to be the step.

You're asking me.... Just say again how you—

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** I would imagine from what you're saying, then, that they have their own particular criteria of understanding for acceptability and that you're working within guidelines that you feel are acceptable there. So I suppose you're answering the question in return, because I would think some countries would be very sensitive to having programs, no matter how beneficial, going on in the country unless they have some kind of common understanding.

Where does this common understanding come from? I would think from your NGO within the country itself. Part of your qualifying would be to ensure that a country feels you are qualified to operate within it.

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** It's not for us to tell them. If there's one thing we learned, it's been that it wasn't very beneficial for us to say let us show you how to do it, or let us tell you what is good for you. That was the learning process.

Ric can, I think, add to our shared wisdom here.

**Mr. Ric Cameron (Senior Vice-President, Canadian International Development Agency):** Like everything else, it's complicated and there's no one answer.

You talked about the Ukraine earlier. Before the recent change in government, we did some programming in Ukraine. There were a couple of government ministries we worked with because we felt that they were actually committed to democratic reform and human rights. There were some government ministries we didn't work with. But we also worked with parts of civil society to support them. In that context, you don't want to work in an area where you're going to put them at risk. So if you're in an area where the government is doing things....

We also, for quite a while, were working in Zimbabwe with civil society, but then that government decided that this was something it was no longer going to permit. So you do have to be able to work within the constraints of that society, that structure.

For a lot of the projects we do, we certainly don't seek the formal approval of the government, but you're working in a social context where the domestic partners.... I mean, one of the things we're looking for with this is Canadian partners need a partner in that country to make it sustainable. And in that context, you're expecting them to be working in a framework where they are contributing to the broader social and economic growth. So indirectly, my answer is yes.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** And you're expecting them to work within a framework of acceptance too. Now, given that, and the understanding that with this is Canadian partners need a partner in that country to make it sustainable, understandably, for the projects you're accepting you'd have to feel comfortable that they too are operating in a context that would be acceptable there.

The question is, how many of those 16 project NGOs are NGOs that had previously been funded in the area? Was part of their acceptance the fact that they had experience in the area? How many of those 16 were previously in there working on programs that were similar to the ones for which they've been funded, or on other types of programs? What would that number be?

• (1640)

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** I would say almost all of them.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** Almost all of them. Now, would this indicate that given this broad advertising for what this project is coming up, if you have such an absence of new applicants that haven't been approved, perhaps this was a re-approval of existing NGOs but maybe not a really drawn-out advertisement to look for new NGOs that might be interested? In other words, could more be done in that area to broaden the scope of the applicants who might come up with projects?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** First of all, I would think, Mr. Goldring, there is a very large number of NGOs who have submitted proposals to CIDA over the years. Many of them have been successful and have gone on to work as partners.

CIDA as a development partner is relatively well known throughout the country. The preferred method of reaching people today is the Internet, but certainly within communities throughout Canada there are regional CIDA representatives. Of all the things that we've needed to take a look at, I've never felt that we needed to beat the bushes to bring in more NGOs because I think they know where we are. I may be wrong; I frequently am.

Go ahead, Jen.

**Ms. Jennifer Benimadhu:** Mr. Goldring, I would just add that one hundred percent of the people who applied for the innovation fund were already eligible for funding through these two mechanisms we're talking about today. New NGOs were entitled to apply.

If I could just give you kind of an order of magnitude, the Canadian Partnership Branch works with 800 partners on a regular basis, and we do over 1,300 projects annually.

**Mr. Peter Goldring:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Khan.

**Mr. Wajid Khan:** Thank you.

Madam Minister, my question is with regard to partnering. Do we partner with the private sector? I believe that private sector partnerships could bear some fruit in capacity building, wealth creation, and therefore poverty reduction. What sort of assistance do we or can we provide private sector partners without affecting the business models, such as in expansions, so these investments might grow into franchises or profit centres in these developing countries? Do we restrict their operations to the model of CIDA, or would we let them prosper as private sector?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Mr. Khan, are you speaking of Canadian companies?

**Mr. Wajid Khan:** Canadian companies, yes.

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** There is a section of Canadian Partnership Branch we call CIDA-INC. INC stands for the industrial cooperation program. CIDA-INC, as all sections of the Canadian Partnership Branch, will be part and parcel of the analysis we have undertaken, but we will be doing so in a full-bloomed manner with this panel of experts we discussed earlier. First and foremost, CIDA-INC is a development assistance program, and it's to promote economic development in the countries we're trying to bring out of poverty.

I sometimes tease some of the large Canadian companies when I say this is about economic development in the developing countries and not here in Canada, but that said, there is no reason we can't develop very fruitful partnerships and fruitful relationships, and we have.

It is a responsive program in that it contributes to projects that have been developed and put forward by Canadian companies, and those firms retain a sense of ownership of the project. What I think is an important linkage here, or will be...the jury is still out for me on this one considerably. You know we've made private sector development one of the key sectors of focus at CIDA, and in so doing we did some work at CIDA on the question, how do you do it? It's not a simple method. There have been those who've tried and failed. We have found micro-finance works very well, but I think we need to get beyond micro-finance, and so do experts in the field.

We have developed a framework, and we did that by engaging some outside experts, again, from the private sector area, to help us at CIDA develop methodology for trying to stimulate and kick-start these economies. We used the Martin-Zedillo report as well, "Unleashing Entrepreneurship", which you know came out of the United Nations; it's authored by—I was going to say "former Prime Minister Martin"—Mr. Martin before he was Prime Minister and former President Zedillo. This is a darn good piece of work and it's based a lot on DeSoto. Using that and getting a lot of outside creativity from this team, we have developed what I think is a very exciting set of methodologies on how we're going to get into those economies and how we're going to do more than micro-finance.

I think it's fair to say most of us who have the interest in development all of us do who sit around this table know that even if we had all of the billions in the world, all of it, unless we can create growth and develop those markets, get the multiplier effect, and see them launch so as to begin to emulate the developed nations, we're never going to have sustainable development. At least, I don't think so.

Where CIDA-INC will go in all of that, we'll see.

I appreciate any input from you or the committee on any of these items, Mr. Chair. Any wisdom that accrues from your deliberations that would assist us as we charge forward, we'd be very grateful to receive.

• (1645)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Thank you very much, Mr. Khan. Your time is up.

Madame Torsney.

**Hon. Paddy Torsney:** Thank you.

My colleagues touched on private sector development. Of course, it is one of the five areas of focus for the international policy statement. The others, of course, are governance, environment, basic education, and health care.

Canada has a particularly stellar record in terms of delivering support on the HIV and AIDS file. Across those five focus priorities, gender is important, and particularly women in development, partly because it works so well, and partly because the situation in many of the developing countries is so much more dramatic for the women.

In terms of HIV and AIDS, there's a great need there. We're seeing lots of children become heads of families. We're seeing lots of women suffer the devastation of losing their partner, and sometimes their property, and everything else.

I wonder if you could elaborate on the priorities and the way we are working in this area to make a difference.

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Thank you, Ms. Torsney.

Everything you say is true, and the HIV/AIDS file, as a priority within the health sector, is one we've taken very seriously. It's interesting. Earlier today I spoke with Stephen Lewis just to discuss, quite frankly, where we are and where we need to go. And I do take advantage of his incredible experience to gain wise advice.

We have taken a major lead. We went in and did the three-by-five initiative at \$100 million with the World Health Organization. That is proving tremendously successful, and it would have faltered had it not been for Canada stepping up to the plate.

**Hon. Paddy Torsney:** Could you explain what the "three by five" is?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** The "three by five" is to get three million people in antiretroviral treatment for AIDS over the next five years. It's proving tremendously successful. It was a piece that was very much required on the whole holistic approach on HIV/AIDS.

We went ahead, and it was innovative, I think—and I'm very proud of the team at CIDA—in investing \$15 million over the next three years on the microbicide. The microbicide, as many of you probably know, is the research and development that's being done to come up, hopefully as soon as possible, with a vaginal gel that will inhibit the transmission of the virus. So, importantly, it puts the control in the hands of women. Culturally, many other dynamics are at play in this battle. Women are the most susceptible. They are again and again the highest percentage of new incidents. I might say that the last UN report showed that 75% of the new incidents were in fact young women between their mid-teens and early twenties, who were

primarily married. These kinds of statistics just speak again and again to the need for something in addition to the condom.

Of course, I think Canada is coming at this as best we can. We have a three-pronged approach. We're there on prevention, which means education; we're there on care; and we're there on treatment. I've greatly increased the core funding to the UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, which is the lead agency on women's reproduction and health, and a major player in that regard, and on AIDS. It has unfortunately had its funding reduced by a different approach to this issue by our neighbour to the south. I felt, as the Dutch and other countries did, a need to step up and increase our funding there so that all of the work they're doing can continue.

It's a multi-faceted approach. I can't think of anything you could be doing in a development agency more importantly than battling AIDS. As we all know, the teachers are dying, the parents are dying, the doctors, everyone. That means that all of the years, all of the patina of development that we've all done from the time I mentioned to you of 40 years is gone, in numbers we can't even contemplate. As Paddy says, you have families of 10 children, and the parent is the 12-year-old.

• (1650)

**Hon. Paddy Torsney:** Thank you, Minister.

I'd like to follow up on the private sector area, because that's an area...as somebody who's on the steering committee for the parliamentary association for the World Trade Organization. We do have a great initiative, through the trade facilitation office, of business people lending their support to helping countries export goods to Canada, getting a feel for what the Canadian marketplace will hold. People like Tom d'Aquino are on that organization.

There's also the Canada Investment Fund for Africa, and I wonder if you could talk a bit more about how that will help develop the marketplace, and particularly help private sector development.

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** That's an exciting initiative.

It took a number of years to get there, did it not, Mr. Cameron?

We had a long walk on fiduciary duty, making sure that we were doing what the Canadian public would have us do. CIFA, as mentioned, is a fund. The Government of Canada has put \$100 million into this fund through my agency, to be matched by the private sector, to give what African leaders have said is desperately needed: the ability to access venture capital.

We have a fund set up. We're working closely with British and Montreal fund managers to bring that kind of capital and make it available to the continent, to investors. As Paddy mentioned, it is a very important piece of the private sector development that country needs. I think the NEPAD leaders—if I'm correct, Mr. Cameron—see that as a worthwhile initiative. That was launched in April.

Mr. Cameron, please feel free to elaborate in any way.

**Mr. Ric Cameron:** As the minister said, because we hadn't undertaken this before, it took some of the modalities to ensure that we had a proper accountability structure. They're about to move out with their first placement, which means the ability to begin to invest. The fund has the ability to undertake equity investments in African entrepreneurial things, which is a significant breakthrough.

We're looking forward to seeing very positive results from this.

**The Chair:** I think that concludes it...

Anyone else?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Could I have a minute, Mr. Chairman?

• (1655)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Sure, by all means.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** I'd like to congratulate the Minister once more for standing up to CIDA. The Agency was experiencing some problems, or administrative woes, as documented in your report. You said you were going to put things in order and streamline structures in order to help NGOs and you said you would proceed as quickly as possible.

How long will it take before Canadian and Quebec NGOs know what lies ahead for them, and what steps do you intend to take as quickly as possible?

**Hon. Paddy Torsney:** Is that a question?

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Getting back to NGOs, it's all well and good to promote CIDA, but the subject-matter here is NGOs.

I assure you, Paddy, that it was indeed a question!

[*English*]

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** It is part of a larger piece, which I'm sure I've explained and you understand. This evaluation is leading into what we're going to do now for the whole of the partnership.

I have mentioned that the funds I've made available are not fully subscribed, so I would hope that those NGOs that want to participate in this project, altered as it may be to a certain extent to reflect the findings and to be a better-run project, do not feel that they need to sit back but rather can come forward and submit proposals under the \$5-million innovation project.

I have undertaken that if that's fully picked up, I'm open to providing some more funds until I get us to the point where we have a good vehicle ready to go. There's no advantage whatsoever to put us all through this and then replicate with the kind of mechanism we had, and I won't do that.

So this fund is there, and as I say, I can augment that, but I would suggest that it won't be longer than six months. I don't think that's an unfair timeline.

I don't want to hamstring this group of wise persons, as they call them, the Council of Europe, in their work, but that doesn't mean that while they're working, if we feel that we have everything set up well with the NGO partner facility, we can't move forward. It doesn't need

to stop until we've finished the whole thing, but what we've learned from that will feed into the larger one.

The wheels are not off. I don't want to convey that. That's not so. This agency is an extraordinary place. But we have too much process—too much process for us and too much process for the people trying to do business with us. My view is that we have to cut it back.

As Ric mentioned in talking about CIFA, we have to balance our fiduciary duty. I have to do that. I have to be sure I can account to Canadians for the moneys they assigned me. But at the same time, we're doing development, and we have to have flexibility. I want more people and I want more processes on the ground. Do you know that?

There's a great story about one of the British representatives from DfID complaining to a Canadian ambassador that he could hardly move because he had only—I know this is going into your blues—some extraordinary amount of money, like five million pounds. You can imagine the look on the Canadian ambassador's face, who I think was working with a Canada fund of maybe \$300,000 or \$400,000.

Today, if we are going to do that kind of development and be effective at it, I treasure my relationship with my NGOs, but I want more of my CIDA team out on the ground. They'll work with the NGOs. The NGOs will be happier, we'll be happier, the governments will be happier, and we'll have, in my view, less process to grind us into inaction.

On that note, Mr. Chair...

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Minister. I would like to once again thank you for taking time out of your valuable schedule and coming before the committee and speaking on the evaluation of the NGO project facility fund.

As you hear from the remarks made by members on the committee, there seems to be consensus that they support this initiative and they really appreciate the effort you've put into it.

I'd like to thank the CIDA team for coming out, as well.

We are going to go in camera and discuss committee business, especially for the upcoming fall session with respect to the initiatives we want to talk about.

If you have a few minutes, Minister, is there any feedback you can provide us with in terms of any initiatives you're taking or CIDA is taking that we might need to consider or should consider when we develop our work plan for the fall session?

I'm just putting that out to get feedback.

• (1700)

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** We'll think about that and take that very seriously.

**The Chair:** Yes, if you can, and if there is anything, please let us know. I'd really appreciate it.

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Mr. Chair, for those members who I think had considerable concern about this evaluation, those who were not able to join us, I presume that you will share with them the discussions we've had today.

**The Chair:** Absolutely. I appreciate that. Thank you very much.      *[Proceedings continue in camera]*

**Hon. Aileen Carroll:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** We'll suspend, and then we'll come back in camera.

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