

# Investing in the Future

## Lessons from Norway on Foreign Aid and Indigenous Peoples

*by*  
*Jean Daudelin,*  
*The North South Institute*

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A Report submitted to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry does not accept any responsibility for the information  
in this report not the views expressed, which are solely those  
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## Foreword

This booklet reflects on the lessons learned from an evaluation project completed in 1998 by the Canadian North-South Institute (NSI) on behalf of the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>[1]</sup>

The Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples (NPIP) has been working in Peru, Guatemala, Brazil, Paraguay and Chile for almost two decades. The program's staff and its official funders in the MFA wanted to know what success the program has had in supporting the development of indigenous people, and how this work could be further improved. The booklet is written by evaluation team member Jean Daudelin of NSI.

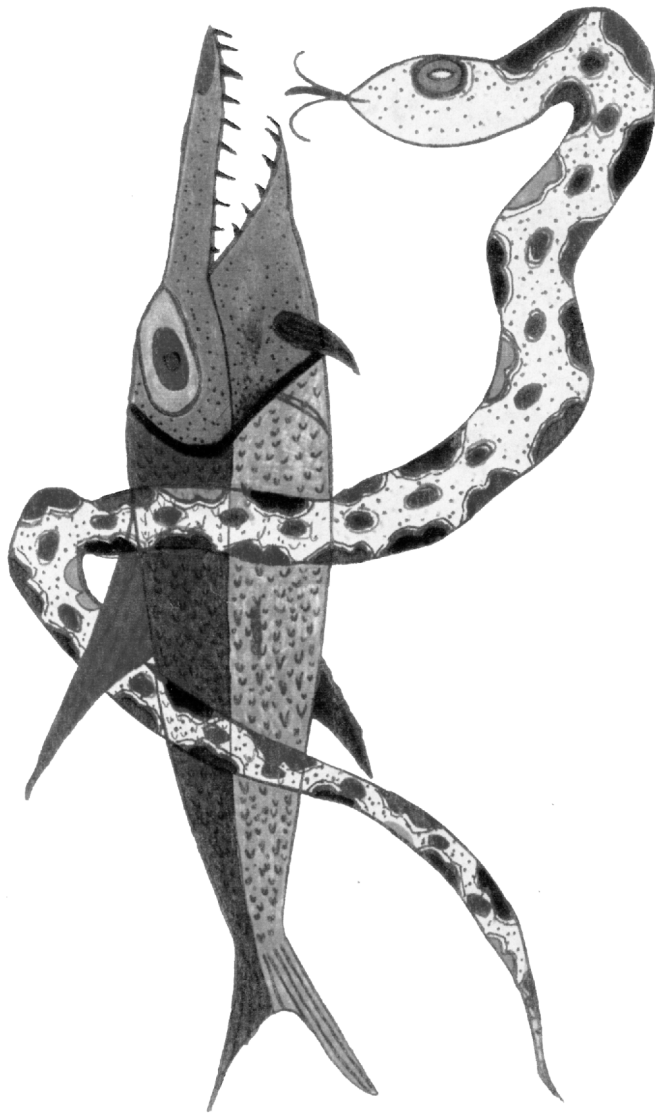
The publication is designed for two important audiences. Published in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, it is meant to report to the people who contributed to the evaluation in Latin America and elsewhere, and to let them know what recommendations were drawn from their ideas, experiences, and voices. The evaluation team believes strongly that too few evaluations ever return to the people whose lives they most deeply affect. The booklet is also meant to carry those voices to aid watchers in Norway and in other countries that sponsor special programs for indigenous peoples. The team believes that there are important lessons to be drawn from the Norwegian experiences for others seeking to support indigenous peoples.

While these recommendations are those of the evaluation team, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway or NPIP, the evaluation process demonstrates the willingness of the Norwegian government to discuss and contribute to the solution of difficult global issues.

*The drawing used in the booklet was graciously provided by Gildo Guedes Meremüü, Ticuna of the Alto Solimões.*

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1. The North-South Institute, *Evaluation of the Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples*, Evaluation Report 8.98, Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo, 1998. The report is available for free from The Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.O. Box 8114 DEP, N-00032 Oslo, Norway, Fax: +47 22 24 95 80, Tel 47 22 24 36 00, <http://odin.dep.no/ud>



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## Introduction

Throughout the Americas, Indigenous peoples have been gaining political and social ground, and the political landscape is changing at a rapid pace. This promises an increasing voice for Indigenous peoples in political debates. Indeed, they are becoming important players in the policy process and in the implementation of the decisions that affect their lives, cultures, livelihoods, and sometimes their very survival. At the same time, the capacity of Indigenous institutions to take on that new role remains weak, above all because of a serious lack of resources and poor economic prospects.

The key dilemma for foreign aid donors is how to best provide strategic resources to address basic issues identified by Indigenous peoples themselves, such as land claims and the development of economic alternatives, without bypassing existing but often weak organizations. How can donors help increase both the impact of the work and the capacity of existing organizations to carry it out when these goals require different strategies and different timelines? Short-term and goal-oriented projects are needed to respond to basic needs issues; long-term and process-driven programs are needed for institutional development.

Norway is the only country in the world that has a special administrative structure, staff, and an aid budget dedicated exclusively to supporting Indigenous peoples in developing countries. NPIP has been dealing creatively with these challenges by focusing first on institutional development. That investment has, in some cases, enabled organizations to access much larger funds from other donors who are confident in the capacity of the strengthened organization to take on the work. NPIP's flexible approach to monitoring has allowed the program to successfully balance the need to build institutional capacity and have an immediate impact.

Norway's small program well complements the work of some other organizations, particularly that of the multilateral agencies. The experiences of other countries and organizations, especially a dedicated Denmark's policy statement for Indigenous peoples, may further inspire the Norwegian program. Building on NPIP's strengths and weaknesses, as well as on innovations identified outside its program, this booklet proposes an integrated approach for the Norwegian program.

This booklet draws lessons from the innovative work of the Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples (NPIP), a program of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). Since 1983, the program has worked to support Indigenous peoples' organizations in five Latin American countries: Paraguay, Chile, Brazil, Guatemala, and Peru. What has NPIP learned from its Indigenous counterparts in Latin America? How can this knowledge help other donor countries and multilateral agencies involved in the region? In what ways could the international aid system as a whole better support the work of Indigenous peoples themselves? This booklet provides some answers to these questions, based on the conclusions of a multi-country field study of NPIP's program, carried out by The North-South Institute (Canada).

From the outset, the evaluation on which this brief report is based sought to involve NPIP's local partners, particularly the Indigenous organizations it supports, and attempted to look at NPIP from their viewpoint. This booklet aims to share the key results of the evaluation with them as a means of contributing to the global dialogue on how best to support Indigenous self-determination while ensuring that basic needs are met.

## Indigenous Peoples Today and the Dilemmas of Aid

### The poorest of the poor

Aboriginal peoples, or First Nations, had lived throughout the Americas for thousands of years when the Europeans first arrived. The demographic disaster that followed is without historical parallel as large populations were decimated by epidemics or enslaved. Those that survived saw their numbers dwindle and their material conditions deteriorate. Today, nonetheless, the 500 Indigenous Nations of the continent number about 40 million people, or close to 5 percent of the Americas' total population. The cultural diversity of Indigenous America is staggering and puts the lie to traditional stereotypes of "the" Indian. Yet a sense of unity exists among Indigenous peoples, based largely on a distinct and close relationship between identity, land, and the environment; on a community outlook to economic development and political organization; and on the will to preserve traditional languages, philosophies, and cultural practices.

Traditional occupations as well as the vagaries of colonialism have pushed most Indigenous peoples to the economic periphery of the continent. As a result, however, Indigenous lands are now in highly strategic locations: the remaining reserves of natural resources, what is left of the natural environment, as well as the border regions are peopled by Indians. From the cold northern and southern expanses to the hot and humid tropical forests at the heart of the Americas, Indian territories now stand as critical and contested spaces, whether for environmental, economic, political, or security reasons.

Indigenous peoples are generally the poorest segment of the hemisphere's population, whether in the richest country, the United States, or the poorest, Bolivia and Nicaragua. For example, while Canada ranks first in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index, Indigenous Canada would rank 63rd; and while Peru's average life expectancy is among the lowest in the continent, that of its Indigenous populations is significantly lower still. Income, literacy, infant mortality, child malnutrition, rates of suicide, access to basic social services—in all of these, everywhere, the situation of Indigenous peoples tells the story of development's failure, of its poor design, and of sheer discrimination. Particularly vulnerable because of their small populations and fragile economies, many Indigenous peoples of the Amazon region have seen their numbers dwindle and traditions threatened.

### *Pullquote:*

*everywhere, the situation of Indigenous peoples tells the story of development's failure, of its poor design, and of sheer discrimination*

Many of these problems can be blamed on sometimes well-meaning but almost always misguided policies and on the dynamics of globalization. Everywhere are visible the marks of policies of assimilation, of racism, of systematic spoliation of traditional lands, of institutional violence, and of outright massacre. Sheer indifference also takes its toll when Indigenous peoples are "in the way" of natural resources exploitation, as in the Amazon or the tropical forest of Central America; when they live in regions favourable to guerrilla activities, as in Guatemala or Peru, or across disputed boundaries, as between Ecuador and Peru. Chief victims of development in the Americas—and in spite of localized attempts at resistance—Indians have long retreated before the state or the settlers. Beginning in the 1970s, however, the tide started to turn.

### **"Intensely transitional times"**

Long disregarded as a political force, conceived at best as victims and objects of human sympathies, Indigenous peoples are now assuming the role of protagonists in the national and international arena. The last 20 years have seen a dramatic increase in efforts to organize: in most countries of the continent, in fact, Indigenous peoples have set up social and political organizations at the local level and, often, federations at the regional or national level. Guatemala, a late starter because of the shattering violence visited upon the Indians, now has 400 Mayan organizations; Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia also have active Indigenous movements, especially among the peoples of the lowland Amazon region. This political renaissance which started in the mid-1970s has also led to the establishment of international and hemispheric organizations, of which the best known are perhaps the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) and the Coordinación de Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA).

In an endeavour of strategic importance, the budding Indian movement reached out to potential allies among social movements in industrial countries. The development of a global alliance and close practical cooperation with the environmental movement proved to be particularly important, as environmental degradation became a central political issue, especially for young voters in rich countries. The Indian movement thus



became internationalized. The primary targets of its political mobilization, and soon its instruments, were large multilateral fora, such as the United Nations and the critically important multilateral development banks, including the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

In a relatively short period, this mobilization produced remarkable results. Brazil, for example, has recognized 11 percent of its total territory—representing 20 percent of the Brazilian Amazon—as Indigenous land and completed the legal demarcation process in about half of this area despite the fact that Indigenous people account for only 0.2 percent of the national population. In Colombia, protected areas now cover 185 000 square km. Significant land concessions have also been made in Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Altogether, the land put under some form of protection for Indigenous peoples in Amazon Pact nations covers close to 1.3 million square km.

Perhaps more significant, Indigenous identity has been revalued. More than ever before, people proclaim and demonstrate their Aboriginal identity. Partly as a result of this new-found pride, self-defined Indigenous populations have been growing quickly in most countries, reversing the trend toward assimilation. Even in the Amazon, where the tiny Indigenous populations were threatened with extinction, it now appears that, as one Brazilian interviewee put it, “the Indians will not be what they have been or what we want them to be, but they are here to stay.”

***Pullquote:***

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These gains must be put into perspective, however: in most countries, full control over natural resources has not been granted to Indigenous peoples. In fact, governments have sometimes violated their own laws to allow mineral or energy exploration and exploitation on Indian land, and many demarcated territories have been invaded to varying degrees (80 percent of the cases in Brazil). Moreover, national governments’ institutional capacity—and sometimes their political will—to implement constitutional or legislative measures, are, as a rule, extremely limited. Formal demarcation of Indian lands is only a starting point, offering limited effective control thereof. Because Indigenous peoples are generally poor, their populations are rapidly growing, and they have limited rights to the land’s resources, their priority has been to move quickly to establish sustainable local economies. This effort has posed an enormous challenge: in isolated Indigenous regions, long-term alternatives to traditional modes of

survival—often pushed to the limits by population growth and destructive agriculture or forestry by settlers—have yet to be devised. And time is not on their side.

Moreover, the convergence of goals between Northerners and Southerners that facilitated the emergence of a strong Indigenous movement is now no longer as steady. The alliance of budding Indigenous organizations, committed anthropologists, and environmentalists had found support in developed countries, crucially in the United States where voters were discovering environmental interdependence and the importance of far-away rainforests, especially in the Amazon. Northern environmentalists in the 1980s identified multilateral development banks (MDBs) as a critical force in the development process and successfully lobbied donor governments to promote environmental and social reforms in the MDBs. Multilateral aid consequently came to have at least nominal standards for the treatment of Indigenous peoples in development projects, particularly in environmentally sensitive areas inhabited by vulnerable Indigenous groups, such as the Amazon.

The environment remains a preoccupation in rich countries, and, by implication in international financial circles, but it has lost much of its novelty, urgency, and political weight. In part because of the prominence of the issue in the 1980s, new international fora were created, including the Climate Convention and the Biodiversity Convention, but the movement now appears to be losing momentum. Ominously, Brazil’s 1998 structural adjustment agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the US government initially eliminated 90 percent of the international grant funding for environmental programs meant to protect the Amazon and Indian land rights—national and international protest has since led the government to promise to restore part of the grant funding. It is also becoming clear that the multiplication of Indigenous organizations has at times outpaced the development of their institutional capacity. Major crises have affected national movements and both CISA (the South American Indigenous Council) and the Americas-centered WCIP—two of the largest Indigenous coalitions of the continent—have been forced to suspend operations.

The growing assertiveness and independence of Indigenous movements have also led to tensions with traditional conservation organizations that cling to northern models which have dubious applicability in frontier zones such as the Amazon and conflict with Indigenous concepts of land, its protection, and models of development. The domestic and international politics of environmental protection and Indigenous rights are

changing, and the outcome of those changes is far from clear.

Finally, a number of important issues are still largely ignored, either by the Indigenous movements, by their local and international allies, or by governments. Drug trafficking and the war against it have had negative consequences in the Amazon interior where the borders of most South American countries meet and where most lowland Indian peoples also live. Very little is being done to deal with the effects on Indigenous peoples. The image of the “exotic” Amazon belies the reality of growing numbers of Indigenous peoples living in urban peripheries, feeding the miserable informal sector that flourishes as a result of the economic crisis and adjustment programs. In political terms, the movement has yet to incorporate highland peoples, whose massive political potential remains divorced from the mobilizations around collective land and resource rights of Amazonian groups.

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**The dilemmas of aid**

Given the social, economic, and political situation of Indigenous peoples in the Americas, no aid program can legitimately—or even practically—exclude them from its list of beneficiaries: if aid is to meet its stated goals, the poorest of the poor must benefit from international development. Once this basic reality is recognized, a number of difficult choices must be made concerning policy, partnership, and project selection.

Policy

In terms of policy approach at the programming level, should the concern with Indigenous peoples lead to special, targeted programs, or should Indigenous programming be “mainstreamed,” and actively integrated into a country’s aid policy? How can a program do either, or both?

The main dilemma here is political rather than practical. The choice depends on the importance the country wants to accord Indigenous peoples. Most countries, as explained later, support individual projects that, coincidentally, deal with Indigenous peoples. Only Denmark has a targeted overall policy and supports Indigenous-specific projects financially, but it does not have a particular program dedicated to Indigenous peoples. Norway, on the other hand, has a dedicated

program that supports individual projects, but no targeted policy. The fullest possible commitment would involve the support of projects, a targeted policy, a dedicated program, and the mainstreaming of Indigenous peoples’ priorities within the entire aid program.

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Partnership

Another choice balances questions of partnership. Should outsiders work primarily with Indigenous organizations themselves, in spite of their political character, frequent organizational failing, and sometimes inadequate levels of technical expertise, or should they work with more professional, often better organized, and typically less politicized “support” organizations, which employ mainly non-Indigenous staff?

This second problem is probably the most difficult to resolve. Much of the success of the last decade can be traced to the work of key support organizations. Yet, and to a significant extent because of those successes, it is also true that Indigenous organizations are now more capable and keener than ever to move on themselves. An aid program must often choose between proven track records and the need to learn by doing; between the short-term, relatively safe results provided by a professional organization and longer-term investments in processes of institutional development.

The dependence of Indigenous organizations on external sources of support and expertise has diminished remarkably during the past few years, but it appears nonetheless unlikely to vanish. At the same time, a critical political mass has been reached by Indigenous peoples, and they will challenge all attempt to make abusive generalization, to oversimplify, and—above all—to pretend to speak on their behalf. Needed institutional development takes time, but many problems need to be tackled now: this means that there is a case to be made for working with non-Indigenous support organizations which are sufficiently competent to generate impact in the short term. In addition, there is often simply little choice: some opportunities cannot be missed (for example, the Brazilian constitutional process) and some threats must be met immediately. An aid program must thus rely on a high degree of understanding of the “field,” i.e. of the organizations themselves, both Indigenous and not, and of the context of Indigenous affairs in specific countries. Ultimately, it requires a flexible approach that balances

short- and medium-term critical outcomes and whose goal is self-sufficiency for indigenous organizations.

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Project selection

Another choice must be made at the project selection stage: should priority be given to legal, educational, and cultural projects whose impact can usually be readily measured, or should efforts be concentrated on supporting longer-term and more uncertain Indigenous organizational development and experimental economic projects?

The institutional side of the problem points to a fundamental tension in any endeavour that targets Indigenous peoples. As one Indigenous activist asked: to what extent is an aid program committed to helping Indigenous peoples construct a future that might not correspond to what its managers and political support-

ers would like? In other words, to what extent is one committed to full self-determination of Indigenous peoples?

Support for—high-risk—economic development projects also poses difficulties. The discouraging record of recent experiments with economic alternatives in the Amazon has pushed aid donors away from this area even though it is crucial to the survival of peoples living on their land. In a world of creeping “results-based” public sector thinking, this difficulty translates into strong incentives for program managers to avoid projects in this essential area.

For the aid program itself, a commitment to the partner’s self-determination, to difficult processes of institutional consolidation, and to risky economic experiments entails important difficulties for the evaluation and strategic planning process. What type of failure is acceptable and how much can one accept? How does one formulate a strategic plan for risky endeavours over which control is, to a significant extent, to be relinquished?

## The Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples

The Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples (NPIP) is a program of the official Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). However, it is housed in, and managed by, the Institute for Applied Social Sciences (FAFO), a nongovernmental research and consulting organization. Over the years, NPIP has financed projects in Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Paraguay, and Peru. Today it supports about 40 projects, mainly in Brazil, Guatemala, and Peru.

NPIP is small by most measures: two full-time staff, activities in a handful of countries, and an annual budget of about US\$6 million (NOK 20 million). It is one of several channels—including disbursements by Norwegian NGOs—that allow the Norwegian government to finance projects among the world's Indigenous peoples. Extensive interviews and research nonetheless show that NPIP's impact has been significant: NPIP has been a noteworthy player in most countries where it has been active and has had a role much larger than the dollar value of the projects supported would suggest, thanks largely to the quality and continuity of its presence. Much can be learned from the program's experience since its creation in 1983.

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NPIP's mandate is "to strengthen the capacity and ability of Indigenous peoples to shape and control their own development given the present context of socio-economic change." This mandate is being carried out in an open and flexible way, through support for a wide range of projects and a diversity of organizations, from small Indigenous ad-hoc initiatives, to the consolidation of large political organizations and the financing of major technical endeavours of professional support organizations. Grants are generally small by both international and Norwegian standards—an average of less than US \$40,000 each—yet their impact has been significant. Four key factors account for NPIP's success: its long term, reliable, and consistent relationships with partners; monitoring; the complementarity of its interventions; and leverage financing. Also important is the niche NPIP occupies in the much larger world of global aid to Indigenous peoples.

### **Relationships and monitoring**

NPIP is staffed by only two people, based in Oslo. In each of the countries where it has projects, the program has the face and personality of its manager. Very low staff turnover has been key to building up the program's remarkable human dimension and its reputation for reliability and long-term consistency. The staff, knowledgeable about the intricacies and particularities of Indigenous affairs, have been able to establish personal relationships with the staff and leaders of partner organizations, making it easier to manoeuvre the complex politics of Indigenous movements and support organizations.

NPIP monitors its programs closely through annual visits. While it can be argued that periodic visits are a poor substitute for a permanent presence in the country or region, the practice means that the program is almost perfectly "flat:" NPIP's officers in the field also manage the process at headquarters and *de facto* control the selection process. Lines of communication could hardly be shorter: a talk to the visiting NPIP manager in effect means access to the decisionmaker and the fund provider, a rare and highly valued commodity on Guatemala's highlands and in the rainforest of Northwestern Brazilian Amazon.

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In spite of these regular visits, time and resource constraints have resulted in relatively hands-off and non-directional project oversight. It is impossible for NPIP officers to be directly involved in the management of the projects or in their political environment. There are obvious dangers, of course, in the personalization of any program and in the absence of alternative channels of communication. Personalization and the program's flat structure call for a reciprocal commitment to provide partners with information about the planning and decisionmaking process. There are also dangers in the hands-off approach to project management with organizations that can be precarious. Professionalism and a commitment to learning by doing has helped NPIP avoid most of these pitfalls, however.

### **Complementarity and leverage**

Overall, NPIP's monitoring is effective but appears to be expensive given the small size of its grants. That impression is deceptive, however: an honest evaluation

needs to factor in at least some of the resources provided by other funders whose support NPIP complements and often makes possible.

NPIP has been quite adventurous in its choice of partners. Many small organizations and projects have received their first—and often their only—funding from the program. The nurturing of such small initiatives, expensive and risky, is not being undertaken by the larger programs, particularly those managed by the multilateral development banks. But the good ideas, experienced staff, and capable organizations those large funders seek and desperately need do not emerge ready-made from the forest.

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Very small pilot projects and organizational experiments need the kind of seed money and the close presence that NPIP provides. To have significant impact, multilateral agencies need smaller programs such as these which help develop organizations' capacity to draw upon the resources the larger funds multilateral agencies make available, and to manage them effectively. While larger sums may ultimately ensure a wider impact, they cannot foster the emergence of genuine organizations, crystallize cooperation when and where the potential exists, or effectively sustain new organizations over time. Moreover, while nongovernmental organizations often take an approach similar to NPIP's, they rarely have the stability and security that NPIP's full government support and commitment provide.

This complementarity between NPIP programs, multilateral funds, and NGO initiatives accounts to a large degree for its ultimate impact. Long-term, consistent, reliable support and close monitoring has enabled many partner organizations to access much larger amounts from multilateral funders and from local government sources, be it for schools, other education initiatives, or health programs. Such leveraging is key to the sustainability of the projects in many ways. Government reach in many regions where Indigenous peoples live is often limited, as is local capacity to implement public policy initiatives. In fact most of the central problems that confront Indigenous peoples stem from the absence or incapacity of state institutions to provide services, whether it be health care and education, or monitoring and enforcing environmental laws, Indigenous rights and constitutional provisions. In those instances, sustainability means full government financing of the programs the State already has

the responsibility to provide. In a number of cases, NPIP-funded programs have been taken over by the State; education programs in native languages in Guatemala, for instance, and the training of health monitors in Brazil.

Even in such circumstances, the challenges of complementarity and sustainability are not necessarily overcome once larger institutions such as multilateral banks or the government itself takes over because both have often proven unreliable. Constant monitoring of the programs, the provision of continuing core support, and ultimately a long-term commitment to the organizations and their initiatives can become a lifeline when things sour. There is a niche for small, long-term, and flexible government programs that act like NGOs but have the wherewithal to stay the course. NPIP occupies that niche.

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### **Policy Integration, Public Education, and Sustainability in Norway**

NPIP has dealt well with most of the problems inherent in managing foreign aid in support of Indigenous peoples' own priorities. While clearly targeting Indigenous peoples through NPIP, the Norwegian government has also supported Indigenous peoples directly in countries of the region where NPIP is not active, and supported them indirectly through its funding to multilateral organizations.

This, however, is not part of a general policy decision to "mainstream" Indigenous issues into Norway's overall programming, nor does it flow from a strategic outlook. NPIP itself, for instance, has not deliberately dealt with the problem of financing Indigenous and non-Indigenous support organizations: it finances both in Brazil, but focuses on Indigenous organizations in Guatemala and Peru.

Generally, because it is almost exclusively focused on managing its projects in Latin America, the program has been poorly integrated into the Indigenous and aid policy community in Norway. In spite of its wealth of information and experience, it has also not contributed much to public education about Indigenous issues. The program's limited visibility in Norway, and the weakness of its linkages to the governmental and nongovernmental groups involved in [Norwegian](#) Indigenous issues—Saami organizations, for instance—have

reduced its impact in the country and could affect its political sustainability.

Finally, while significant risks were taken in supporting the institutional consolidation of Indigenous organizations and Indigenous peoples-led initiatives, economic development projects—key to long-term survival—have been dropped.

To meet the challenges and build on the program's successes, changes are in order. Ensuring that Nor-

way's aid program continues to manifest a pro-Indigenous stance and to guarantee continuity through unavoidable staff changes calls for a more explicit policy orientation, better articulated policy priorities, and a closer meshing with other components of Norway's Indigenous work. A better-defined image and clearer priorities would also facilitate its promotion in Latin America. The experiences of other donors, described later in this report, could be useful in this respect.

## Alternative Approaches

No foreign aid program can claim relevance in the Americas if it does not address Indigenous issues. Most donor countries do, in fact, finance projects and programs that aim to support the work of Indigenous peoples. Three stand out for their innovative character and potential impact: Denmark's dedicated policy; the Dutch NGOs' long term perspective; and the World Bank's and the Inter-American Development Bank's massive influence.

### Denmark

Denmark's current policy is based on a formal "Strategy for Danish Support to Indigenous Peoples" elaborated in 1994 in response to a demand by the Danish Parliament to "present (...) a general strategy for increased, effective Danish assistance to the Indigenous peoples of the world." It has two broad components: policy activities at the multilateral and bilateral levels; and project support through the Danish aid agency (DANIDA) in program countries, as well as through international and national NGOs in non-country programs. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is committed to regularly assessing the strategy, and has organized seminars during which its various components are examined and Indigenous issues are discussed.

Support for Indigenous peoples is integrated as a cross-cutting issue throughout aid, foreign affairs, and international environmental policies. However, while spending targets have been set, no staff or funding has been dedicated to Indigenous issues. In the case of bilateral assistance, for example, the goal is to invest 5 percent of resources in projects dealing with human rights, of which Indigenous issues are a component. In addition, most aid in program countries such as Bolivia support Indigenous peoples given their prominence among the poorest levels of the population, even where projects do not specifically target them as such.

The strategy statement is remarkable for its outright commitment to tackling the "political marginalization" of Indigenous peoples throughout the world. While general in tone, it also represents a notably enlightened foreign policy stance. At the domestic level, the clarity and visibility of the government's commitment contributes to the political sustainability of its policy, and serves as a catalyst for dialogue among those involved in Indigenous issues in Denmark. On the ground, however, the strategy appears to make little difference, either in terms of the range of projects supported—which is just as varied as those supported by NPIP—or the type of presence which varies from on-site perma-

nent staff to regular monitoring visits, according to the strategies of partner NGOs, the strategy's only mechanism for aid delivery.

### *Pullquote:*

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### The Netherlands

Two of the four NGOs that benefit from core funding from the Dutch government—the Protestant Inter-Church Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO) and NOVIB, a secular NGO member of the Oxfam family—have been active among Indigenous peoples in Latin America. Although ICCO does not have a particular policy on Indigenous peoples, Indigenous issues are at the centre of its work and country strategies. Their work has been remarkable for its effort to encourage local partners to reflect on the program, solve problems, and set priorities. Moreover, ICCO has tailored its relationship to the organizations it works with: while there is a four-year maximum funding term, organizations with long-term vision and strong institutional capacity can be promised rollover periods for longer periods. Finally, ICCO has managed to mix Indigenous and non-Indigenous partner organizations very pragmatically, resisting drastic options for either short-term impact through professional support organizations, or the long-term institutional development of Indigenous organizations.

NOVIB also works extensively among Indigenous peoples in Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, and Venezuela, and is now launching an Amazonian program. Like ICCO, NOVIB has no particular policy on Indigenous peoples, but has referred to Indigenous needs in overall strategy documents and has developed specific programming on Indigenous issues. Perhaps even more than ICCO, NOVIB has been committed to involving partner organizations in analyzing the national context and Indigenous issues, and in developing core programming areas. In addition, it favours institutional rather than project funding, and cycles of three to five years, options that greatly facilitate the work of local partners. Finally, its systematic use of evaluations has greatly improved the quality of its work.

The experience of these Dutch NGOs parallels NPIP's NGO-like commitment to Indigenous capacity building, but with important improvements. While long-

term support has been a common characteristic of NPIP work (even though there are funding restrictions on paper), ICCO and NOVIB show how this long-term commitment can be institutionalized for even greater benefit. Part of that institutionalization has crucially involved the partners in the diagnosis and design of the program, factors that could further inspire NPIP.

### **The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank**

Multilateral development banks (MDBs) are the dominant players in the development game. In 1996, the World Bank lent US\$4.7 billion to Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Inter-American Development Bank contributed another US\$6.7 billion. Moreover, their operations are highly leveraged, which means that their money is added to the money contributed by governments themselves, doubling the value of the projects supported. In recent years the value of those loans has been dwarfed by private investment flows. However, for crucial infrastructure investments, MDBs are often still the most determinant external influence on national development priorities and policies, and are sometimes actively engaged in their formulation. Their policies regarding Indigenous peoples, directly or indirectly, are thus most important.

In 1982, the World Bank adopted an operational statement on Tribal People in Bank-Financed Projects. That statement, however, was modified following public controversy about potentially disastrous consequences for Indigenous people of the Bank-supported Polonoeste project in the Brazilian Amazon. The fundamental principle of the new policy was that “the Bank will not assist projects that knowingly involve encroachment on traditional territories being used or occupied by tribal people, unless adequate safeguards are provided.” In 1991, a new Operational Directive broadened the definition of Indigenous peoples so that it could more easily be applied to ethnic and cultural minorities in Africa and Asia. The focus of the policy—the mitigation of adverse impacts—was also broadened to ensure that Indigenous people benefit from development. The Directive states that “the objective (...) is to ensure that Indigenous peoples do not suffer adverse effects during the development process, particularly from Bank-financed projects, and that they receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits.”

Although the Bank’s internal evaluators and external critics have both pointed to a wide range of failings, in practice the Bank has been a positive force, and is increasingly so over time. However, it has acted most

energetically when under pressure. The 1991 Operational Directive is now being reformulated under the Bank’s “safeguard policies” initiative and quite extensive consultations are being organized. Nonetheless, the “mainstreaming” of Indigenous peoples’ concerns remains at best uneven.

#### ***Pullquote:***

***“the Bank will not assist projects that knowingly involve encroachment on traditional territories being used or occupied by tribal people, unless adequate safeguards are provided”***

Since the mid-1980s, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has devised guidelines for programming for and with Indigenous peoples, to be used by its Environmental Management Committee. Although they are similar in tenor to the World Bank’s Operational Directive, the guidelines lack its formal status since they have not been approved by the IDB’s board. In 1992, however, the Bank moved decisively to create long-term means of support for Indigenous development initiatives by establishing the Indigenous Peoples’ Fund whose governing structure includes Indigenous organizations as well as governments. The Fund aims to create an endowment of US\$100 million, to be administered by the IDB, with some \$26 million already pledged. While this initiative could play a significant role in improving the situation of Indigenous peoples, tensions that have already emerged between NGOs and governments point to significant potential difficulties.

As a whole the multilateral channels are not an alternative to smaller sources of funding. Small programs are everything the MDBs are not: personalized, agile, flexible, and often more reliable over time. While it is encouraging that the MDBs now propose to offer direct assistance to Indigenous groups, this approach is recent and largely untested. To have significant positive impact on the lives and work of Indigenous peoples, large funders need smaller programs, either national where the capacity exists, or international, such as NPIP, to reach the organizations and peoples who nurture Indigenous projects in their vulnerable initial stages.

#### ***Pullquote:***

***Small programs are everything the MDBs are not: personalized, agile, flexible, and often more reliable over time***



## Proposal for an Integrated Approach

Building on the evaluation of NPIP and survey of alternative programs and organizations, the evaluation team developed a model to address NPIP's key weaknesses and enable it to take advantage of the opportu-

nities that present themselves. The table below identifies five action areas, the institutions responsible for their implementation, and the basic requirements of implementation.

### *Proposal for an Integrated Approach*

<b>Policy statement</b>	<b>Multilateral Policy</b>	<b>Communication/ Education</b>	<b>Program Delivery</b>	
MFA <sup>a</sup> /NORAD	MFA	NPIP Executing agency	Proactive NORAD	Reactive MFA/NORAD
Parliament	United Nations	Roundtable: Saami	NPIP	NGOs Bilateral
Saami Parliament	Multilateral Development Banks	NGOs Parliament Academics	Consultative Board	
		National consultation to discuss/evaluate polity orientation and its implementation	Dedicated funding guaranteed for three years	Dedicated fund
			Three-year mandate closely related to government policy orientation	

a. MFA = Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

### 1. Policy statement

In the proposed model, and building on Denmark's experience, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NORAD are to be jointly responsible for the development of a policy statement that identifies the basic parameters of a new, overarching Norwegian policy for Indigenous Peoples. For maximum political sustainability, that orientation needs to be endorsed by both the National Parliament and the Saami Parliament (the partial governing body for Norway's Indigenous people).

### 2. Multilateral Policy

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to develop its position on Indigenous issues in multilateral fora, including in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Working Party on Export Credits and Credit Guarantees, and in multilateral aid agencies on the basis of the general policy statement discussed above.

### 3. Communication/Education

A national roundtable on Indigenous issues is to be set up to discuss the situation of the world's Indigenous

peoples, and to address Norway's public and nongovernmental activities in the area. A secretariat will organize an annual general meeting, regular policy discussion, and public and specialized information sessions; it will also serve as a clearing house for information on Norwegian organizations and projects in the field. NPIP's executing agency—currently FAFO—could be responsible for these activities which could fulfill the public education dimension of its mandate,

### 4. Proactive Program Delivery

Effective program delivery is NPIP's main comparative advantage. Norway is the only country in the world that has a special administrative structure, staff, and an aid budget dedicated to supporting Indigenous peoples in developing countries. This increases the likelihood that strategic plans will be implemented. In the proposed framework, NPIP becomes the main channel for implementing government policy in the field. To facilitate its work and increase the reliability and longer-term outlook of the program, dedicated funding is to be guaranteed for three-year periods, closely tied to a specific mandate and strategy for each period.

***Pullquote:***

***Norway is the only country in the world that has a special administrative structure, staff, and an aid budget dedicated to supporting Indigenous peoples in developing countries***

**5. Reactive Program Delivery**

As in most industrial countries, Norwegian voluntary organizations offer an attractive channel for implementing a broad policy toward Indigenous peoples. That approach—which responds to project ideas first advanced by NGOs—offers flexibility and opens the possibility of involvement in non-core countries and in areas that might not have been foreseen in NPIP’s strategic plan. In addition, the government is to promote

the program within developing countries, thus informing local NGOs of Norway’s interest in supporting projects that correspond with its—and Indigenous peoples’—strategies toward self-determination.

As the main implementing instrument, NPIP is the hub of this model. As the Danish example demonstrates, the adoption of a general statement of support for Indigenous peoples helps ensure the political sustainability of the aid program and focus the domestic discussion on the issue. It also offers a point of convergence for policy, programs, and projects that address it. Building on the Danish model, the template suggested here goes further, complementing and buttressing the dedicated work currently carried out by NPIP.

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## Conclusion

Support for Indigenous self-determination reoccurs often in the documentation of many aid programs. The intent is to contribute to capacity building without constraining the ways in which that capacity could be used. In the past, however, aid has often been tied: tied to the procurement of goods or services in the donor countries, certainly, but more importantly, tied also to models, values, and policy prescriptions designed in the North and typically implemented by people—foreign or local—educated in the North.

***Pullquote:***

***In the past aid has often been tied: tied to the procurement of goods or services in the donor countries, tied also to models, values, and policy prescriptions designed in the North and implemented by people educated in the North***

Decades of such development aid have ignored large segments of society. Worse still, it has often deepened their impoverishment and alienation. For the Indige-

nous peoples of the Americas, centuries of oppression have disrupted their societies, destroyed their culture, razed their forests, contaminated their rivers, killed their children, and trampled their self-respect. Although there have been periods of resistance, only in the last few decades has widespread political and social organization taken place, giving Indigenous peoples and their views a new prominence. Since then, Indigenous peoples have spoken in their own right and have increasingly refused to be confined to roles defined by outsiders, including those coming to help.

This new-found pride tests outsiders' commitment to Indigenous self-determination. Foreign aid provided to Indigenous peoples must recognize them as full partners. More challenging, however, it must also be a political "blank cheque," a commitment to people as an end unto themselves, subjects of their own development and authors of their own future. Aid to Indigenous peoples today can only be an investment in their freedom.

## Annex A: Executive Summary of Evaluation

The North-South Institute, *Evaluation of the Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples*, Evaluation Report 8.98, Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo, 1998.

### Main Message

We found that the work of the Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples (NPIP), a NORAD program run by the Norwegian Institute for Applied Social Science (FAFO), has been an important support to the work of indigenous and pro-indigenous organizations in Latin America. We visited all but three partners of the program in Brazil, Guatemala, and Peru, and discussed their assessments of the relevance and effectiveness of the program in meeting their needs. With some room for improvement, the overall message was that the program was responsive, dependable, and in some cases crucial for the advancement of indigenous peoples' agendas in the region.

We also reviewed the policy and administrative environment of the program in Norway, including the relationship between NPIP, NORAD, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other organizations in Norway, including the Saami, involved in working with indigenous peoples abroad. Our finding here is that the government has not been adequately supportive of the mandate of the program or of its administration by FAFO. Wrangling over contracts and the scope of the program has, over the long term, meant that the program has been strategically orphaned by *both* NORAD and FAFO. While day to day administration is competent, the success of the program relies most heavily on the work of the program's staff and, on occasion, its Advisory Council.

Our recommendations, therefore, fall into three groups. At the system level, we propose a series of policy decisions and institutions that will improve the strategic coherence of *all* the work that Norway already accomplishes in support of indigenous peoples. At the level of the program's organizational home, we recommend ways in which the program can be brought under the umbrella of a firmer political commitment and strategic direction, both by the program executing agency and NORAD, particularly in the re-positioning of the program's Advisory Council into an Advisory Board. At the program level, we make further suggestions for improving operations in the field, and more substantively, expanding the communications work of the program in Norway.

### Description of the Program

The Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples (NPIP) is a program of the governmental Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) since 1983 (and in a different form, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1980). Since 1991, the program has been administered by an outside agency, the Institute for Applied Social Sciences (FAFO), and from there continues to offer financial support to indigenous and pro-indigenous organizations in five Latin American countries: Chile, Peru, Guatemala, Brazil and Paraguay.

The mandate of the program is "to strengthen the capacity and ability of indigenous peoples to shape and control their own development given the present context of socioeconomic change." Toward that end, financial and technical support is offered for projects in the areas of rights and health, culture and education, and institution building and networking. In 1998, the budget is NOK 20 million (USD 6 million) for 40 projects in the five countries, administered by two professional staff members, supported by management and accounting services at FAFO.

Over the course of the program's history, either within NORAD or FAFO, there has never been an evaluation of its success in meeting its mandate (although individual projects have been evaluated). As the contract with FAFO comes up for renewal in 1998, this evaluation has been commissioned.

### Terms of Reference and Methods

This evaluation focuses on the management of the program since FAFO took over its stewardship. However, support to indigenous peoples' efforts exists in many parts of the government (primarily through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NORAD, its aid wing, and indirectly through support to the work of Norwegian NGOs also working in the field), and questions have been raised about coordination, relevance, and strategy throughout, not simply within FAFO's administration of NPIP. The evaluation has therefore been designed to encompass a range of questions that will help the Norwegian government to move forward.

Key among the central questions posed in the initial Terms of Reference tendered by the Ministry are:

1. How relevant is NPIP (and Norway's overall support) to the needs articulated by indigenous peoples in Latin America? To Norway's own policies?

2. How effective is current NPIP (and other Norwegian) programming in terms of policy (overall direction), strategy (implementation plans), and management (administration)?
3. What future directions should be recommended, again in terms of policy, strategy, and management of NPIP? Of other programs? Should Norway continue on its current course?

At the very centre of the overall evaluation, therefore, is FAFO's management of the Norwegian Program for Indigenous Peoples, both in Norway and in Latin America. However, while the evaluation has undertaken primary research to assess the work of NPIP, it has *not* undertaken an in-depth evaluation of the success of individual projects or organizations supported by the program. In this report, we limit our attention to the *system, organizational home, and program* levels, and so steer clear of *project* level assessments.

The implementation of the evaluation involved seven basic steps:

1. A team of ten professionals (anthropologists, political scientists and organizational specialists) was constituted to undertake the research and to advise on the methodology and findings.
2. Five background papers were commissioned to provide the team with a shared basis of information on the key issues of the evaluation (these have become part of the report and its appendices).
3. The whole team, including the advisors, met in Ottawa for a closed five-day session in January 1998. The main objective of the meeting was to develop a shared basic understanding of the situation of indigenous peoples in Latin America and a common methodology for data collection.
4. Fieldwork in Latin America then took place over a period of a month in January and February 1998, building on previous fieldwork in Norway and the United States.
5. The complete team was brought back to Ottawa for a week-long closed meeting to share, gauge and consolidate the data collected.
6. Subsequent visits to Washington's multilateral agencies were made, and after the second team workshop, trips to Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands were also made in March 1998 to get more information on apparent alternatives to Norway's program.

7. The report's conclusions were discussed at a roundtable meeting in Oslo in March 1998, and a drafted report was circulated to a reference group of stakeholders in Norway (including an academic specialist in Latin America, a representative from the Saami academic community, and members from FAFO, NORAD and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). A second roundtable in April 1998 reviewed the written draft and discussed its findings. This final report incorporates agreed changes discussed at that meeting.

### **Main Findings**

Our report has outlined a range of strengths and weaknesses in the program and system in which NPIP works, and has highlighted alternatives in use by other organizations. In this final chapter and summarized here, those assessments are boiled into a list of priority findings and key recommendations.

### **The Norwegian Strategy**

The main message is that Norway's official work for, and with, indigenous peoples has demonstrated a remarkable empathy for indigenous peoples, with a degree of sensitivity closer to that of progressive NGOs than to most multilateral and bilateral agencies. However, the absence of a strategy throughout this array of Norwegian activity — including NPIP but encompassing other government and non-governmental programs — robs Norway of improved coherence, effectiveness and visibility.

- I. **STRENGTH: Progressive and Important Work.** Norway already supports a wide range of activities through multilateral, bilateral, NGO, and NPIP channels. These activities, progressive in their approach, have earned Norway a positive reputation in the countries where the work takes place.
  - A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Continue Work with Indigenous Peoples.
- II. **PROBLEM: Poor Coordination.** The wide range of activities supported by Norway are not framed within a coordinated, unified outlook nor are they the topic of systematic communication among players.
  - A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Prepare a Government-Wide Policy Statement to Guide Multilateral, Bilateral and NGO-Support Activities Related to Indigenous Issues.
  - B. **RECOMMENDATION:** Establish A National Roundtable Support for Indigenous Peoples.

III. **PROBLEM:** Lack of Continuity. NPIP represents only a relatively small part of Norway's support for indigenous peoples, with the rest of the funding disbursed through support for NGO initiatives. Such procedures offer little guarantee of continuity in effort.

- A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Provide Special Funding for Indigenous Programming.
- B. **RECOMMENDATION:** Prepare to Use the Multilateral and Bilateral Programs, as Well as NGO Channels, to Implement Policy.
- C. **RECOMMENDATION:** For Project *Delivery*, as Distinct from Policy Development Work, Put Emphasis on NPIP and NGO Channels.

IV. **PROBLEM:** Visibility. Finally, the visibility of these activities is low. Public awareness, support, and hence the political sustainability of Norway's support for indigenous peoples is in no way guaranteed.

- A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Request that Parliament Publicly Endorse the Strategic Statement in Support of Indigenous Peoples.
- B. **RECOMMENDATION:** Promote NPIP's Education Role through Additional Contributions to its Communication Role.

### **The Organizational Home**

NPIP's success is partly due to the shelter the program receives as an out-of-house program, the flexibility permitted within FAFO, the administrative competence brought by FAFO, and the quality of the staff recruited to manage it.

I. **STRENGTH:** Political and Bureaucratic Independence. The key benefit of the current home, and the out-of-house model in general, is that the program has been sheltered from undue political pressure and administrative burdens. This shelter has permitted the program to be flexible, responsive, and agile in its work in the field.

II. **STRENGTH:** Administrative Simplicity and Efficiency. FAFO's administration of the program in terms of reporting, accounting, and procedure are effective and non-bureaucratic.

- A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Retain an Out-of House Model for the Program.

III. **STRENGTH:** Competent Staff. FAFO has also retained high quality staff and assembled a com-

petent Advisory Council. This specialization is important because of our finding that in-depth, specialized, and continuously verified knowledge of the indigenous landscape is crucial for program success.

The NPIP project staff have clearly demonstrated that they have the required project competencies, with some improvements necessary (see recommendations for the program outlined below), particularly with respect to communication competencies.

Current staffing levels are insufficient, however, not only to ensure implementation of the public education dimension of NPIP's mandate, but also to provide more appropriate project cycle administration and project monitoring.

- A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Increase staffing levels by one and possibly two persons, depending on the size of the effort made in the area of public education.

IV. **PROBLEM:** Weak Strategic Programming. FAFO's hands-off policy is partly responsible for the weak overall strategic planning and programmatic coherence of NPIP.

- A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Improve Key Competencies and Qualities of the Organization.
- B. **RECOMMENDATION:** Undertake a Development Plan.
- C. **RECOMMENDATION:** Strengthen the Advisory Council.
- D. **RECOMMENDATION:** Revise NORAD Commitment.

V. **PROBLEM:** Poor Record in Public Education and Information in Norway. In Norway, the public education and information mandate has not been fulfilled. In the past, the impediments for action were understandable; current plans, however, are not sufficient to carry the mandate further.

- A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Develop an Information Strategy.
- B. **RECOMMENDATION:** Augment Research.

These weaknesses alone do not justify moving the program if improvements are made. However, the choice of another home would need to take into account the advantages of the current model.

## The Program

Our review of the program in Peru, Guatemala and Brazil, shows that it has largely been relevant to the needs of indigenous peoples and has had significant impact. Improvements to strengthen the program's record would involve better strategic coherence across regions and themes, a revision of the contract cycle, systems to counteract an excessive personalization, more consistent communications and more frequent use of evaluations.

NPIP, as a dedicated program with dedicated staff and funds, has had a significant impact in the countries where projects were funded. The program has thus proven effective and relevant from the standpoint of its contribution to the capacity of indigenous people to guide their own future.

- I. **STRENGTH:** Effectiveness and Relevance on the Ground. Noting the caveat that the most relevant and important efforts are often the most difficult to achieve, we nonetheless found instances of effective use of program resources in many areas and in all the countries.
- II. **STRENGTH:** Cost-Effectiveness and Comparative Advantage. While we have not been able to comment on the cost-effectiveness of the program in an accounting sense (other than to note that the budget and financial systems are in order), we find that the *nature* of the program has special cost-effective benefits. As a small funder of both large and small indigenous organizations, NPIP has acted as a lever for new funds, a complementary source of funding during periods of other outside funding, and a special source of funding for small organizations unable to access other resources.

However, while the program has had notable successes, it has also struggled with strategic and operational difficulties.

- I. **PROBLEM:** Country-Choice Coherence. The choice of countries eligible for the program, and the division of projects and budgets among countries within the program, are not based on an assessment of indigenous needs or agendas in the region. NORAD's restriction on eligible countries and NPIP choices on project allocation do not seem to be adequately supported.

The choice of current countries and the choice for future expansion needs revision. We examined possible alternatives for choosing countries within Latin America. Our recommendation is that decisions on expansion within the continent (or to

other regions of the world) should take the following elements into consideration:

- A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Undertake a Continental Profile.
  - B. **RECOMMENDATION:** Develop a High and Lowland Program Prior to other Expansion.
  - C. **RECOMMENDATION:** Contemplate New Regions.
  - D. **RECOMMENDATION:** Revise Decision to Leave Chile.
- II. **PROBLEM:** Thematic and Core Area Focus. The decision to limit income-generation projects, and the (largely ignored) focus on three core areas for funding, indicates a lack of strategic planning both on the side of FAFO and NORAD, as well as a lack of responsiveness to needs in the region.
    - A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt One Broad Goal (Field of Activity or Thrust or Focus or General Orientation): Institutional And Capacity Building.
    - B. **RECOMMENDATION:** Maintain Flexibility. Continue to consider both pro-indigenous and indigenous organizations.
    - C. **RECOMMENDATION:** Include Income-Generating Projects.
  - III. **PROBLEM:** Funding cycle. NPIP is perceived as a reliable source of support by many important indigenous and non-indigenous support organizations in Latin America. Most organizations, however, find it difficult to work effectively within the one-year cycle, a pattern that is unusual among other donor organizations working with indigenous organizations.
    - A. **RECOMMENDATION:** Lengthen Funding Cycle.
    - B. **RECOMMENDATION:** Reconfigure Budget to Allow For Risk.
  - IV. **PROBLEM:** Personalization. The strict division of labour between coordinators has meant there is a danger of over-personalizing the program, potentially making partners vulnerable to personal, rather than organizational, decisions on funding. Steps need to be taken to offer an institutional relationship with the partners in addition to the personal one.

- A. RECOMMENDATION: Build a Management System to Limit the Dangers of Personalization.
- V. PROBLEM: Field Evaluations. We also find that the infrequent use of independent project evaluations is a problem, both as a danger to organizations whose funding may be cut because of personal misunderstandings with coordinators, and as a means for helping organizations improve their work.
- A. RECOMMENDATION: Plan More Regular Evaluations.
- VI. PROBLEM: Field Communications and Transparency. The research also found that communications (in the shape of more formal procedures and more regular correspondence) needed to be improved in order for the program to act more transparently.
- A. RECOMMENDATION: Undertake a Participatory Diagnosis.

- B. RECOMMENDATION: Install Standard Communication Guidelines.
- C. RECOMMENDATION: Implement Transparency Safeguards.
- D. RECOMMENDATION: Undertake a Pro-Active Funding Review.

### **Recommended Next Steps**

Based on these recommendations, we suggest that NORAD and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs present this evaluation publicly as a basis for discussion for a new strategy. Indigenous organizations who have formed the backbone of the information in this report should be included in this dissemination and discussion. We also suggest that discussions on lessons learned within the program further be disseminated to other NGO, bilateral, and multilateral programs working with indigenous peoples, that they may share in Norway's experience and open up further conversations on their own work. We finally recommend that the contract negotiations take into consideration the needed improvements identified and that a minimum three year contract be signed.



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