

Short Summary of 2018 OECD Peer Review of Canada and its Development Cooperation September 2018

The press release can be found at <https://www.oecd.org/development/canada-needs-to-increase-foreign-aid-flows-in-line-with-its-renewed-engagement.htm>.

The full report is at: https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/oecd-development-co-operation-peer-reviews-canada-2018_9789264303560-en

Background on the Review

- The last time Canada had a review was in 2012.
- It included reviewers from Germany and Norway and included a visit to Tanzania.
- According to the report, 9 of the 2012 recommendations are implemented, 12 are partially implemented and 3 are not implemented.

Some steps forward in Canada's Development Cooperation

- The Report congratulated Canada for:
 - Having a clearer vision and focus than in 2012 (Feminist International Assistance Policy and bringing greater visibility to gender equality, updating the Civil Society Partnerships Policy, ending tied aid);
 - Being a good humanitarian donor (integrated conflict analysis and engagement, whole of government approach, multi-year funding, cash transfer); and
 - Strengthening monitoring and evaluation across development, foreign policy and trade, and designing a learning strategy.

Recommendations

- However, the Report recommended a number of areas where Global Affairs Canada could build on this progress and **foster greater clarity and predictability** by:
 - Circulating clear guidance and tools for implementing the FIAP (policies for the six action areas, updated guidance and tools) – which is expected any day now;
 - Clarifying its approach to partnership (having shifted away from Countries of focus) to ensure it will be nimble, flexible, while also ensuring ownership, predictability, inclusive partnerships, alignment and mutual accountability;
 - Evaluating the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of its partnerships and further strengthening predictability, given how key CSOs are as partners; the Report hinted that this lack of predictability came from GAC's current emphasis on project funding over programme and institutionalized funding;
 - Developing a clear strategy, guidance and tools for working with the private sector; and
 - Increasing its core support for multilaterals, including developing a strategic framework for its engagement with multilaterals, developed in dialogue with them.
- While amalgamation appears to have enhanced the **coherence of Canada's approach** to foreign policy, trade, development and peace and security, the Report noted a number of areas that **still require work**:

- The Ministry still needs to do more to streamline and harmonize processes and systems, build a shared culture, break down silos and information sharing across departments.
- To implement the new FIAP, staff will also need new skillsets, ways of working and technical support to be able to build their expertise, experiment, innovate and take risks.
- The Report noted that while **streamlining programming is a work in progress**, Canada **still needs to reduce the administrative burden** of its funding calls and generate more effective mechanisms and approaches. This includes:
 - Using service standards for program managers to bring predictability to timelines for project initiative, approval, contract signing and communications of funding outcomes –
 - Increasing the delegated authorities for international assistance and, since Treasury Board compliance and control mechanisms remain a barrier to ensuring timely responses, agreeing with Treasury Board on a process for grants and contributions that would fastrack the process, while still ensuring adequate controls.
 - As the results-based management framework gets more complex to respond to the different action areas and country frameworks, making sure the results frameworks are simple and demonstrate progress; and increasingly using country-owned data and results.
 - Canadian humanitarian response is principles and needs-based, but the Peers recommended the government provide guidance on how it will realize this, clarify its criteria for supporting individual crises and measure the results of its support.
- On **key challenges**, the Peers recognized the need for Canada to still:
 - Increase its ODA by committing to an ambitious ODA to GNI ratio and commit to a timeframe for getting there.
 - Enhance its policy coherence by establishing a mechanism for assessing where domestic policy and regulations may have a negative impact on developing countries.