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English

**CIDR Policy**

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# Introduction

CIDR undertook an analysis of the evolutionary factors in Sub Saharan Africa during the last ten years. It reflected on the changes in development co-operation policies and strategies. It also reviewed, with external expertise, its own activities during the period 1999/2003 and the new challenges in its fields of intervention.

As a consequence, CIDR decided to orient its actions along four major political objectives :

- ▶ To strengthen civil societies in the South by supporting the construction and development of sustainable local institutions that will serve the people
- ▶ To build with expertise from the South professional partnerships, thematic networks and strategic alliances
- ▶ To confront the triple challenge of efficiency, social performance and governance of partner institutions
- ▶ To participate, together with partner institutions, in the elaboration of public policies and in the implementation of sectorial approaches.

## 1. Strengthening civil societies in the South by supporting the construction and development of sustainable institutions

CIDR wants to participate in the reinforcement of civil societies in the South through the construction and development of local and regional institutions that serve local disadvantaged people, are sustainable and well rooted in their environment.

To reach this objective CIDR will have to define, together with its partners, possible institutionalisation scenarios. It will have to define the specific steps and the needs for technical support to reach institutionalisation. CIDR will have to be very reactive to demands from its partners in the South and be able to provide a range of competence : research/action, documentation of experiences, innovation and conduct of changes. It will have to position itself in the process and clarify its functions in regard to the development stages of these institutions.

### *1.1. Supporting the creation and development of new institutions*

CIDR and its partners must be able to define the most appropriate intervention modalities to foster the emergence of initiatives in the South and further, to accompany their implementation, growth and institutionalisation.

To this end CIDR will implement pilot projects in "promising" sectors which can address the new needs. It will define methodologies and tools that will have to be tested during an initial period. It will provide these institutions with advisory services in organisation development, human resources management, training plans and procedures (operational, administrative, financial and for control). These pilot projects will be limited in time. CIDR will put in place the personnel in charge of research-action activities. The activities will be closely monitored and the output regularly documented.

### *1.2. Implementing new innovative dissemination modes*

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When the know-how, the methodologies and the tools of implementation have matured, CIDR will propose innovative dissemination modes in order to increase the outreach and the effectiveness of the actions without affecting their quality.

CIDR will intervene at this stage in conjunction with a public or private partner. Emphasis will be put, from the inception, upon the conditions for long-term viability of the local, regional or national institutions promoted. This dissemination partner will be able to intervene, either directly with its own technical team, or by contracting out to local organisations with a proven knowledge of the area and its environment. At this stage, CIDR will provide advisory services on extension methods, non hierarchic management, strategic analysis for diversification and building alliances.

### *1.3. Accompanying changes within autonomous institutions*

Needs for technical assistance may remain after institutions become autonomous, as they have to adapt permanently to an ever changing environment and to control growth. CIDR will address them by promoting innovative technical and financial support mechanisms. Its function will be to guarantee a permanent access to tailored services delivered by experienced professionals who will be able to accompany the institutions in preparing their business plans and supporting their innovative activities. The institutions and the support structure will work on contract base where objectives, rules and norms will be clarified and regularly evaluated.

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## **2. Building with expertise from the South professional partnerships, thematic networks and strategic alliances**

While the States disengaged themselves from several development issues and social services, many sectors were liberalised and democratisation was engaged, diverse and active forms of civil society appeared in the South. These civil societies foster initiatives in many fields of interest, such as social, economic, environmental, union, civic and political issues. Many institutions, diverse in forms and in scales, have emerged, developed and structured themselves.

CIDR intends to build its support policy through three types of partnerships : co-promotion with professional operators, exchange and advocacy networks with autonomous institutions, strategic alliances with actors from the South.

Each of these partnerships will be characterised by the nature of the relation, the profile of the institutions or actors involved and its purpose. In each case, CIDR commits itself to building a quality partnership, based upon reciprocal terms that are clearly and precisely defined, internal and external evaluations and transparent processes of information sharing. It commits itself to activate monitoring tools and mechanisms with relevant and objectively verifiable indicators to be defined jointly with its partners.

### *2.1. Co-promoting programmes with professional operators*

CIDR will build partnerships with interested professional operators for the co-promotion of programmes in the countries or regions where it is active. These partnerships will aim at diversifying actions in favour of specific population groups and at answering new needs. It will be based upon a joint definition of objectives and a pooling of competence and means. According to circumstances, it will be formalised in general agreement with more precise and detailed yearly agreements, in "delegation" contracts or in technical assistance contracts.

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## *2.2. Structuring thematic exchanges and advocacy networks with autonomous institutions*

In first instance, CIDR partners are the social and economic institutions it has co-promoted and/or led towards their autonomy. These are services enterprises working with producers' organisations, village saving and credit networks, solidarity group lending institutions, health insurance institutions, local councils, services users' associations, neighbourhood organisations, etc. CIDR will follow and support the networking actions to link these autonomous organisations on thematic issues at national or sub-regional level. The objectives of these thematic networks are : organising exchanges on know-how, methodologies, development experiences, bargaining skills ; participating in the political dialogue for the elaboration of public sectorial policies.

## *2.3. Building strategic alliances with actors from the South*

Collaborators of CIDR, coming from southern countries, have created the "International Alliance for Development and Research". This alliance has a political project and a "charter" to guide its orientations. It is a group of persons who share the same principles and action modes and have a common vision on development. CIDR will support these actors in the implementation of their own private development structures. It will initiate a policy of organisational learning. CIDR will also support them by sharing development research activities. It will install a knowledge management centre. It will establish with these structures long term political and strategic alliances.

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# **3. Confronting the triple challenge of efficiency, social performance and governance of partner institutions**

## *3.1. Increasing institutions' outreach*

CIDR wants to contribute to the efficiency of partner organisations. The objective is to allocate technical and financial resources in a rational way in order to progressively increase the number of beneficiaries without increasing the costs proportionally, and facilitate the financial sustainability of the organisation. CIDR will provide a service of support/counsel in the field of costs reduction (streamlining internal organisation, products and services, etc.) and increase in effectiveness (personnel training, management, etc.).

## *3.2. Developing social performance monitoring and evaluation practices*

The social performance of an institution measures the coherence between its social intentions (its mission) and its actions (methods, services, and tools). CIDR will contribute to good social performance of the institutions it supports by helping them in systematically taking social objectives into account when they prepare their strategic plans. When it comes to implementing these plans, CIDR will make sure that the beneficiaries' point of view will be sought (for the definition of the services to be provided and to set quality standards). CIDR will also sensitise its partners on their social responsibility toward the beneficiaries, their communities and the institution staff. It will also favour practices of social performance monitoring/evaluation and will advocate for these to be part of the institutions' regular management procedures. It is convinced that this will contribute to their long-term viability.

## *3.3. Finding a right balance between governance and management*

An institution governance will to a large extent depend upon proper control and upon good monitoring of the orientations set. It is a compound of factors that characterises its effective ownership by the members in the name of whom its integrity and values will be defended. CIDR will accompany these institutions when they will install their

governance bodies. It will attract their attention upon the required balance of power and competence between management and governance bodies. If necessary, it will participate in the training of elected board members and managers. It will propose and implement governance/management tools that favour transparency and a good circulation of information flows.

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## **4. Participating in the elaboration of public policies and the implementation of sectorial approaches**

### *4.1. Supporting the institutions in their feedback role on public policies impact*

Several macro-economic conditions are required to create a favourable environment for socio-economic development initiatives : economic and political stability ; a genuine devolution and decentralisation policy ; liberalisation of trade ; incentives for economic initiatives ; promotion of professional organisations ; strengthening of capacities ; encouragement for innovations ; etc. These are responsibilities of the States. CIDR will support local actors and partner institutions in their feedback role for assessing the impact of these policies upon growth, outreach, viability of socio-economic poverty alleviation initiatives taken by local populations, and upon people livelihood.

### *4.2. Encouraging institutions to participate in the definition of intermediary public policies*

CIDR and the partner institutions will have to engage into a political dialogue with decision-making bodies in order to introduce practitioners' experience into the definition of public policies. They will have to do it at the right time and at the right level. This could be done through concise and precise thematic notes, presenting analysis of real field situations and stock taking of relevant experiences.

CIDR has often been active in new sectors of activities that have been regulated only to a little extent. It will attract decision makers attention to the consequences of a hasty regulation : discourage innovations ; undermine a sector's dynamism and growth ; could be inapplicable for lack of means to ensure its supervision ; etc.

### *4.3. Involving institutions in the implementation of sectorial approaches*

A sectorial approach is a mean to rationalise development aid through the elaboration of strategic documents and the co-ordination of donors' interventions. Sectorial approaches have been largely recognised as useful when it comes to enhance sectorial ministries' performances. However, central authorities have paid little attention to the position and role of local actors in the implementation of sectorial policies. CIDR will favour operational links between decentralised department of technical ministries, local government and actors and institutions of the civil society operating within the framework of sectorial programmes.