

Supporting Democracy

The South Africa–Canada Program on Governance

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Foreword

The South Africa–Canada Program on Governance (PoG) is a special initiative of the Canadian government. Its objective is to help South Africa make the transition to democracy and establish democratic institutions of government. The PoG is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency and managed through the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

The PoG was initiated in 1993, following President Mandela’s first visit to Canada, in 1992: it is a foreign-policy initiative that expresses and embodies the strong relationship between the Canadian people and South Africa. This report is a brief history of the PoG. It recounts the first task of the PoG: supporting the Democratic Movement in South Africa as it prepared to take on the responsibilities of governing the country following its first democratic election. Since the 1994 election the PoG has worked with the newly established provincial governments and the national government to develop the institutions of government and the capacities for good governance.

After 5 years of operation, the PoG commissioned a review and assessment of its work. Its author, Dr S.L. Sutherland, is a well-known political scientist who has followed and published articles on program-evaluation policy as it has developed in Canada’s federal government for the past 20 years and who has worked in government in both central agencies and departments. She spent more than 6 weeks in South Africa in early 1998, reviewing documentation and talking with South Africans and Canadians involved in the PoG.

Her report describes how the PoG has assisted South African clients and the activities it has designed and developed. The report aims to give

a sense of both the “what” and the “how” of a governance program, as well as the “why.” It includes the assessment and recommendations derived from conversations with a wide range of South African clients of the PoG. What have they found more or less useful? What changes would they recommend? Where does this program fit within the array of donor activities in South Africa? What is its particular niche? The report also includes comments by Canadians who have contributed substantially to this work in South Africa. What have they found useful about this endeavour?

The purpose of publishing this history and assessment of the PoG is to share with a wider audience in the development community the experience of one governance program — its methodology, its approach, its successes, and its failures. In terms of Canadian development policy, the PoG is an experiment in design and operation. It was originally a departure in conceptual terms, and its continued evolution provides insight into questions of design, operation, and management. It is also the product of a particular synergy of needs and demands in the South African political and constitutional context, on the one hand, and the skills and insights of one of Canada’s foremost public servants, on the other. From its inception, the PoG has been led by Dr A.W. Johnson, who is well known for his enormous contribution to Canadian public policy and administration, both as a practitioner and as a scholar.

IDRC has as its primary mission the creation and dissemination of knowledge relevant to the issues of development and development assistance. Our interest is to add to the field of study by sharing the results and analysis of the PoG as a particular initiative. Publication of this report is intended to contribute to a wider discussion on the design and delivery of governance programs. What are the methods adopted by various practitioners? How do particular programs relate to the national political environment in which they operate? What unique and general challenges do governance programs face? How do programs solve specific design and delivery problems. How do their activities and projects evolve as needs change? It is hoped that the detailed description of the activities of the PoG will contribute to the thoughtful analysis of these issues.

Maureen O’Neil
President
International Development Research Centre
July 1999

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Program on Governance

The purpose of this report is to record and analyze (evaluate) the accomplishments of the South Africa–Canada Program on Governance (PoG) and the lessons learned in the course of its operation from its origin in 1992 through to the end of 1997. This is part of a larger report that also suggested a framework for future review and evaluation.

This chapter introduces the PoG and describes its mode of operation and goals. The next three chapters provide an overview of the three periods of PoG’s operations, with some details about its accomplishments and lessons learned. Chapter 5 then documents the results of the interviews with South African and Canadian participants, stakeholders, and observers.

Inception

Through the PoG, Canadian civil-service practitioners give practical management assistance to their counterparts in the South African civil service. The PoG is a foreign-policy program that originated at the political level. It was initiated by a request in 1992 from Nelson Mandela to the then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney that Canada help the Democratic

Movement in South Africa prepare to govern the country after the elections set for 1994.

Mr Mandela was attempting to plan for the fact that in 1994, South Africa was to change from “a country of six million to a country of 40 million,” as one Canadian put it. “It had to provide services without structures. The need for the support of others is absolutely without question.”

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) responded to the request. It sent a mission, which included Dr A.W. (Al) Johnson, to South Africa in July and November of 1992 to arrive at an agreement with the Democratic Movement on the work to be undertaken. The goal was to find a way to respond to the needs of the Democratic Movement and to devise an effective practitioner-based strategy to assist South Africa’s incoming government cadre to improve its capacity to govern once elected.

The planning was completed in December 1992. Once the program had been conceived and described as a practitioners’ effort, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) was chosen as the executing agency and administrative platform for the new program, which CIDA would fund. IDRC now has a large regional office in Johannesburg, with a staff of about 50, but even in the early 1990s this group already had several governance-related activities under way. However, all of them were research based, in contrast to the practitioner orientation of the new program.

Dr Johnson was chosen jointly by CIDA and IDRC to lead the new program. Dr Johnson — a former deputy minister (DM) in Canadian provincial and federal governments, a former professor who continued to publish throughout his public-service career, and a former president of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, is one of the most experienced and dynamic public servants Canada has

produced. He was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in the mid-1980s and a Companion of the Order of Canada by the Governor General in 1997 for his contribution to public service.

Dr Johnson believed it was not Canada's place to fix in advance a substantial curriculum for helping to build the capacity of South Africans to govern themselves; rather, only the means, or process, and the style of engagement could be specified. He reasoned that seasoned practitioners of public administration from Canada, both elected and appointed, could most quickly and effectively make a difference by mentoring the prospective South African governing teams. In this relationship, the South Africans would develop their own capacity by analyzing their settings and formulating the problems they themselves wanted to address.

The PoG's intellectual life covers three periods:

1. *Late 1992 to April 1994, the preelection period* — In this period, the PoG assisted the democratic forces during the “pacted” transition to democracy that led to the 1994 national election, the first election in which the black population would have the franchise.
2. *April 1994 to the end of 1996, the transitional-government period* — This period extends from April 1994, when the African National Congress (ANC) was elected, to the end of 1996, when the formal Constitution that is in force today was promulgated.
3. *January 1997 onward* — In this period, the PoG refined its orientation, reaffirmed its practitioner focus, and carried out a major task at the request of President Mandela, that is, taking a role in his Presidential Review Commission (PRC).

In its first period, therefore, the PoG's focus was on helping to prepare the transitional Constitution. Then it coached the transitional government and provided background and analysis as a contribution to the design of the final Constitution. At the same time, it mounted a full program of activities in both the central and provincial governments, as will be seen in the more detailed history. In the most recent period, in addition to its ongoing work, the PoG has been supporting Dr Johnson's PRC work in the areas of planning, budgeting, and financial administration. At the beginning of the most recent period, the PoG spent some time rethinking how it could best help to improve the state's capacity to govern. It articulated its areas of interest more precisely as follows:

- Intergovernmental fiscal arrangements;
- Intergovernmental relations generally;
- Machinery of government at the centre;
- Planning and budgeting at the centre and in the departments of governments; and
- Improvement of the legislative process and knowledge of administration in the provincial legislatures.

It is important to note that as soon as the provinces had been established, the PoG began to help them increase their capacity to govern. Conceptually, the PoG has always worked on the same issues, whether in central government or in the provinces, but it is its success at working in

depth with the provinces that has captured considerable attention. Its mode of operation has in most cases been to start up collaboration with the provinces itself, providing mentoring and consultation. Once an initial familiarity and level of trust have been established, the PoG then brokers a “twinning” partnership between Canadian and South African provincial civil services. It has urged along, and continues to be deeply implicated in, six such arrangements, each with its own distinguishing features and rate of establishment. Thus, through the PoG, Canada has significant contact with six of the nine South African provinces. In each arrangement, senior Canadian public servants “leverage” significant resources from the Canadian provincial governments and sometimes from private individuals. (Although political and trade missions have timed their visits to overlap with the PoG tours arranged for civil-service practitioners, the PoG funds only the latter.)

Because the PoG aims to improve South Africa's ability to govern itself, it is important to understand what this means to the PoG in terms of institutions (the functions upon which it concentrates having been listed above). In defining the central pillars of good governance, Dr Johnson (1995¹) listed the following as necessary elements:

- Creating and strengthening the machinery of government at the top, including the Office of the Premier, the Cabinet Office, the other central agencies serving the Executive Council, and the offices of the Members of the Executive Council (MECs);
- Working to develop the capacities of the Public Service Commission (PSC); and
- Strengthening and integrating the operating departments, portfolio by portfolio, in the government as a whole and at both the provincial and the federal levels.

Modes of operation

To achieve its goal, the PoG offers practitioner expertise in a number of ways. First, its Canadian Special Advisors reside in South Africa. This arrangement makes it easier to plan the program's activities and to provide the South African clients with more timely and accessible advice and

¹ Johnson, A. W. 1995. Memorandum; the twinning of South African and Canadian provinces in the field of governance. Annex A: The central elements of good governance. 31 Jul 1995. Unpublished PoG files.

support in management and administration. Second, the resident Special Advisors provide comparative information and advice on high-order issues, ranging from constitutional arrangements to the technical machinery of government problems. This central function dictates that the Special Advisors and the experts the PoG engages have considerable experience at the heart of government, be of an intellectual bent, if not in possession of high-level academic credentials, and have the capacity to analyze and explain very clearly the possible impacts of various structural configurations. Their credibility is the critical factor that gives the PoG a voice in the major issues of South African governance. Third, the program works intensively with individual South Africans to develop their capacities and uses all educational and familiarization methods possible: individual coaching and mentoring, study tours to Canada, visits from Canadians engaged in similar work, workshops, and conferences. Finally, the PoG tends the networks of contacts struck up by its clients. This "brokering" of persons with needs to persons with skills not only introduces Canadians to the program but also broadens the human-resource base that the program is helping to strengthen in South Africa. This network of contacts constitutes a planned "virtual organization" that has taken the form of local and international networks of practitioner colleagues in the wake of the first wave of direct PoG involvement.

Indeed, because of the PoG is at the centre of the large network it has built and nurtured, it can be seen as two entities. One is, of course, its physical presence in South Africa, which consists of one or two practitioners with the title Special Advisor, one Program Manager, and one or two support staff.² The Special Advisors advise, coach, and mentor South African practitioners on comparative governance and best current practice. They also sort through the issues brought to them by South Africans, to find the links and commonalities. Thus, out of these initial contacts with South African practitioners, the PoG Special Advisors have built the second entity: the virtual organization — the network of experts and an interconnected program of activities. Activities are conducted by the Special Advisors and the Program Manager with the help of other Canadian practitioners brought in for tours of duty of various durations.

² Dr Johnson was the sole Special Advisor until late 1995, when he was joined by Rosemary Proctor, former DM of Social Services, Government of Ontario. Ms Proctor worked with the PoG part time until 1996, when she became a full-time Special Advisor. In 1997, Anne Evans, on leave from her position as Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) in the Finance Department, Government of Ontario, also joined the PoG. Another significant actor in the PoG in the period under review was Keith Ogilvie, Program Manager from late 1994 until May 1998, when he left to work for the Government of British Columbia.

At the end of the 1996/97 fiscal year, the PoG conducted a review of its past activities and clarified what it would do in the future. In this self-evaluation, the PoG took into account the program's experiences and the evolving situation in South Africa and consulted extensively with senior South African officials. The PoG reorganized its priorities under a smaller number of thematic lines to address the highest-priority capacity-building requirements, and it revisited the kinds of support it had been offering to participants in the twinning arrangements. It decided it would assist with service delivery in the provinces; continue to strive to develop central machinery and processes and better capacity in the areas of budget and planning; and help legislatures with internal service and administration.

PoG vision

The PoG vision can perhaps be summarized as four beliefs:

- Strategic interventions receiving the attention of key decision-makers at the centre in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and in the provinces could lead to a multiplier effect in South Africa;
- Canadian practitioners from both federal and provincial governments, when introduced to South African needs, would create opportunities for reflection, add value by themselves, and, more frequently than not, find a means to sustain capacity-building with their South African contacts independently of PoG funding (beyond the initial contacts or field trips);
- The South African clients could likewise be counted on to be rational investors and would inevitably build their own personal networks for consultation on any given problem; and
- The PoG core leadership could, therefore, more or less confidently decrease its contribution at sites where work was well under way and invest it elsewhere, sometimes reallocating its time and personnel in light of the contributions being made by colleagues from other countries.

Program funding

The first period of formal program funding began in February 1993 and extended to April 1994. The funds for this period were about \$2 million, which were channeled from CIDA through IDRC to the PoG. Since then

there have been two additional and larger Contribution Agreements between CIDA and IDRC. The first of these, in the initial amount of \$4.3 million, was signed in May 1993. This agreement specified a termination date of 31 March 1997. However, the current (and final) Contribution Agreement, signed in March 1996, specifies that project activities will stop in September 1999 and that an end-of-project report be submitted to CIDA in December 1999. The final contribution for the period of April 1996 to December 1999 is to be \$9.8 million, creating an overall contribution under this program of \$14.6 million.

In the current agreement, the project goal is "to strengthen public-sector effectiveness and good governance in South Africa." One can note, therefore, a movement in the new agreement toward a

mandate more in keeping with the operating spirit of the program. This shift recognizes the program's practitioner mode of operation, which is intended to improve the quality of management per se (as opposed to conducting research on the content of public policy).

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Chapter 2

The Preelection Period

Late 1992 to April 1994

It was said earlier that the PoG has evolved through three phases: from roughly the end of 1992 to the first election in April 1994; from April 1994 to the end of 1996, when the final Constitution was adopted; and the most recent period, from early 1997 onward.

The preelection work established the nature of the program and set its course of development. Its distinguishing feature, which continues today, would be leadership and management by Canadian practitioners of public administration who had worked at the politics-administration interface. Further, Canadians who were brought to South Africa to help the PoG resident Special Advisors deliver activities would likewise be practitioners with backgrounds appropriate to the tasks or would have significant practitioner backgrounds.

Because of its formative influence, the thinking of the first 14 months of operation is reviewed in this chapter. It begins with Dr Johnson's decisions for program design, moves through the preelection activities and the manner in which he organized them, and closes with his reflections on the preelection efforts.

Program-design decisions

In personal interviews during March and April 1998, Dr Johnson explained the program-design work he had undertaken in 1992 in response to CIDA's request that he go to South Africa with a view to developing a project. He first interviewed an array of people in different political movements. He was received enthusiastically by the ANC. Its response was, "here is a donor who has come to help us before the election!" The timeliness of Canada's response to Mr Mandela's request for help made Dr Johnson welcome.

During these interviews, Dr Johnson got a sense of what it was like for the ANC and the Democratic Movement to be designing a constitution and institutions "knowing that you are going to be in those institutions." It also became clear to him that the ANC did not want a foreign institution to help it develop policy: "it knew what it wanted, which was social justice." He therefore returned to Mr Mandela's problem, which was the issue of how they were going govern — in other words, how to increase their capacity in the technology of management per se.

It was "glaringly obvious" to Dr Johnson that the most efficient kind of help available would be from practitioners of public administration, that is, high-level government managers. In his view, the choice facing the PoG at its inception was between two strategies.³ The strategy not chosen was to try to develop a long-term capacity in the arts and techniques of management in public-sector organizations by working through the universities. It was clear to Dr Johnson that other nations and the international university community itself were both already active in South African universities. Finally, it was clear

to him as a former academic that if the total funds available to the PoG were devoted to a program of formal education and research, they would not go very far. Effectively, the total funds expended over the lifetime of the program to the present would barely have reached the amount needed to endow one university research chair and bring in the technical resources around which a small research and teaching unit could form.

And so the second strategy was chosen: working through experienced Canadian practitioners, who would mentor South African officials and thus build competence and confidence while creating examples of best practice in the South African context. These innovations would then be diffused and transferred to other South African jurisdictions through direct imitation and also through transfer of personnel.

Another factor in Dr Johnson's decision-making was that IDRC's Regional Director was already active in the policy domain, helping South

³ The program did not have enough personnel or funds to pursue the two strategies concurrently.

Africans develop their orientations for macroeconomic policy, and other agencies were also doing this kind of work. Following the election, each minister would want a White Paper setting out policy options in his or her jurisdiction, including how they would relate to the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme (ANC 1994). Dr Johnson reasoned that "rendering these papers practical" for implementation would be the next challenge, one that would have to be worked out on the terrain, because the capacity in South Africa for implementation appeared to him to be thin.

Dr Johnson's formula became that of "key people, key places (centre of government), and core processes." His strategic task in the first period, he concluded, would be to develop projects that could bring in a cohort of people who were highly likely to be working in the Public Service in the future and then "to begin working with them at the same time as providing venues for them to think about the kind of Public Service that would take shape" (interview, 10 March 1998). Dr Johnson then confirmed in his own mind the strategy that still guides the PoG: to work with a very small core staff and to amplify the impact of the program through exchanges, general networking, and twinning. The last three strategies would pull in volunteered human resources ("leverage," in CIDA terms) and at the same time help Dr Johnson find ways to put practitioner expertise into key places to help build the South African Public Service.

First funding agreement: mandate

Work to be undertaken

The first funding agreement (1993–96) set out the project's purpose and objectives and a detailed description of its mandate. The overall objective was to "support a peaceful transition to a democratic South African state and build the capacity of the antiapartheid movement to participate in negotiations and a future democratic government." The agreement specified that the PoG would work to strengthen the abilities of the coalition in the Democratic Movement to do the research and planning to reshape the administrative apparatus of the state, and the PoG would also provide expert advice on public administration on an as-needed basis. Modalities could include policy research, workshops, seminars, and conferences, as well as expert advice.

Preelection activities: 15 February 1993 to 30 April 1994

Dr Johnson worked alone for the first 9 months. Then, in August 1993, he was joined by a South African academic with a specialization in public administration who stayed until after the election. The PoG also had a part-time secretary, and Dr Johnson had the help of an executive assistant for a few months before the election. The election took place from 26 to 29 April 1994.

During the preelection period, the program was called the Public Service Policy Project. In its first days, it was in effect responsible to the Democratic Movement for the “what” of program development (the content of what was done) and to IDRC (and from IDRC to CIDA) for the “how” of its execution (Johnson 1994).

Dr Johnson arrived in South Africa to take up preelection duties in February 1993 and very soon became involved in the constitutional debate, participating in a major constitutional conference sponsored by the Consultative Business Movement.

Key people and processes

In February 1993, Dr Johnson began a series of programmatic activities that would make the program more widely known and give him a deeper familiarity with South African administration that in turn would help guide the future development of the program.

First, he made himself available to talk with South African administrators seeking confidential advice. He allowed me to review his handwritten appointment books, as well as his record of daily activities and reflections. It is difficult to describe an “average day,” other than to say that each day was filled with meetings, conversations with South African practitioners, and networking by telephone, plus the kinds of work described below.

A number of very general observations can be made that are equally applicable today. A typical 2-week period would incorporate work on each of the fronts of the program:

- Advisory and ground-preparing work with many individuals who are now at the helm of government and administration or have moved to parastatals;
- Workshop design, including speakers, logistics, and implementation;
- PoG papers and the program presence at others’ workshops;
- Conversations and follow-up on twinning arrangements;
- Study-tour objectives; and
- Pure logistics consultation to make events and tours go as planned.

It is not difficult to understand why many of the topics discussed in private conversations should remain confidential. South African practitioners benefit from having a neutral sounding board, and the PoG benefits from the conclusions it can draw about how to make itself most useful.

Dr Zola Skweyiya, as Head of Constitutional and Legal Affairs for the ANC, was at the time leading the ANC discussions on the future Constitution (Dr Skweyiya holds a doctorate in law from the University of Leipzig). As he responded to Dr Skweyiya’s request to prepare a series of papers on organizational options for a future government and also participated on a series of task forces on provincial government, he gained an appreciation of the administrative techniques of the old state.

In response to the request for possible organizational designs for the new administration, Dr Johnson prepared a first version of these national structures in chart format for the National Working Committee and National Executive Committee at the end of November 1993. Following discussion, these were revised and presented, with charts in parallel for the proposed provincial-government structures. A discussion was then held at a joint meeting of nominated premiers, their secretaries, and the

coordinators for provincial transition. In acquitting this work, as noted, Dr Johnson had to become a student of the administrative structures and habits of the old regime. He found the old Commission for Administration in the Treasury (“the rule-book people”) to be both “hide bound and rule bound.” Part of the reason was that South Africa, as a kind of international pariah, had been closed to administrative modernization for decades and had developed its own ways of operating.⁴

Another request in this period provided the catalyst for the current practice of twinning with provinces. This was a proposal for help in sending three ANC premiers-designate and their secretaries abroad. In

⁴ Unfortunately, in the race to decide the most basic elements of both the interim and the final Constitution, large portions of the laws and rules that mandated the old administrative processes were not directly addressed. Over time, as implementation and administrative delays and bottlenecks were experienced, South African administrators would discover that the “new book” remained largely to be written.

Canada, they were exposed to three Canadian premiers and their support apparatuses, as well as to DMs and other senior officials, in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick. Germany and the United States also offered visits, but Canada was the only country to explicitly twin its own and South African provinces. In particular, the Northern Cape twinning with New Brunswick took root from the moment the premier-designate of Northern Cape, Manne Dipico, visited New Brunswick and met the then Premier Frank McKenna.

By the beginning of March 1994 a continuing committee of the ANC candidate premiers, their secretaries, and the coordinators had been established. It was decided that the group would meet weekly with Dr Johnson to review typical organizational forms for subnational governments, the organization and functions of a premier’s office, the integration of the old Homelands and other structures, and the use of Cabinet committees, among other topics. The PoG financed and coordinated the meetings, which continued until the end of April 1994.

Collaboration in, or sponsorship of, workshops on useful topics was an efficient method for the PoG to become known during the preelection period. It mounted, or took a major role in, 11 workshops. Five of these were designed for the national government under the rubric of “key places,” meaning that crucial areas of governance were identified and information was provided on how these are usually structured. The attendance at these 1- or 2-day workshops, which took place between the end of June 1993 and the beginning of February 1995, ranged between 50 and 100 persons. If one multiplies an average of 75 for attendance by the number of conferences, one can see that the PoG made a large number of contacts. Some of these would turn out to be crucial.

Key places

Topics for the key-places workshops were as follows:

- The Transitional Executive Council and Sub-Councils;
- Transitions in Government, with particular attention to Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe;
- Portraits of Government at the Top, with particular attention to the RSA, Canada, Sweden, and the United Kingdom;
- Regional Government, with particular attention to the RSA, Canada, Germany, and the United States; and
- Public Service and Public Service Commissions, with particular attention to Canada, India, and the United States.

Further, Dr Johnson made presentations on the powers and functions of Canadian provincial governments in the light of the powers proposed for the South African provinces in the new Constitution. These six workshops were part of a different series that took place between early December 1993 and early March 1994. They were designed to familiarize the ANC and Democratic Alliance with levels of government other than the national. Four of the workshops were on provincial government. One of these was sponsored and funded by the Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape, and the other three were sponsored and funded by the PoG. Venues were Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Neilspruit, and Johannesburg. One of the other two workshops was an international conference on Comparative Regional and Local Government, held over 3 days in Vanderbijlpark and sponsored and funded by the ANC and the Centre for Law and Local Governance; and the other was an orientation course for the nominees on the provisional list of premiers and their transition committees, which was sponsored by the Institute for Local Governance and Development. The PoG's early experience with partners would lead to some lasting relationships.

As noted above, activities aimed at improving administrative or management capacity in the initial 14 months involved both the national and the provincial governments. Help was also given on the democracy side. The PoG assisted the developing provincial legislative assemblies (for provinces created for the first time by the new Constitution) and helped with the staffing of the National Assembly. In regard to the National Assembly, six persons, named jointly by the ANC and the Democratic Alliance, spent 2 weeks in Zimbabwe, 1 week in the Canadian House of Commons, 1 week in the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and some days in Cape Town to look at procedures and rules at each of these venues.

To prepare to establish Public Service Commissions, the ANC and Democratic Alliance put together a think tank, assisted by the PoG Project Manager, to designate key areas for research. Five topics were defined, and the group was divided into subcommittees to prepare papers. Each group's principal author then spent a week in Canada researching the topic with the assistance of the Chair of Canada's federal PSC and five other senior Canadian practitioners. On their return to South Africa, these authors finished their papers and then played host to the five

Canadian practitioners with whom they had worked in Canada, who came to review the papers and to study and discuss the topics further in the South African context.

During the PoG's first 14 months, it also worked for both levels of government to directly develop future personnel. IDRC sent at least 30 people to other countries to observe government functions relevant to their own programs of pretransition study and preparation (in equal portion to Canada, Namibia, and Zimbabwe). The host countries arranged these "familiarization" programs in consultation with the ANC and IDRC. For the visits to Canada, the Institute on Governance collaborated in planning individual programs geared to the interests and academic backgrounds of the visitors.

The PoG paid for 50 candidates for Foreign Affairs entry-level positions to attend a course at the Centre for Foreign Relations in Tanzania. The PoG also funded, jointly with the Commonwealth Secretariat, a 10-week program for 25 diplomatic candidates. As well, the PoG sent two members of a Foreign Affairs study group to Canada, Norway, and the United Kingdom to look at structures and staffing practices of the relevant departments.

Program self-evaluation

The text in this section is drawn from the document, "Program Self Evaluation" (Johnson 1994); from personal interviews with Dr Johnson during February and March of 1998; and from a review of Dr Johnson's appointment agendas and daily record of activities.

In the self-evaluation document, Dr Johnson explained that the primary goal of this international assistance to build capacity was “to transfer the broad range of knowledge, born of experience, that is required for the effective governing of an emerging democracy” (Johnson 1994, p. 11). In light of that goal, Dr Johnson then reflected on the problems encountered and the shortfalls from the program’s initial aims. First, the number of people in leadership positions in the ANC and the Democratic Movement before the election was, in absolute terms, small. Second, events determined the priorities of this group: the drafting of the interim Constitution, preparation of the electoral list, planning for the new provincial governments, and electioneering and related negotiations between parties. For these reasons, the attention of the leadership could be

characterized as sequential, rather than comprehensive; the future ANC leadership had only 3 months before the election to concentrate on preparing to assume power. It was not possible to identify which individuals would survive the election, let alone those who would take on given responsibilities — the election would decide who would be in the future government, and only then would the government allocate portfolios and fill the top positions in the administration. Furthermore, with the small scale of the PoG intervention and the small size of the ANC leadership, the situation simply did not allow for a process of grooming particular persons for particular posts.

In the evaluative portion of his paper, Dr Johnson reviewed the effort undertaken on behalf of the candidate premiers that resulted in the Canadian premiers formally agreeing to maintain their twinning arrangements after the 1994 South African election; at the time, this was but one of many initiatives.

Dr Johnson closed his assessment by stating the two goals he conceived for the subsequent proposal to CIDA to assist South Africa: first, to help the transitional governments to establish and consolidate institutions and processes; and, second, to “assist in the transfer to new officials in the upper echelons of government the knowledge and experience . . . which they could not possibly have acquired during the apartheid period” (Johnson 1994, p. 12).

In both the self-assessment of 30 April 1994 and the personal interviews, Dr Johnson referred to everything the program did in the first phase as “induction” or, more often, “familiarization.” Giving the people who would run the new order a look at other systems was a necessary starting point. In particular, this was true of the provincial governments; the national level at least began with a departmental structure to build on.

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Chapter 3

The Period of Transitional Government

April 1994 to the End of 1996

The RSA transitional Constitution was accepted by Parliament at the end of 1993. With the election of April 1994, the new Government of National Unity had to begin administering the state and had as well to maintain its active commitment to constitutional development by preparing the final Constitution.

After the election, the program changed its name to the South Africa–Canada Program on Governance, in recognition of its new relationship with the members and officials of a democratically elected government. The PoG was able to engage a Program Manager who had wide experience in development as both a former CIDA officer and a consultant. He was able to take over a number of activities and free Dr Johnson to devote himself to work in the constitutional and fiscal areas. For most

of this period, in fact until the end of 1996, the PoG consisted of these two individuals along with some support staff (about 1.5 person–years). The task of the PoG in this period was to respond to the government’s needs while retaining its own focus on the central functions and machinery of government.

As a matter of demand and continuity, one major challenge was to remain engaged in constitutional issues. Another truly major challenge was to help the Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC) — a newly created body and independent organization under the Constitution — establish itself so that it could carry out its function of advising the government

on revenue sharing (with due consideration of the special circumstances of each province). Closely related to PoG’s work for the FFC was a rededication of PoG’s energies to the areas of planning and budgeting. Central officials also wanted to discuss many Public Service issues and to get comparative information about alternative arrangements and the probable medium- and long-term impacts of such arrangements in the South African context.

Further, the potential of twinning as a way of drawing Canadian provinces into working with the South African ones — and thereby multiplying the impact of the PoG by as many times as such arrangements could be made fully operational — was becoming more clear. It was also more feasible, as there was now a Program Manager, who could put more time into fostering and monitoring the relationships.

Finally, the new Contribution Agreement of early 1996 explicitly tasked the PoG to negotiate a continuing partnership between the Canadian Centre for Management Development (CCMD) — the federal government’s training institution for executives — and the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI).

Despite being involved in many other activities in 1996, the PoG worked intensively to build its niche for the coming 2 years. This effort related to the centre-of-government activity that would last through 1997 and into the first quarter of 1998, that is, taking on responsibility in President Mandela’s PRC on the Public Service. Mr Mandela announced the establishment of this Commission on 28 February 1996. Four of the 16 Commissioners named by the Minister of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) for the exercise were foreign: 1 from the United Kingdom, 1 from Sweden, 1 from Zimbabwe, and Dr Johnson from Canada. From February to August 1996, the three donor countries (Canada, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) worked on a general business plan for the Commission. This activity, which would not bear serious fruit until the end of 1997 and the beginning of 1998, took a good deal of Dr Johnson’s time and dipped heavily into the time of the Program Manager, who assisted with project and work planning to help get the Commission under way.

The following main areas of PoG’s activity are described in this chapter: the Constitution; the FFC, planning, and budgeting; and the Public Service. Canadian provinces’ support to define central structures and processes of government and assistance to the legislatures are highlighted as well.

Consultation for the final Constitution

The road to the final Constitution was not a smooth one, given that decisions on constitutional provisions required the consensus of the parties. The first version of the final Constitution was rejected by the Constitutional Court, with the consequence that the Constitution as it now exists was not adopted until May 1996; amendments were accepted by the Constitutional Assembly in October 1996.

Much of Dr Johnson’s efforts were “behind the scenes,” although it is generally known among South Africans (see Chapter 5) that he made important contributions in a number of areas, perhaps most particularly in regard to documents on the new PSC. One finds in the files, for example, a 10-page, single-spaced paper Dr Johnson wrote for the transitional Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Roelf

Meyer, who, along with the Chair of the Constitutional Assembly, Cyril Ramaphosa (ANC Secretary General), was a crucial figure in negotiations. Both of these individuals identified problems in government arising from known gaps in the interim Constitution, and they fleshed out relationships between central, provincial, and local governments (to the extent that this could be done). The centrality of Dr Johnson's work was acknowledged at the political level in South Africa when he appeared as a witness before the Constitutional Assembly in May and June of 1995. (The Constitutional Assembly consisted of the National Assembly and the Senate, sitting together and chaired by Cyril Ramaphosa, as mentioned above.)

Another major event of 1994 was the Conference on Constitutional Development (IoG 1994), which exposed South African officials to Canada's experience with developing its own Constitution. The objective of this conference, held in Ottawa, Toronto, and Montréal on 18–23 July, was to provide senior elected and appointed officials with a basis for comparative analysis. More than 20 South Africans participated, among them the drafter of the interim Constitution and other key legal personnel, South African professors of constitutional law, the Minister for Constitutional Development, and a number of other political figures. On the Canadian side, in the Ottawa portion of the conference, papers were presented by national figures with expertise in these areas. The Toronto and Montréal programs included meetings with key ministers and constitutional advisors, as well as a morning for the South Africans to respond to what they had heard. The Institute on Governance, in Ottawa, handled the administrative aspects of the conference and prepared the proceedings (see IoG 1994).

To engage other South Africans in discussion and to learn their views, four workshops on constitutional structures were held in Nelspruit, Kimberley, Bloemfontein, and Bisho between 6 and 12 May 1995. These workshops were at the instigation of the Chief Whip of the Eastern Transvaal Legislature. The presenters in each case were Dr Johnson; the Honourable Allan Blakeney, former premier of Saskatchewan and, at the time, Professor of Law at the University of Saskatchewan; and Dr Richard Simeon, Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto and perhaps the most prominent Canadian expert on constitutional matters and intergovernmental relations. The objective was to develop a comparative perspective, with a view to examining prospects for future development. Topics included divisions of powers, intergovernmental relations, fiscal relationships, and minority-party rights. Each workshop drew between 25 and 30 participants, including members of the provincial and national legislatures and senior administrators.

Under the sponsorship of the Minister of Constitutional Affairs, a 3-day seminar (17–20 July) on constitutional development was held in Pretoria. Among the presenters were, again, Dr Johnson, Allan Blakeney, and Richard Simeon; they were joined by Dr Richard Gilbert, a specialist on urban affairs. More than 20 participants from the Department of Constitutional Affairs attended the function. The administrative aspects were handled by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa.

Financial and Fiscal Commission and other financial issues

Dr Johnson's experience as both a national and a provincial DM and as one of the authors of the formulas that still constitute Canada's regime of fiscal federalism made it natural for him to be an advisor to those heading the new FFC.

Following a request for a study tour to Canada to look into intergovernmental financial and fiscal relations, the PoG set up a full 5-day conference for a large group in Ottawa and Toronto, in October 1995. Attending from South Africa were seven Commissioners of the FFC and four staff members. Dr Johnson briefed the South African group before the tour and provided a written note on Canadian fiscal relations. Canadians who prepared presentations and generally made themselves available on site in Canada included the top officials from the Department of Finance

in the federal government and serving and former DMs and ADMs from a number of Canadian provinces.

The Ottawa portion of the conference began with sessions on South Africa's then current thinking about its situation so that the Canadians could tailor their own presentations to be of maximum relevance. The topics presented by the Canadians were the staples of the subject: taxation, borrowing, equalization, conditional and block grants from the federal government to the provinces, and budgeting. To explore the differences accorded to provinces in diverse situations, the 2-day Toronto session focused on case studies of New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec. Considerable attention was paid to provincial–local financing procedures and issues.

Planning and budgeting workshop

The South African provinces requested a planning and budgeting workshop. They were gradually coming to grips with the scope of action they would have. The meeting had three objectives:

- To allow South Africans to see how a mature (but clearly imperfect) budgetary system operates in Canada;
- To discuss such a system's applicability in South Africa; and
- To discuss the particular planning and budgeting needs of South Africa.

The 3-day workshop took place from 30 October to 1 November 1996. Parenthetically, it can be noted that by the end of the workshop, the PoG and the South Africans were already talking about how to conduct work in the provinces at an applied level, that is, to involve Canadian mentors in provincial operations as they unrolled, with a view to improving them.

The workshop was designed to benefit provincial Directors General (DGs) and heads of finance departments and treasuries. It focused on how policy decisions are moved from theory to programs with enough detail to be implemented and how resource-allocation decisions are made. Presentations were made by a South African Premier, and by a former premier of Saskatchewan. The 10 South African speakers included 3 provincial DGs, the Director of the FFC, and the top officials from the Department of State Expenditure; the 6 Canadian speakers were current and former provincial DMs and ADMs of finance and an Assistant Secretary of the federal

Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). In addition to those speaking, more than 30 other senior officials were in attendance. After the workshop, summary proceedings were prepared (see PoG 1996b).

Finance, planning, and budgeting: the provinces

In July 1996, two senior officials from the Ministry of Finance in Saskatchewan came to work with the Department of Finance in the Free State. Then in October, two officials from the latter department went to Saskatchewan for 2 weeks to gain greater familiarity with Saskatchewan's financial systems.

Public Service

In the predemocracy era, about 40% of all civil servants were employed by the 10 Homelands or "apartheid states." The task of aligning the various civil services under the new administrative entities and making them capable of implementing the policy designs of the new government has proven one of the most difficult challenges facing the new South Africa. Some of the new provinces can include parts of as many as three former homelands, plus municipal governments and areas formerly governed by other entities (Harber and Ludman 1995).

During the period of the interim Constitution, the responsibilities later held by DPSA were exercised by

the national PSC. The PSC also had important planning responsibilities, as it had to design the new institution and start to put legs under the provincial civil services and align these with the new administrative map. (Leading up to and during part of the period of the interim Constitution, it was anticipated that each province would have a wholly independent PSC. But in the final Constitution, Section 196 starts with the statement, “There is a single PSC for the Republic.”)

In 1995, therefore, it was important to help the South Africans shape their new institutions, which would have to address issues of integration and quality. Early in the year, the Minister of DPSA was given support to travel to Canada to look into the machinery of government, particularly staffing practices and the management of human resources. The events arranged for the Minister and four other officials, with the

local assistance of the Institute on Governance in Ottawa, took place in Ottawa and Toronto from 28 January to 4 February 1995.

The next year, at the Minister’s request, a workshop was held on 29–31 January in Johannesburg for South African national and provincial Public Service Commissioners. The workshop had two objectives:

- To provide an overview of various Public Service models; and
- To explore the appropriateness of these models in the context of South Africa’s needs and its Constitution.

The practices of Canadian governments were explained by two national officials and one provincial commissioner from each of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. An equal number of South Africans and Canadians were speakers at the workshop, and South Africans occupied the Chair throughout the proceedings. Including the 5 Canadian officials, about 40 non-PoG personnel participated. Several hours were provided, at intervals, for discussion. A summary was made of the proceedings (see PoG 1996a).

In Ottawa, among those who made themselves available to the South African delegation were the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister Responsible for Public Service Renewal; the President of the PSC, with all her top officials; the President of Treasury Board and Minister Responsible for Infrastructure, with his Secretary and other top officials; the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; the President of CIDA; the Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet for Machinery of Government; and the Principal of CCMD, with his officials. Provisions were made for individual members of the South African delegation to follow through with meetings according to their own interests.

At the request of the Chair of South Africa’s new PSC, the PoG set up a study tour for him, the DG of the PSC, and a Commissioner. The objective of the visit, which took place during 25–31 May 1996, was to gather information and discuss possibilities for further development of the functions of South Africa’s PSC. A complete program of speakers was set up for the period, involving about 35 top federal officials from the Privy Council Office, TBS, and the Office of the Auditor General and numerous departmental deputy heads and ADMs. Canadian informants were briefed to cover specific topics, such as relations between the PSC, TBS, and the Privy Council Office concerning personnel; collective bargaining; accountability to Parliament; merit; information management; and career planning. The Institute on Governance made the local arrangements.

Some additional capacity-building work took place later in the year. A former deputy secretary to Cabinet for Machinery of Government in the Canadian federal Public Service was given support in work at DPSA for 3 weeks in October 1996. This visit resulted in a formal report. In early spring of 1997, DPSA completed a draft of its White Paper on training, which it then sent to the consultant for

comment. The Program Special Advisors were at the same time meeting frequently with DPSA to discuss the same topics.

Assistance to develop central civil-service structures and processes

As already noted, a Program Manager joined the PoG as an administrative officer in 1994, after the elections. He played a central role in encouraging longer exchanges of Canadian and South African provincial personnel, with the goal of deepening the educational impact. (It is perhaps important to note that although some of the relationships between provinces have led to trade-related activity, the PoG does not fund nongovernmental travel.) In this phase, three cross-national partnerships were involved in developing capacity at the centre of government. These partnerships are discussed below.

Free State–Saskatchewan — There were three major events in the Free State–Saskatchewan relationship in 1995. The Executive Council of Saskatchewan loaned one of its senior officials to the Office of the DG of the Free State. This work assignment took place from August through November 1995, and its main product was a manual of processes and procedures for moving papers to Cabinet in the Free State. This 4-month assignment marked the first of the longer tours. In addition, in late November, the Advisor to the Premier of the Free State and members of the Communications Directorate of the Office of the Premier went to Saskatchewan for about 10 days to study Saskatchewan's system. The third event in this twinning was a visit to Saskatchewan by the Free State's Minister of Education, also in November.

In 1996, one visit took place in connection with the development of central structures: the Associate Deputy Minister (Policy and Planning) to the Premier of Saskatchewan, worked in the Office of the DG of the Free State on structures and processes to track policy.

Northern Cape–New Brunswick — The DM to the Premier of New Brunswick accompanied by the Secretary to Cabinet spent about 10 days in Northern Cape working with officials to identify areas for future exchanges. They also reviewed methods for coordinating the work of the Office of the DG and the Office of the Premier and made recommendations.

North West–Manitoba — A 2-week visit to North West Province by Manitoba's Clerk of the Executive Council and the Secretary to Cabinet for Intergovernmental Relations took place in November 1995. A program was developed for future developmental work. A few months later, Gary Filmon, Premier of Manitoba, and Mrs Filmon visited for more than 1 week, accompanied by the Secretary to Cabinet, officials from the Manitoba Development Department, and some entrepreneurs. The visit was the occasion for the formal signing of a cooperation agreement between the two provinces. Only the activity directly related to civil servants and their collaborative work was funded by the PoG.

From 8 to 16 April 1996, the DG of North West Province and three of his officials went to Manitoba to study the structures, systems, and processes at the centre of their host government. During their stay, they developed a program of exchanges with Manitoba for further work. As a spin-off from the contact between provincial political leaders, five South African business executives also spent 8–16 April 1996 in Manitoba, at their own expense.

Assistance to legislatures

Capacity-building assistance to legislatures perhaps deserves priority of place in beginning a record of action in this period. Three workshops of 2 days each were put on for provincial legislative assemblies between 16 March and 29 June 1995. The PoG sponsored these, working with a Canadian organization, the Parliamentary Centre. Venues were Bloemfontein, Caledon–Cape Town, and Mmabatho. The

provincial assemblies had requested the workshops. Their objective was to provide South Africans elected to the provincial assemblies, along with their staff, an opportunity to talk with people with a long familiarity with provincial legislatures in a parliamentary structure having two levels of government. The workshop programs touched on powers, representative government, legislative committees, and roles and responsibilities. Speakers and

Provincial Secretaries attended in each case, along with three to seven other individuals (the legislatures had just been established).

Again working with the Parliamentary Centre, the PoG sent a delegation from provincial legislatures to Canada in the fall of 1995. Their trip included a 10-day tour to Ottawa and three provincial legislatures. The 27 delegates were the Speakers, committee heads, and Provincial Secretaries of the nine South African provincial legislatures. Workshops were held in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Regina, and Fredericton from 16 to 20 October.

Around the same time, another project was launched at the request of one provincial legislature. Under the auspices of the PoG, a former DM of Social Services in Ontario undertook to help develop the democratic participation of ordinary citizens in the work of this legislature. (The Canadian had spent time in senior positions at the provincial level in Canada, had expertise in the organization and functioning of central agencies, and had extensive experience in service delivery, a matter of great interest to South African governments.)

The work in the provincial legislature arose from a request from, and later discussions with, the Speaker of the Legislature and the Chair of the Public Participation Committee. Their first priority was to make the institutions of representative democracy really work at the provincial level: to move from liberation politics to a politics of engagement. They were interested in getting advice on how to educate the whole public about the new representative body and wanted to directly engage the public. They were particularly interested in reaching out to people who were not a part of the nongovernmental-organization (NGO) base, “white suburbs,” or professional groups; in other words, they wanted to consult with the mass population, including the illiterate and homeless. Of course, the consultation issue is particularly pointed for governments with proportional representation, one effect of which is that constituents do not identify strongly with the “list” member assigned to that area.

In April 1996, the consultant plus a faculty member of Wits University Faculty of Law and a postdoctoral fellow at the University of British Columbia submitted a research document of more than 100 pages on public participation in the legislature. Other provinces were keenly interested.⁵

⁵ The paper (Proctor et al. 1996) was released for general distribution in September 1997 by the Speaker of the Gauteng Legislature.

In April 1996, the Speaker of the Alberta Legislature spent 3 days in Mpumalanga Province, visiting the legislature. He was already in South Africa for a conference, so the PoG supported his internal travel only. In June, three members of the Mpumalanga Legislature and two staff members from the Office of the Premier went to Alberta for 1 week. The elected officials explored the structures and operations of caucus committees of the governing party in Alberta, whereas the staff members familiarized themselves with the operations of the Alberta Premier’s Office and Cabinet. In October 1996, the Premier of Mpumalanga, his senior advisor, leaders of two opposition parties, and an MEC went to Alberta. The two Premiers signed an agreement relating to the PoG. They also followed through with independent agreements with the University of Alberta and the mayors of Calgary and Edmonton and made plans for a trade-investment seminar.

In 1996, the PoG sent another two delegations from South African provincial legislatures to Canada. From 27 September to 6 October 1996, the house leaders, two support staff from all but one of the provincial legislatures, and the Leader of the National Senate went to Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Regina, with a view to exploring the house leaders' obligations in managing the business of the assembly. The initiative was undertaken in response to a request from the Speakers' Forum. The program was developed by the Parliamentary Centre. The Ottawa program included talks by a procedural expert and Executive Assistant to the Government House Leader; the Chair of the Procedures Committee; the Opposition house leaders; and a former governor general of Canada and former house leader for both the Government and the Opposition.

For the provincial visits, the delegates were split into three groups, and programs were prepared in each of the provincial legislatures. At these meetings, attention was concentrated on managing the legislative session and on the relationship between the Speaker and the house leaders, with some attention given to the "preparliamentary" phases of policy development and legislative drafting and review.

The second delegation was a group of support staff from the provincial legislatures. This delegation of 20 staff participated in a 1-week program in Ottawa and spent another week in either Edmonton or Toronto. The main focus was on the research and information services of the legislature, along with the human-resource functions.

Working to establish province-to-province collaboration

Attempts to twin some Canadian and South African provinces are discussed below.

Mpumalanga–Alberta — The Special Advisor to the Premier of Mpumalanga went to Edmonton for 10 days in early November 1995 to discuss the form of a provincial twinning arrangement with Alberta. A few months later, in the second half of February 1996, three Alberta officials (the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, his DM, and the Ethics Commissioner) spent 10 days in Mpumalanga, in response to the interests defined during the November 1995 visit.

Eastern Cape–British Columbia — Also in November, three officials from British Columbia (the DM to the Premier, the ADM of Intergovernmental Affairs, and the DM of the Ministry of Labour) spent 10 days in Eastern Cape Province. They met with the Premier, several members of the Executive Council, the provincial DG, and senior officials. Plans were made for a twinning arrangement. In early 1996, Premier Mhlaba, one of his ministers, and several officials traveled to British Columbia to sign a formal agreement to mandate the twinning relationship. The state delegation was accompanied by five business executives, who paid their own expenses.

Gauteng–Ontario — Ontario's Premier consented to develop a twinning arrangement with Gauteng Province. However, Gauteng was being approached by a number of potential international partners and did not respond during this period.

An attempt to foster collaboration between government training facilities

The PoG, after months of negotiations with the CCMD, the South African PSC, and IDRC, was able to arrange a 2-week study tour in mid-October 1995 for three of the top officers of the South African PSC and the two top officers responsible for SAMDI's management and executive training. The objectives of the trip were the following:

- To identify areas of potential collaboration between SAMDI and CCMD;
- To strengthen SAMDI's teaching programs in the area of capacity-building; and
- To expose the South Africans to the various CCMD research and training programs and other initiatives.

It was hoped that the visit would seal a twinning arrangement between these two national-government agencies.

Attrition and difficulties in planned initiatives

Can one get a sense of efforts that had to be abandoned, postponed, or recycled into another format? What follows is a listing of the most significant disappointments and problems encountered before the end 1996:

1. *Twinning arrangements* — In relation to one twinning initiative, work on the One-Stop Service Delivery Project was going well when the problem of the size of the available management cadre in South Africa asserted itself. A key individual suddenly died and another official who had been very effectively coordinating the project in the Office of the Premier was recruited to a position in another government. The first One-Stop Centre opened in early 1998. Collaboration on other organizational issues continued effectively. Despite a good deal of preliminary work and intensive PoG follow-up, two of the twinning arrangements did not move out of the starting blocks in this period. One province had many other issues on its plate, as well as a large number of offers to twin with other countries. Implementation of the agreed protocol for another partnership was delayed by an election in Canada and a change of premier in South Africa.
2. *Public Participation Project* — Even though it had enjoyed a strong beginning with high-level political support, the Public Participation Project lost momentum to a certain extent. While the Proctor et al. (1966) report was still in its draft stages, the Legislature was hiring staff and organizing its Public Participation Office, which was only in place in late 1996. The project and the Public Participation Office had to get to know the current “lay of the land,” or the context within which the Legislature would be operating, including local-government liaison, the administrative offices of government, and local NGOs. The Legislature itself had very little legislation brought to it by the Executive, which was thought to be due in part to the pace at which the national

government was setting out its policy-framework agreements and in part to a lack of skilled drafters. Rather than remain in the doldrums, the Public Participation Office started to organize workshops for the elected members’ constituency workers, teaching them how government in general and the Legislature in particular work. Thus, although the Public Participation Project had to flow around the obstacles it encountered, it did not die. In addition, strong links were built between the PoG and the provincial government, and these have supported the development of subsequent projects.

3. *Training-institute partnership* — Perhaps most importantly for the CIDA–IDRC managers, the Contribution Agreement had mandated a partnership between the two national civil-service training bodies but the PoG was unable to bring this about. At a crucial point in the process, the Canadian Principal, who had been fostering the collaboration, left CCMD. The new Principal had a mandate to make a number of changes in CCMD’s form and orientation. One change was that this Canadian training institution would no longer be interested in international work.
4. *Governance course for DGs* — The PoG was requested by the Minister of DPSA to develop a training course for all DGs, both new and inherited, plus all the provincial heads of departments. After a good deal of consultation in Canada and South Africa, the proposed project was judged to be too large and too heterogeneous to be carried off as a single effort. Basically, even if it had in principle been possible to accomplish, the task was thought to be simply too big for the PoG. The PoG therefore abandoned the idea of a long course, continuing to work with individuals and with workshop participants.

Chapter 4

Sustaining the Progress

January 1997 Onward

Toward the end of 1996 and leading into 1997, the PoG engaged in a review of its direction and focus. At that point, a significant development for South Africa was the completion of the final Constitution and its recent proclamation. This Constitution called for the creation of several new institutions and for modifications to the roles of existing institutions, the implementation of which would require time and effort. In addition, other aspects of governance, such as intergovernmental relations, were assuming greater importance.

The review confirmed PoG's general direction: it would continue to concentrate on assisting the centre of government and provide advice to government agencies. In addition, it was decided that the PoG would focus on planning and budgeting and on service delivery. The support to provincial legislatures would be rethought. And it was decided that the PoG would become somewhat more interventionist in assisting with ongoing projects. As well, as of early 1996 the PoG had already committed itself to working with President Mandela's PRC on the transformation of the Public Service.

Given the completion of the Constitution, intergovernmental relations would become an area of concentration. More substantially, the South Africans had had no experience of intergovernmental relations in the state they had run before the 1994 election. The apartheid state was a

unitary structure, and provincial governments were first created with the new order. As well, under apartheid, the education, health, and welfare services were largely restricted to a small portion of the population. Thus, for example, the social-welfare services had to be coordinated for, and delivered to, the whole population for the first time.

One should be reminded that South Africa is a First World country in many respects and a Third World country in many others. Johannesburg is a world centre for innovation in medicine and is said to have more CAT scanners than New York, yet black children in rural areas are not immunized against major childhood diseases. South Africa has first-rate universities and many world-calibre faculty members, but in some elementary schools in Johannesburg black children must bring their own chairs and take them home each day because the schools have no walls. Thus, the PoG confirmed that one of its key interests was assisting the government in the area of service delivery.

The emphasis on fiscal arrangements and planning and budgeting would likewise be continued, because policy is implemented through these arrangements. The two remaining focuses were to be central structures, which relate closely to the capacity of a government to implement its policies and to control their evolution through the implementation process; and assistance to legislatures. In these fields, the PoG continued to use the methods of engagement developed in the program's first stages. The Special Advisors in South Africa worked intensely, in accordance with their particular and general skills. There were study visits to Canada; assignments of Canadian public servants to specific projects in South Africa; and workshops dealing with issues of comparable systems and processes of government.

Beyond the designated subject areas, the twinning work was to be given pride of place. Although the PoG could be sure of leaving a certain legacy (its work on the Constitution and on the design of fiscal arrangements), the cross-national arrangements between provinces called for greater impetus so that some major projects in the provinces could be accomplished before the PoG passed from the scene. With this in mind, the Special Advisor visited most of the Canadian partners in early 1997, hoping to

encourage an intensification of work in key areas and to provide momentum on stalled arrangements.

Fiscal arrangements, planning, and budgeting

Presidential Review Commission

Mr Mandela's PRC started as a general review of government. The Commission was announced on 28 February 1996, and Dr Johnson was chosen to act as one of its four foreign Commissioners. But it was not until June 1997 that its Chair asked Dr Johnson to assume the lead responsibility for the Commission's work on planning, budgeting, and financial administration. These constituted the area of focus of one of four special task teams established by the PRC. He accepted the offer because it fit in with the PoG's strengths and interests.

Canada's efforts in its work with PRC during 1997 and early 1998 were directed primarily to fiscal and financial policy, planning, and budgeting, but the PoG also took a strong interest in provincial and departmental structures and functions, following on its earlier work on the Constitution. The Commission's work became virtually a full-time occupation for Dr Johnson, and it took a great deal of the Program Manager's and Special Advisor's time as well through the remainder of 1997. Then, in late September 1997, an ADM for Fiscal and Financial Policy in the Ontario Government joined the PoG as a Special Advisor, with particular responsibilities in this area. She immediately began to play a central role in the planning and budgeting work for the PRC.

The funding agreement for Canada's contribution of about \$335 000 to the PRC was made formal and signed by IDRC at a ceremony in the Office of the Minister of DPSA in October 1997. The PoG was also prepared to fund about 150 additional person-days of expert assistance for its task-force responsibilities.

The interim report of the Commission was produced in 1997. The final report (PRC 1998) was wrapped up in February 1998, about 6 months after the anticipated date. In the course of the PRC's period of intensive work, the Special Advisors organized a reference panel of key South Africans from national and provincial governments and produced a major paper on planning, budgeting, and financial administration, a report that would mark its contribution and would also serve as a teaching tool (PRC 1998). It is not yet known whether the recommendations of the task group will be implemented, although the substance of the final report has been publicly welcomed.

Other planning and budgeting initiatives

As the work on the PRC progressed, the PoG also began to foster planning, budgeting and finance activities with specific provinces. In meetings between one province's Director of Strategic Planning and his Canadian counterparts, during March 1997, a plan was developed to send a mission of Canadians to work in the South African twinned province for nearly a month.

Five of the group were senior officials from line departments; their responsibilities in their departments bore on planning and budgeting. In addition, the Comptroller from the Ministry of Finance was a member of the group, as was the Director of Community Economic Development Services. Each official worked as a mentor-consultant to his or her counterpart in South Africa, always in the area of financial management and control. In addition to concentrating on particular functions in their host departments, the Canadian officials met weekly with the provincial DG and senior officials in Finance to discuss their progress. This work, because it concentrated on financial planning and budgeting, provided insights and background information that the Special Advisors found useful in their work for the PRC.

This initiative was the first provincial project in planning and budgeting; over the next months, work expanded into two other provinces. For example, in January 1998, a member of a Canadian legislature came to South Africa, accompanied by the provincial Chief of Protocol. The PoG provided briefings and accompanied the visitors on the final day of their visit. Discussions took place on how to shift the focus of the twinning arrangement toward planning, budgeting, and financial management. A three-part program was implemented in 1998.

As well, in an effort to assist the FFC, the PoG arranged for the Chair and Director of the FFC to meet with officials from Statistics Canada to determine whether Canada would be able to help develop indicators of fiscal need in the provinces.

Intergovernmental relations

As noted earlier, a second focus planned for this period was on intergovernmental relations. At the request of the Department of Constitutional Development in South Africa, the PoG designed and delivered a major workshop in this field. The workshop took place in Ottawa from 7 to

10 April 1997, followed by 2 days of work in Winnipeg, and it engaged representatives of each of the nine South African provinces, plus national government officials. The exercise had the following objectives:

- To provide a comparative analysis of constitutional arrangements in Canada and South Africa;
- To determine how such arrangements impact on the design and development of intergovernmental relationships; and
- To explore the relationship between formal constitutional rules and the norms and practices that grow up within and around intergovernmental contacts.

The program presented such comparative analysis in overview sessions and case studies of intergovernmental relationships in particular areas of Canadian policy.

The program had 16 Canadian resource persons: some were academics; others were federal or provincial public servants involved in the Ottawa workshop. Four South Africans provided information to the Canadians. Another 11 South Africans who were involved in intergovernmental work attended as participants. The Manitoba portion of the workshop was run by the Clerk of the Cabinet and the Cabinet Secretary for Intergovernmental Relations. In addition, the Director of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment and an Associate DM for the Saskatchewan Department of the Environment, attended to explain how events occur in a jurisdiction shared by the national and provincial governments.

Legislatures

The PoG's efforts to assist provincial legislatures were focused on the province where the newly established Public Participation Office began its outreach activities. It organized workshops from March to July in seven disadvantaged townships to prepare the citizens for public hearings to be held by the Welfare Committee of the provincial legislature. A two-stage approach was employed. The first stage was a workshop to explain the role and function of the provincial legislature and to explain the issues to be addressed by the Committee. The second stage was designed to assist people interested in preparing a presentation or statement to be used at

the Welfare Committee's public hearings. An evaluative exercise following this effort identified a number of operational and design barriers the legislature would have to overcome to facilitate public participation.

In the same province, at the request of the House Leader the PoG participated in a workshop in late August on relationships between standing committees and line departments. And, in late 1997, the government asked for assistance to study the idea of instituting a Question Period based on the parliamentary model of Canada or the United Kingdom. In response, the PoG arranged for a diagnostic visit from a former Clerk of the Saskatchewan Legislature and of the Canadian Senate.

As well, in May 1997, in fulfilment of a long-standing commitment, the PoG enabled three members of the National Assembly's support staff to visit legislatures in Edmonton and Toronto, as well as the House of Commons in Ottawa. The Canadian Parliament's International Visits Office prepared the agenda for the visit.

Service delivery

A number of efforts were made to develop projects relevant to the service-delivery needs of South Africa's governments. In November 1997, the Project Manager accompanied the Deputy Head of the Department of Public Works of South Africa (DPWSA), on a 1-week visit to Ottawa to meet the Deputy Head's counterparts in Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC). This was a formal follow-up to an earlier trip the DG had made on his own initiative. In response to the November visit, two officers at PWGSC (the DG of Strategic Management and the Director of Accommodation Management) went to South Africa for several weeks. Their assignment led to concrete plans for twinning DPWSA and PWGSC. The partnership focuses on assisting the South Africans with real-property management, human-resource management, and planning and budgeting in general.

One PoG Special Advisor also worked with the Minister and the DG of another national department, essentially helping to develop a new senior team in the department. Through the second quarter of 1997, the projects included analyzing and writing a report on the major management issues facing the department; a workshop for senior departmental managers on how to support their minister; an investigation of performance management for the Executive Committee, followed by a workshop she designed and facilitated; and a review of the support services of the top officials of the department, followed by a report with recommendations.

The PoG also exerted efforts to expand service-delivery activities in the twinned provinces. For example, the Special Advisor visited the Free State to talk to senior provincial officials about the PoG's activities in general. At the same time, she initiated work in the welfare area. As a result of this work, in cooperation with the Head of Social Welfare in the Free State, the Canadian twinned province organized a study program for two Free State officials with responsibilities in the areas of child and family services, state institutions, and planning and management of welfare services.

In a consultative visit to another province to discuss the PoG's activities, the Special Advisor initiated work in the area of service delivery in the Department of Health and Social Services. From 2 to 10 October, the Head of the Department of Health and Social Services and two of his officials went to Canada to undertake a comprehensive review of health services, social services (including corrections), and occupational safety and health. In this period, as well, the first assignment from Service New Brunswick occurred when a senior official helped the Office of the DG of Northern Cape with its feasibility study for a one-stop service-delivery system.

Central institutions and processes

Work continued in support of the centre of government in several provinces. For example, the senior official from the Executive Council of Saskatchewan returned to the Free State with the DM to the Premier and Secretary to Cabinet. The Saskatchewan DM reported that he saw the work in the Free

State as providing excellent developmental opportunities for Saskatchewan civil servants. The senior official remained for a month to work with the Office of the DG of the Free State.

In other exchanges, the Saskatchewan Deputy Premier visited the Free State in March, at Saskatchewan's expense, accompanying a trade mission. And in March 1997, the new Premier of the South African province visited Saskatchewan, where she studied executive structures and functions and met the Premier, a number of Cabinet ministers, and several officials.

In August 1997, the Premier of a South African province invited the PoG to deliver a workshop to the Executive Council on the roles,

responsibilities, and functions of Cabinet. The Special Advisors delivered the workshop at a Cabinet meeting.

In developing the relationship between New Brunswick and its twinned partner, the ADM for Intergovernmental Affairs visited South Africa in February 1997. His project was to prepare for a visit the following month by the Secretary to the New Brunswick Cabinet and to work with the staff of the Office of the DG and the Office of the Premier to understand how their processes supported Cabinet. In early March, the Cabinet Secretary worked with her counterparts in South Africa on issues related to Cabinet functions and Executive decision-making. She planned and facilitated a full-day workshop for the Cabinet, as well as a second full-day workshop for the heads of departments. Cabinet endorsed recommendations for change that came out of these workshops. To follow up, five officials from South Africa (the Chief Director in the Office of the Premier, the Secretary to Cabinet, the Director of Communications, the Deputy Director for the Status of Women, and the Administrative Officer in the Office of the Premier) went to Canada at the end of September 1997 to observe the Cabinet cycle for a week. During this visit, Frank McKenna, the Premier of New Brunswick, announced his retirement. The PoG arranged a 1-week visit to South Africa for him and his ADM for Intergovernmental Relations. Mr McKenna spent most of his visit working with the Premier and Cabinet in South Africa. In addition, he was asked by his New Brunswick successor to sign the formal twinning agreement between the two provinces. This ceremony was well reported in both Canada and South Africa.

Finally, as part of the work between yet another set of provinces, the Canadian Premier's Chief of Staff spent a month in South Africa to provide advice on how to run the Office of the Premier. During this time, he worked with staff on their running case load and accompanied the Premier to his functions. At this time, the South African province itself developed its own master plan for the assistance that it hoped to receive from the PoG. This plan takes in financial and human-resource management, education, local government, environment, transport, economic development, and the Office of the Premier.

Other activities

The twinning relationships were the basis of other activities as well. These arose from requests that specific South African provinces made to their Canadian counterparts. For example, four officials (the Deputy Head of

Agriculture, an official from Economic Development, an official from the Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council, and the Director of Internal Audit) spent 3 weeks working with their South African counterparts and delivering some training in financial management.

A number of departmental officials from the twinned South African province also visited Canada. These included the DG of the Department of Agriculture, and one of her officials, who spent 2 weeks investigating agricultural development, including programs to assist young farmers. In addition, the Head of Policy in the Department of Local and Rural Development and the Chief Director in the

Department of Transport worked with their counterparts. The Minister for Safety and Security and three of his officials also spent 2 weeks in Canada, in June, but at the expense of the province. They worked with Canadian politicians and officials on corrections and policing.

In related activities that emerged from the twinning relationship, a trade mission of 10 business executives and a representative of the Manitoba Trade Office visited North West Province at their own expense. Then, in early September 1997, a trade mission of 13 North West Province business executives (traveling at their own cost) went to Manitoba to follow up on the trip that occurred the year before. They were accompanied by two officials, who stayed on for a short time to work with their Manitoba counterparts.

In the first quarter of 1997, there were two visits from Alberta officials and one visitor from an NGO. These visitors looked at issues in economic development, intergovernmental relations, and volunteer services. At the end of April 1997, Premier Phosa of Mpumalanga led 5 South African officials and 15 business executives on a major trade mission to Alberta. This mission was not supported by the PoG but was a consequence of the twinning. (Several initiatives related to pipelines, mapping, and training in meat processing were undertaken.)

The PoG continued to engage with officials in provinces where the twinning was inactive. In September, Dr Johnson traveled to the capital of one province to speak with the DG about a number of proposed initiatives, including a visit from the Secretary to the Cabinet in the Canadian province. (This monitoring was to bear fruit in early 1998.) And, some years after the first contact, the much-sought-after sixth twinning began to take on life. The first working visit to South Africa by the Secretary to Cabinet and key officials occurred in the week of 16 March 1998. Priority areas were identified.

Attrition and difficulties in planned activities

In addition to the difficulties encountered in bringing all the twinning arrangements to a stage of planned activity, the PoG suffered one other setback. After working for several months with one national department, in 1997, the PoG formally sought feedback so that it could be assured that the work was meeting the department's needs. Later that year, the DG resigned her post, and the PoG's work with this department ceased, at least in the short term.

Chapter 5 Partner and Observer Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 28 individuals in Africa during February and March of 1998 (see Appendix 1). Of these, 21 were South Africans who had participated in the PoG (3 of these were white South Africans), 2 were South African academic observers, and the remaining 5 were Canadian officials residing in South Africa and observing the PoG. The 2 interviews with South African academics were conducted by telephone; the other 26 interviews were conducted in person. Another 8 interviews were conducted in Canada from April to June 1998 by telephone, e-mail, or letter with Canadians who had participated in provincial twinning activities or workshops, for a total of 36 interviews of partners and observers. (The 21 South African and 8 Canadian participants were considered "partners" in the PoG exercise, whereas the 5 Canadians resident in South Africa were observers, as were the South African scholars.)

Ten of the South African partner respondents were high-level public servants in two provincial governments in mature twinning relationships with Canadian provincial governments. I visited both of

these South African provinces. Of the respondents in the South African provinces, six were in financial or coordinating functions, but three heads of line departments were also interviewed, as well as the person in charge of the One-Stop Service Delivery Project. At the national level, three interviewees were high-level officials in the area of state expenditure. Four were leading officials in national line departments, and two were leading officials in

national central or coordinating agencies. One member of a provincial legislature was also interviewed.

The seven Canadian participants who were chosen for interviews had a variety of experiences. Some represented the “other half” of the most successful partnerships: the Secretaries to the Cabinets of two provinces and the former Premier of one of them. Two others were most deeply involved in work on the future roles and responsibilities of public service commissions, an area where the PoG had worked hard but had less direct evidence of success. One respondent is perhaps Canada’s most distinguished constitutional expert and commentator, who has had enormous experience in South Africa outside the auspices of the PoG, and another is a scholar and a former DM of the Ontario government.

The backgrounds of South African interviewees ranged from spending long periods in exile, generally in educational work abroad, to staying in the country and pursuing South African careers. For the most part, their careers were in education, and they had more or less intensely and prominently participated in the political struggle to end apartheid. A commonality was therefore that the South Africans interviewed had excellent educations — several had doctorates — all were fluent in English (in contrast to the national statistic of 5% of black South Africans who are fluent in English, and these are greatly outnumbered by speakers of Afrikaans); but most lacked the knowledge and experience in government operations that the work at their current level demands.

A necessary caution is that many of the South African respondents have held several different official positions in the period since 1993 and thus have engaged with the PoG in more than one capacity and from more than one vantage point. In general, personal mobility in the period of 1994 to the present has been high.

The persons interviewed are listed in Appendix 1.

South African sample: availability group

The ideal sample for these interviews, many would argue, would meet three conditions:

- It would be drawn randomly from a complete list of all persons having had contact with the PoG, such that each person on the list would have an equal and known chance of being selected for an interview.
- It would consist entirely or almost entirely of individuals who could be reached and interviewed wherever they might happen to be.
- It would be of a sufficient size to represent all possible variability in the “universe.” (Generally, the smaller the universe [census], the larger the sample must be as a proportion.) Further, because the PoG’s activities are tailored to the client and his or her situation, its activities are varied, and this increases the requirement for a large sample.

But the PoG is not a controlled experiment involving captive subjects; it is a demand-based program delivering advice on issues of Public Service management and providing educational opportunities to clients who are in very busy jobs, who are underresourced (or at least do not have adequately skilled human resources to support them), and who change positions and regions frequently. Therefore, the sample of persons contacted constitutes an availability or haphazard sample.

PoG personnel, in consultation with the evaluator, drew up the list of target subjects. The goal was to

cluster subjects into groups with particular experiences of the PoG: persons who had availed themselves of the variety of operations of the PoG or those with sufficient knowledge and experience of it to be analytical and critical. Where an interview could not be secured with one individual, another with a similar experience of the PoG would be substituted. In this sense, the sample has “face validity” in that it is loosely representative of the variety of types of PoG clients. It is also beneficially haphazard (it was not planned to include only certain individuals), a feature that made room for surprises and unfamiliar feedback. This was true even within the cluster of five persons interviewed in each of the two provinces visited. But it is worth saying explicitly that the particular provinces were selected because they were the two that had put the most of themselves into their twinnings, and thus their cases were the most mature. (They were also two of the poorer provinces.)

Five of the 22 South Africans and 1 of the 5 Canadians interviewed in South Africa were women. (In respect of gender balance, it is interesting to note that somewhat more than one-half of the Canadians brought to South Africa to provide advice were women.)⁶

⁶ While I was in South Africa, delegations from New Brunswick, Ontario, and Saskatchewan passed through PoG headquarters in Johannesburg, on their way to work with their respective twins, but I did not have the opportunity to interview individuals at any length.

Semidirective topic schedule

Most of the interviews with South African program participants lasted 2 hours or more; four were, however, much shorter. The interviews revolved around a list of fixed topics but were only semidirective; in other words, I probed interesting responses to simple questions and followed up on topics raised by the interviewees and, in general, allowed people to choose many of their own topic emphases. However, to avoid the possibility that PoG beneficiaries might accentuate the positive, I asked all the required questions and covered all areas in each case, directly and indirectly. For example, to encourage individuals to think both analytically and critically, I asked them to put themselves in the place of the Program Manager and suggest what could be important for new projects or to suggest changes in a general way. When the interviewee took up the challenge, which all but two or three did, I asked suitable probing questions to discover whether the suggestions were a form of polite criticism.

It is important to note that questions were always initially asked in such a way that no answer was suggested; for example, to get to the indirect benefits or effects of the PoG, I would ask whether the interviewee could think of any additional remarks they might like to make about the PoG or any effects it might have had: I would not suggest “trade” or any other example until the interviewee had either come up with his or her own list or come up blank. I was also careful to nod and give signals of affirmation and encouragement no matter what subjects were being covered by the interviewee, provided they were on the broad PoG topic. An exception to this practice occurred in interviews with a few Canadian nationals resident in South Africa (not the PoG personnel), who followed their own agendas and had their own priorities.

Ground covered in the interviews was roughly as follows:

- Explanation of the analyst’s role and the scope and probable use of an evaluation (more formative and thus aimed more toward learning “what works” than toward accountability for use of resources);
- Verification of the timing, extent, and nature of the person’s experience and knowledge of the PoG;
- Exploration of how the person first came to know of the PoG;

- Exploration of the evolution of the PoG to date as the interviewee understood it, with an indication from me that there could be some room for change in the balance of activities, such as the PoG's use of managers or practitioners versus its use of subject experts or academics;
- Exploration of the extent to which an individual may have had recourse to the Special Advisors (or other officers) of the PoG on a confidential basis, with probes to establish whether those one-on-one contacts had led to any other activities or services under the auspices of the PoG;
- Exploration of whether and how the person's involvement with the PoG may have helped in his or her work, with probes as a possibility;
- Exploration of the person's knowledge of, and involvement with, aid programs offered by other foreign governments, with probes to establish in what way such programs differed substantially in what they offered or, more generally, appeared to be similar or different and probes to establish the extent to which there might be competition between donors for the same contacts;
- Verification of my impression of what the individual believed the PoG uniquely offered to him or her and exploration of what the PoG's legacy might be when it ended and what further opportunities would be lost if it ended;
- Exploration of whether and in what ways the PoG was "user friendly," with probes to establish what it cost in terms of personal time, energy, or finances to access its benefits; and
- A closing question to determine whether the individual could think of other direct or indirect personal or more general benefits that the PoG had brought about (other than those the individual had already mentioned), with probes to establish whether any such indirect benefits could or should be realized more directly and by what means.

Interview summary

The responses can be caught under the following broad topics (discussed below): program profile (discovery); program niche; satisfaction with experiences (including the practitioner mode of operation, tours, and

other instruments) and identification of direct benefits; indirect benefits; and suggestions for future collaboration.

In the discussion that follows, a sentence, phrase, or word in quotation marks is a direct quotation. Paraphrases are set out in indented blocks and noted as such. In most cases, a masculine pronoun is used to conceal the gender of the respondent, because some asked for confidentiality in some parts of their remarks.

Program profile (discovery)

That a majority of persons interviewed could not say exactly when or how they had learned of the PoG is perhaps a sign of how quickly events have moved in South Africa since the end of the apartheid system, the establishment of the transitional government, and the first democratic elections. A couple said they had come across the PoG "by chance." One said that although he could not recall how the collaboration with the PoG had begun, he was absolutely certain that it had always been a "mutual shaping" of projects, and his faithfulness to the PoG was based on both the quality of the expertise and the ease with which it could be accessed. Most of the respondents who were based in Johannesburg or Pretoria between 1990 and 1995 said they had been aware of Special Advisor Dr Johnson since the PoG began and of the program manager from the mid-1990s. This corresponds to their respective arrivals in South Africa.

Senior officials who had been involved with constitutional or intergovernmental affairs in the period of the interim Constitution recalled their first contacts with the PoG as having taken place somewhere between 1992 and 1994, or they recalled having been instructed by their minister to be in touch with the PoG. One summed up the reaction of the most senior cadre of South African officials to the PoG: “They have somehow succeeded in making sure that we go to them: this has been 50% of their success here.”

Provincial officials, on the other hand, tended not to register a clear awareness of the PoG until later on. They became aware of it when first approached in regard to twinning, or even after their first experiences with Canadian personnel once a partnership had started. Most often, provincial officials related that their Premier or DG had gone to Canada, after which they found themselves working on a new project or working in collaboration with Canadians. Very high-level officials tended to be exceptions. One provincial DG, for example, had been acquainted with the PoG since

its beginning. The twinning arrangement involving his province had begun before he became DG: his current Premier had struck up a relationship with the Canadian Premier before the South African elections of 1994. When the DG took up his position, he essentially “consolidated the relationship” that existed.

In summary, the PoG has a high profile in Pretoria and among top officials everywhere, but it is less well known at the working levels of the civil service in the provinces. In contrast, several officials in provincial line departments thought the PoG was solely an umbrella organization with the role of coordinating the Canadian provinces’ work with South African provinces. In addition, a number of respondents thought that the PoG was IDRC.

Program niche

There are two interrelated aspects to the PoG’s particular niche in the ecology of foreign aid offered to South Africa. First, its technology is that of a practitioner-to-practitioner program: it tries to directly transfer the practical wisdom and experience that practitioners need to deal with the processes and issues of concern in contemporary South Africa. One South African practitioner said that other programs tend to offer broad assistance that might or might not address the actual managerial and other gaps experienced and thus might or might not address the needs of the recipient, but the PoG offers practical help of a highly individualized nature, which is nonetheless based on careful analysis and provided in context. In other words, the PoG learned local realities, as well as providing explanation and literature.

One admirer deftly characterized the PoG team as “practitioners of complexity,” which meant, he explained, people who can find a way to move ahead in situations of near stasis, in which the problems are poorly defined, the levers of action are hard to find, and the organizations are so new (“lack connective tissue”) that even high-level officials do not know one another.

The second aspect of the PoG’s niche is its relation to other aid programs: effectively, the reasons why people use the PoG and stick with it, despite the fact that other nations provide aid to South Africa and sometimes compete for the attention of its top decision-makers. I will discuss the reasons why the practitioner base appears to work and then discuss the PoG’s niche in relation to other aid programs.

Practitioner base of the program

The South African practitioner clients who were interviewed revealed a wide range of experience with the PoG practitioners, such as the following:

- Occasional to regular consultation with the resident Special Advisors;

- Service together on commissions;
- Education programs carefully formulated for the South African practitioners by the resident Special Advisors, including
 - Short visits to Canada,
- Opportunities to host Canadian expert visitors in their divisions (the provincial twinning arrangements, for example),
- Participation in PoG workshops and conferences, and
- Travel to Canada on PoG educational trips (study visits) on more than one occasion; and
- The more passive role in which they worked side by side with officials from Canadian provinces.

The overwhelming majority of South African practitioners very strongly approved of the practitioner focus of the PoG. Most saw a place for academic work but also feared that, until South Africa's poor administrative capacity was improved, the more cerebral work was of little use. Distilled below is how one interviewee, whose core message was similar to that of many others, put the matter:

Higher education is not a panacea for South African governance . . . higher education cannot address the current level of civil-service competence . . . South Africa has Directors and Directors General [deputy heads or permanent secretaries] with doctorates and little or no management experience. These persons who now run the government possess the conceptual skills to learn on the run, and therefore only need and only have time for “on-the-job coaching” on the technology of bureaucracy . . . processes, systems, records, control, transparency . . . ways of being efficient at these things

There are surely also civil servants who need short-term training in how to implement bureaucratic processes about which they already know and for which they already understand the reasons . . . and there are some who could benefit from broader education, including in public administration and in democracy and the reasons for which things should be done in a certain way . . . but we have no time for it

No one in this governing cohort can go spend a year at Harvard. For better or worse, the people now running government must be helped to succeed as best they can in their situations. Larger-scale education for public service will be necessary, but programed academic learning is for the next generation . . . the next [top administrative] cohort or even two will resemble this one. It will work like this one To get to the future, the present must be saved.

Another South African practitioner was more direct. He believed it was essential that generous amounts of mentoring be provided by persons who are themselves skilled civil servants and not “academics, foreign service officers or politicians.”

A third looked at the issue from another angle: “Look, our [policy] Green Papers and White Papers may be the best in the world. But they never contain a costing model or provide an implementation strategy! This is why we need a program by practitioners for practitioners.”

In summary, as most South African interviewees were themselves well educated, they did not dismiss out of hand the need for formal education for civil servants but saw systematic education in administrative matters as a pillar of the future. However, not one South African in the survey was willing to trade his own “hands-on” assistance and collaboration on management issues for formal study in the principles of public administration.

Two respondents made the point that in some respects South Africa was now overburdened with examples of the inappropriate institutionalization of “civil society.” They noted that NGOs had certainly added to the capacity of persons outside the state to talk back to the apartheid state. But with

the establishment of electoral democracy, these NGOs now sometimes came close to appropriating the right to speak (“the voices”) of the most marginalized persons in the population. Another example of premature institutionalization had occurred in some operations intended to educate civil servants. These groups had found bricks, mortar, and continuing grants and had selected their staff complements before a clear mandate — a concept of who they would serve, what they could offer, and what research was necessary — had “jelled.” In comparison, the PoG strategy of working with a small core of staff, a very large informal network of human resources, and the goal of “institutionalizing capacity in a fluid way within the client organizations” was viewed as efficient and as a useful experiment.

Only one South African civil servant was critical of Canadian administrative practice. By association, he was therefore doubtful about the potential contribution of the PoG. Canadians had little to teach South Africans in the area of human-resource management, he said. He characterized Canada’s own downsizing as wasteful of the Canadian public’s costly investment in skilling government personnel. He hoped that South African governments would reengineer its human-resource profile more selectively.

However, even this critical respondent remarked that he had found the PoG practitioner focus useful in two respects, both unrelated to his core expertise. First, the Canadian exchange personnel who visited his province had provided South Africans with an example “of how to hold mature meetings.” By this he meant meetings where there was an agenda; participants stayed on topic and expressed themselves briefly; and decisions were made, recorded, and followed up on. The second point was that somehow the PoG had got past the South African “mania for experts.” In a sense, therefore, he approved of the practitioner focus, although in areas of administration other than his own. Thus, he approved of the PoG practitioner method of work but disapproved of Canada’s personnel-administration policies.

Three of the five non-PoG Canadian interviewees residing in South Africa, in contrast to the South Africans, were very strongly critical of the PoG’s practitioner focus. They characterized PoG activities as a series of problem-based confidential interventions that amounted to one-off operations — what would in Canada be called “fire fighting.” They strongly believed that the practitioner mode of operation was incompatible with any degree of institutionalization of improved state capacity to govern in South Africa. In their opinion, the PoG could not leave a legacy. Two of these believed that CIDA and IDRC were missing the boat by supporting the PoG. The PoG grant, they felt, should go instead to an educational institution in South Africa, such as a university or SAMDI. The creation, codification, and subsequent dissemination of appropriate knowledge would only then be institutionalized, thus leaving an enduring legacy.⁷ These Canadian professional aid workers said that most foreign governments giving aid to South Africa were supporting large-scale, programmatic, in-class training: the PoG was therefore said to be an anomaly.

Two of the three Canadians who wanted to see the CIDA–IDRC funds dedicated to education and training cautioned me as the interviewer that any positive comments South Africans might make about the PoG could not be taken at face value: South Africans were “too diplomatic” to

⁷ See Chapter 4 for an account of the PoG’s attempts to twin CCMD with SAMDI.

report negative impressions of the PoG’s efforts. The other two Canadians interviewed expressed no opinion about the practitioner modality, other than to say that it appeared to be appreciated. They suggested, however, that it would be helpful if the PoG gave them, wherever possible, longer advance notice of Canadian visits to South Africa so that they could prepare for these visits, avoid embarrassment, and perhaps achieve some appropriate synergies for their own activities.

Niche in relation to other aid programs

According to an interviewee who had extensive experience with the PoG, the program is unique among foreign contributions to the new South Africa in that before the elections it alone trained and worked with South Africans, who then moved into positions of power in both national and provincial governments. This work facilitated the PoG's later linkages with the provinces and resulted as well in the unmatched depth of these relationships. (The nine South African provinces, he said, had been "divided among a number of countries. Canada alone has five.")

On the word of most South African public servants interviewed, the PoG most certainly does not operate in a vacuum or without brisk foreign competition for the attention of top South African public servants and decision-makers. One respondent listed the agencies, states, and substates that had recently visited him to offer assistance: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Australia, China, Cuba, Germany, Malaysia, Poland, New Jersey, Texas, and a county in the United Kingdom. All these entities offer assistance for economic development and some kind of governance development. (Other respondents had similar lists of potential donors, and two of these respondents listed Iceland and Singapore.) One interviewee short-circuited the process of detailing comparable foreign programs by saying simply, "Look, if I want to travel anywhere in the world, all I have to do is say to one of that country's representatives here that I would like to look at the way they do this or that. I can guarantee you that I will be on my way by midweek. They will set up an itinerary and pay my travel and expenses."

Canada, like Australia and Germany, has a certain complementarity to South Africa's constitutional provisions. Canada has a parliamentary system, and some of its federal features provide useful practical examples, particularly its fiscal relations. Canada, like Sweden, is a nonthreatening middle power that is seen as being essentially at the middle of the ideological spectrum no matter which party is in power.

South Africans use the PoG because it is effective and useful: more than half the respondents who had been on study tours noted that no other foreign government planned these learning opportunities so carefully and tailored them to the specific needs and time constraints of the South African visitor (sometimes bringing collections of diverse Canadians together to spend a few days with the South Africans and following this up with 1-week visits to key departments or centres of expertise).

What has been extremely beneficial about the PoG — and unique — was that it alone offered to help with the initial design of potential interventions. The PoG began helping as soon as it and its South African partner had identified an administrative focus, without requiring front-end development costs from partners, especially expenditures of time. Also, in comparison with other programs, the PoG followed through in a remarkable manner, developing and deepening the learning experiences offered by the first exchanges. Other contacts often tended to remain at the political level and were not brought to life at the working level.

The other countries that came in for spontaneous praise were Australia, Germany, and Sweden. Australia is a federation that has experimented with upper-house powers and a country with a thoroughgoing managerialist approach to government. It is a model that is very attractive to some South Africans. Australia also found a niche because of climatic similarities. It has shared many sustainability problems with South African agriculturists and has been admired for its ideas on "land care," a comprehensive program that brings together all the elements of land use, such as water, soil types, and use of forests.

Germany is likewise a welcome benefactor and counsellor in regard to constitutional affairs. Germany contributed to the drafting of the Constitution and, like Canada, has a presence in the Gauteng Legislature. The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung of Germany assists with establishing a petitions process (there is a petitions committee in the German parliament and in some of the state legislatures). It, like the

PoG, also sponsors conferences and proceedings, a notable example being the Conference on Civil Society after Apartheid (Humphries and Reitzes 1996). Thus, the German effort provides complementarity to the PoG practitioner mode in that it does fund studies and facilitate publications.

Sweden, which gave asylum to many exiles during the apartheid era, is another very important presence, working across all functions and levels of government and bringing expert help as well as management help.

It is particularly well known, interviewees said, for its work in bringing services to the population. Sweden in fact shares the provincial One-Stop Service Delivery Project with Canada, being deeply involved in this since 1994. Sweden has made several persons available to this particular provincial government, some of them for as long as 3 years at a stretch, working in the centre and in two major departments, including the Department of Health and Social Services. Despite Sweden's concerted efforts and considerable presence there, it was quite happy to describe the One-Stop project as being 60% due to Canadian support. One of the resident Swedish advisors told the evaluator that the Swedish nationals residing in the South African province valued their collaboration with Canada.

The DG of the Department of Health and Social Services in this province valued the complementarity of Swedish and Canadian contributions: "We think it helps to give us a range of options." The Swedes have also differed from the PoG in that the consultants have worked toward the implementation of key defined outcomes, whereas the PoG has concentrated on raising the levels of current administrative capacity.

Not surprisingly, given that this is a poorer province, the British government's Department for International Development (DFID) was also making a large contribution there, notably in women's health and particularly in regard to reproductive issues and violence against women. DFID provided 3.5 million South African ZAR for a contract let to a local partner, which would provide Open University-certified management training to about 250 district and local health professionals (in 1999, 6.09 South African rand [ZAR] = 1 United States dollar [USD]). DFID was also helping the Department of Health and Social Services with transport management.

USAID was frequently cited as standing in the most pointed contrast to the PoG's "low-key persistence" approach, although interviewees said that some other countries were as prescriptive as the Americans. Seven or eight highly placed South African civil servants were worried about one aspect of US assistance: what they described as the pervasive "monovision" of the Americans' views of democracy and the transmission of these views through a variety of means, from American academic writing on government, to popular culture, to USAID. In this monovision, democracy is best served by setting up centres of "civil-society power" to contest state power and by ensuring that the Executive remains weak and ineffectual by sharing power across other state institutions. American mistrust of Executive power — "the national habit of thinking of all state

power as oppressive" — they said, seeps into most of the South African organizations that work to further democracy, and this encourages South Africans to want to "normalize" their own structures by rebuilding them in the direction of a separation-of-powers constitution. They therefore press for increases in the powers of legislatures, even before the legislatures have got to their feet and before the new South African Executive can address its serious problems of coordination and lack of capacity.

On the other hand, three of the five non-PoG Canadian interviewees residing in Africa denied that the PoG had any distinctive style or approach; to the extent that the PoG was successful because of its style, such differences should be attributed to the tactful and retiring "national character" of Canadians.

Satisfaction with experiences (including the practitioner mode of operation, tours, and other instruments) and identification of direct benefits

The range of views, experiences, and program use suggests that the PoG's clients predominantly fall into two broad categories:

- Those dedicated to using the resident Special Advisors as sounding boards and as assistants in defining problems and planning more general and systematic approaches; and
- Those who have fairly well-defined educational and information needs and who can thus benefit from exposure to foreign counterparts (both at home in South Africa and through visits to Canada), exposure to a more mature system, and exposure to programmatic information and testing in workshops and conferences (twinning-related work, for example).

Some clients of the PoG fall outside this dichotomy; they are reported below under "Ad hoc PoG users."

The South Africans overwhelmingly reported being satisfied and often excited and encouraged by their work with Canadians through the PoG. In the 21 practitioner-partner interviews with South Africans, only two interviewees had criticisms of the PoG's operations. As noted, one person's response was related to his function — human relations — in which he thought Canadians fell down. The second individual was annoyed that the PoG had put on a good conference on budgeting but at a poor time for his department (and when the DGs of the provinces were

still thought of as accounting officers for the whole provincial expenditure). To remedy this, he said, the PoG should consider itself obliged to stage the conference a second time, rethinking the invitation list in light of recent changes in constitutional interpretation. In short, according to South African cooperants, the PoG is a much-appreciated source of important assistance.

With this settled, what do South Africans think it is that "works" for the PoG? First, an important element in its success has been the mental flexibility of the PoG leadership. The PoG has since 1993 always responded quickly and intelligently to the changing order of the country's most dramatic needs — Constitution, institutional design for central government and departments, control processes for central institutions, strategic planning, budgeting, and service delivery — without losing sight of the South African context but building appropriately on shared experiences.

Second, all 21 South African practitioners praised the PoG for being intelligently modest about Canada (as we noted, one academic was critical). The negative lessons that can be drawn from Canada's Constitution, bureaucratic history, and practice were part of any discussion about options, along with the good points. According to the interviewees, the other "plus" from the preelection period to the present was the "astounding" knowledge of South Africans and South Africa acquired by Dr Johnson. Most foreigners, even academics, operated with much less depth and less currency in pure knowledge. Equally important, Dr Johnson brought with him a vast and perhaps unmatched experience of Canadian federal and provincial government at the highest levels, which he was able to bring to bear on issues in any venue. From a pragmatic viewpoint, not only did he have a vast network of Canadian contacts, but he also had such a stature in Canada that senior bureaucrats at all levels of government, academics, and business executives were willing to respond to his requests for assistance.

At the level of program management, the PoG simply excelled. It always followed up. It solidified contacts, formalized agreements, and always answered its phones: "All I have to do is pick up the phone and speak to someone and a few hours later I will get a fax that gives me some basis to orient myself."

The Program Manager had such a "formidable" knowledge of South Africa that he could respond quickly and precisely to information needs. A senior official felt that the PoG's service was close to

astounding: he had

personally received articles and books that were directly useful for the exact issues he had put forward, and he knew other South Africans for whom the same was true.

I took the opportunity of “double checking” the PoG’s performance with South Africans, after hearing the negative remarks made by the Canadians resident in South Africa. For example, I presented as a matter of fact — without attribution — the three (of five) Canadian observers’ critical explanation of the evolution of the PoG. This was to the effect that the PoG’s shift from constitutional subjects to the provinces was due to its loss of access to top officials at the national level. The South Africans quickly corrected this impression. The most succinct response was the following: “When the ANC was making a Constitution it sat all day talking about a Constitution. Now it is governing. The Program helped with the Constitution. Now it is helping with government.”

Another aspect of the PoG style that was almost always mentioned was its relaxed attitude toward other aid donors — a form of creative non-competitiveness. For example, at the time of the Manitoba delegation’s visit to its twinned South African province, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme were launching a capacity-building project for the whole of South Africa, and the Manitobans helped that province draw up a business plan for its participation in that project.

A further success has been the skill that has developed on the Canadian side in the selection process. The leadership on the Canadian twinning side paid careful attention to the nature of the challenge and the characteristics of the South Africans with whom the Canadian officials would work. The briefing given Canadians was very thorough and comprehensive, thanks to both the provincial counterparts and the PoG.

The PoG excelled in the selection and briefing of Canadian program participants (cooperants). Only one Canadian posed a problem for black South Africans, and the discomfort he created was due to exaggerated sensitivity. Before potential cooperants come to South Africa, as one prominent South African respondent put it, they must be “intelligently politically desensitized” to race so that they are capable of moving ahead in a businesslike way. It is counterproductive for people from other countries to think they can establish personal bonds with nonwhite South African strangers by, for example, insisting on long conversations about the apartheid era, colour classifications, or the Truth Commission. South Africans are all too familiar with the injustices that arise from a

consciousness of race and find others’ loss of innocence in this regard to be tedious and ignorant in equal measure. Respondents thought that overall the nearly perfect record was a tribute to the capacity of their provincial counterparts to select and brief Canadian participants.

Because it was the single most frequent spontaneous comment, it also deserves to be emphasized that program recipients appreciated the “demonstration effect” of the PoG’s managerial capacity to make “brilliant arrangements.” These extended from well-planned learning objectives for each activity, to flawless itineraries for travellers, to careful physical arrangements at conferences and workshops, to the choice of Canadian and South African cooperants.

We now turn to the direct benefits the participants saw in the program elements they used most.

Use of resident Special Advisors

An interviewee said the following of Dr Johnson: “He must be one of the most accomplished civil servants Canada has ever had. He has done tremendous work here, and those of us who know the extent of it are very grateful.” At least four other of the most senior national figures made similar remarks.

In the period leading up to the elections and the interim Constitution, the PoG operated as a “mini think tank,” one interviewee noted. Dr Johnson, with the support of a South African academic did in fact “train” a considerable number of people, and after the elections many of them became ministers, DGs, and Members of Parliament. Before the elections, Dr Johnson put a great effort into exposing potential leaders to how government is run in Canada and in a number of newly independent countries. He helped prepare potential leaders for multiparty negotiations. His other critical contributions in this period included giving shape to two chapters in the interim Constitution (relating to the Public Service). The recognition of this contribution came when the President appointed him to the PRC, which was established in 1996 and reported in early 1998. Here again, the PoG made a crucial contribution, this time in relation not to the Public Service but to financial planning and budgeting. Dr Johnson’s “team” provided enormous support and leadership.

The interview with the Chair of an independent advisory body to the government on fiscal matters provided perhaps the most representative information about how highly placed officials at the national level had made use of the PoG, starting in the preelection period, when the

government was designing machinery and organizing itself. First, the South Africans “shopped” among foreign-aid programs to find suitable assistance. The Chair had looked for programs similar to the PoG among the aid programs offered by Australia, Germany, India, and Canada. He had an early inclination toward the Canadian model, particularly on the fiscal, taxation, and equalization side, and therefore one of the first persons he contacted was Dr Johnson. The PoG, he said, was very definitely “a lot of use,” because South Africa suffers a “particularly serious dearth” of financial knowledge. “If I had anything to say about it I would certainly say continue [indefinitely].” The PoG was “user friendly,” creating no overhead costs. South African needs, however, were changing as the governance system struggled to develop.

The Commission Chair had received ongoing assistance from the PoG in year 1 of the Commission, when it was established; in year 2, when it made its linkages with government and other bodies; and in year 3, the year of “application of principles.” The advisory aspect of the PoG has been very important. Discussing other governments, the Chair noted that the Australian government is often seen as fulfilling an advisory capacity, but many South Africans believe that it offers a more expenditure-driven model than the Canadian fiscal framework. “Canadians have made much more of a difference in how we approach the revenue side [in terms of planning shared fiscal capacity, including such provisions as tax room for the provinces].”

A provincial DG was also a frequent user of the “counsel” function offered by the first resident Special Advisor, Dr Johnson. He had had recourse to Dr Johnson for his input on important papers in the period before the election and following his subsequent appointment as DG for the province. He also consulted Dr Johnson on several occasions on specific issues.

Similarly, the help Dr Johnson provided as Special Advisor with the PoG was strongly appreciated on the constitutional side. An official recounted having been advised by his minister sometime in 1993 to speak with Dr Johnson. This official’s strong positive assessment of the Canadian role came from both the close similarities and the interesting differences in the respective Constitutions. Personalities were important, as was a knowledge of the context: “Both Al Johnson and the Program Manager understand South Africa very well and their personal style got the Canadians to the table.”

The “stunning intellectual and personal contribution” that Dr Johnson made during the period leading up to the elections, the official said, was — if one knew South Africa — illustrated by the enthusiastic applause of the National Assembly to the announcement of the nomination of Dr Johnson to the PRC as a Commissioner. The official noted that “one more often heard ‘noises’ [the Hansard term] rather than applause when foreign names were put forward for important functions.” This same official

recalled Dr Johnson's ability to recruit the right Canadians to bring to South Africa during the constitutional negotiations. At one point, a Canadian suggestion (by Dr Richard Simeon) on a major constitutional difficulty turned out to be the wording that was adopted.

A former Deputy Minister in the Ontario government, became a resident Special Advisor in 1996. One interviewee reported extensive contact with the Special Advisor. "That special combination of experience in government along with experience in management" was exactly what was needed. This DG had found that help from the corporate world was quick to be offered, as was assistance from parastatals, but this advice did not hit the right chord. What was extremely helpful about the PoG was "the opportunity to talk at length about administration on an intellectual level and in a relaxed manner to someone who had no possible stake in what procedures and roles would be decided, but who at the same time had had a well-rounded and high-level experience in government."

The PoG had also been a pivotal figure in the development of one provincial legislature's Public Participation Project. One interviewee characterized this program as "an experiment in the best sense of the word," one that would be of interest to all the South African provinces, as well as to the national government, and "might even have importance for democracies generally." The PoG had played a critical role in helping to conceptualize and develop the lines of this program. It was their energy and commitment that had made the experiment real. This person noted that it is often difficult to sustain the effort needed to keep a project such as this one moving along: responsibility for it had changed hands in the province, and it could have been lost. "If we had not had the dedication to the project from IDRC [PoG], we would not have continued."

Also, recently, an official responsible for an aspect of the national budget said he had made intensive and focused use of the advisory function of the PoG. It had been useful as a sounding board. For example, after one of his consultations with Dr Johnson he redid some of the instructions to national departments and then sent his revised work to the PoG for

comment. The Special Advisor for planning and budgeting, who had been in South Africa for only 5 months at the time, was building her own place as the linchpin for the PoG's counseling on planning and budgeting and the coordination of these activities within departments and between departments and the centres of government.

Study tours

About half of the South African participants interviewed had traveled to Canada, either to attend the 1994 Conference on Constitutional Development, as part of a study tour on an area of interest to them, or on a study visit organized through a twinning relationship. Most of the others had attended one or more of the local or regional workshops. All had valued their contact, whatever it had been, and several pointed out the documents they had collected as part of their PoG exposure. In the interests of space, only a selection of comments has been made below.

One interviewee had attended the Conference on Constitutional Development in Ottawa in July 1994. The program covered the division of powers, financial arrangements, Charter issues, and provincial and local government. This had been a useful and formative experience, in large part because of the quality of the participants and papers from all sides, the seriousness with which the conference was carried out, and the smoothness of all arrangements.

Another participant likewise had strong praise for this conference:

an incredible collection of people with diverse experiences . . . the intellectual experience was wonderful and in no small measure due to Al Johnson as an individual . . . one went from knowing nothing to learning quite a lot in a few days . . . it was most assuredly not a holiday!

This officer had also been part of a 1997 event in Canada, in which he went to Statistics Canada and spent several days in a workshop, then saw Canadian provincial civil servants to discuss issues of planning and budgeting. This tour had been fitted to his particular needs and was immensely productive. He had been somewhat startled by the number and depth of the questions Canadian officials asked about what South Africa was doing in their areas — “an openness to learning.”

“Why do you need to take a bunch of South Africans to Canada?” one official asked as a prelude to answering why South Africans needed to see other governments. Part of why South Africans needed to see other governments was that South Africa had been closed to outside influences for so long that sharing of experiences helped build capacity and

confidence. Another benefit was the intensity of the learning: everyone picked out different features of their talks to Canadian officials “at the coal face,” and then the conversations between South Africans would begin, such that a deeper consensual understanding and a kind of dynamism were forged in the visiting group. Several persons volunteered that the Ottawa constitutional conference and all the PoG workshops that had kept people together for several days had been foundational experiences for them, regardless of the venue — hard work, steep learning curves. The fact that South Africans spent a period of concentrated time together for the first time created an almost-instant network of South African contacts at a time when everyone was new to government.

As in the “arrangements” comments earlier, respondents found the PoG unmatched in its commitment to “maximize outcomes” for the South Africans whom it sent abroad. The PoG personnel listened attentively to the South African’s expression of needs and interests. Then they did something no other aid donor did: they pulled Canadians together at each site so that the South African visitors didn’t have to waste time “traipsing from building to building.” The PoG also chose Canadians such that “all practices were put into the context of an academic and contextual exercise.” In this way, South Africans felt in control of picking and choosing workable elements, rather than feeling obliged to undertake wholesale adaptations. One respondent’s experience of tours to other countries was that “we were told how it was to be done, not why it was done.”

Another interviewee had also been in Canada for several weeks as part of the legislature-development program. Despite the utility of the Canadian tour, “in some ways it increased my frustrations” because the Canadian model was comparatively complete, South Africa being still at the stage of institution-building. After this one visit to Canada, he had no wish to travel there again but, instead, engaged the PoG in his own projects in South Africa.

Twinning agreements

Rural Province A — In the opinion of the person who had taken on the primary responsibility for coordinating the contribution of Canadian provincial counterparts in one twinning arrangement, the keys to a successful partnership were to focus on specific issues that would lead to capacity-building; to have the full support of the provincial DG, as well as the Premier; and to have a dedicated champion of the twinning exercises in each province. This particular twinning had a focus on the structures of executive government, coordination issues, and financial management. To initiate this exchange, the Clerk of the Cabinet for Manitoba visited South Africa in 1995 with some officials and the PoG program manager and worked out a program of consultation and assistance. A series of exchanges ensued. Most recently, six Canadian provincial officials spent nearly 6 weeks in the South African province doing “diagnostics.” The full extent of the cost to the South African host was to arrange for the Canadian officials to have portable computers in their rooms so that they could work in the evenings and on weekends. Very useful recommendations emerged in these 6 weeks, some applicable to all departments, others specific to certain functions. When the Canadians returned, they would do

targeted training and workshops.

The ongoing acquisition of capacity by civil servants in this province was further solidified by the DG's requirement for a business plan for every exchange and then, as a follow-up, a report for the provincial Executive Committee summarizing the contribution made by the visit and requiring decisions for future direction.⁸

Asked what he would do when the funding period for the PoG ends or if the PoG is prematurely closed, one provincial DG said that the twinning aspect of the program could not, and would not, end no matter what happened to the PoG: "The relationship between the two provinces has been institutionalized [his word] and it will continue, no matter what."

Rural Province B — Each provincial twinning program is quite different. Whereas the one described above centres on getting its budgetary and financial-control systems working and integrated into its departmental structures, one of Province B's centrepieces is a citizen-centred one-stop project for services. Several "nodes" have been established over the territory, and at these nodes all government services are available under one "roof" (the roof being existing facilities, such as police stations and clinics, pending the establishment of some new structures that would also be shared).

One interviewee had been working with the PoG on methods to improve service delivery in a rural area when direct support from the Canadian province was negotiated through the PoG. Two officials went to New Brunswick, after which Canadian officials came to South Africa and did an assessment for the Premier and the DG. Shortly after, the project

⁸ This practice is not followed by all the South African provinces. It is the responsibility of the provincial DGs to decide what to require of individual participants.

was introduced to the South African province, with the result that "everyone in South Africa is looking at it." The One-Stop Service Delivery Project is a fairly direct adaptation of what was seen on the ground in New Brunswick. Now under a new director, who was rapidly bringing two pilot sites into operation, the South African version had been carefully defined in consultation with every ward in the province and every kind of stake-holder. The services it would offer had been identified by the people. The tremendous need for the project had always been clear to everyone in a region where people were known to travel hundreds of kilometres on foot or by donkey cart to register a birth or a death or to clear up a pension problem. The South African Premier instantly recognized the utility of the Canadian experience on his first visit there, before he became Premier.

The DG of this province explained the twinning as being "needs based," with one major focus (in addition to the one-stop initiative) being to strengthen the Office of the Premier. Here again, the Canadian model appealed strongly. A reorganization was under way to combine the functions of the Office of the DG that support the Premier with the work of the Office of the Cabinet. IDRC (PoG) had been monitoring the content of what was done and keeping the relationships active. As a result, the province now has a management-committee system unique among South African provinces. A major element in this system is a biweekly meeting of all Cabinet ministers with all departmental DGs.

We now have an integrated system where there is trust and understanding of the dynamics between politicians and officials. This is a sign of mature leadership, and it underlies our decision to decentre our model to give departmental ministers more responsibility . . . we do not manage by fear but by consultation.

They had now agreed on a joint capacity-building program for MECs and heads of departments. Further, officials in the national government became interested in the organizational format and

processes chosen to strengthen the Office of the Premier and were promoting this model to other provinces.

Another feature of this twinning was the personal bond that had been forged between the two premiers. They had become acquainted before the South African elections when the PoG sponsored a trip for the South African Premier-to-be, then a labour leader who had been jailed under apartheid, and the Canadian Premier decided to assist the young man of 33 as much as he could. When the Canadian Premier visited South Africa in 1997, he attended Cabinet meetings, including the touring Cabinet meetings, and he personally made an enormous contribution by

helping the team members pace their expectation in facing the challenge of South Africa. He “brought perspective.” He told them his government had been in power for 4 years before he felt able to plan his next government’s approach. In short, the visit had “tailored their excitement and given them a better grasp of the time horizon.”

Pending the final touches to the reorganization of the Office of the Cabinet, the DG had delegated the function of the Cabinet Secretary to an officer who joined the government in September 1996. Her formal educational background had been in public administration and industrial psychology, but, as with most other senior South African civil servants after the election, she was not fully prepared by her educational background to meet the challenges of office in a vast, poor, and thinly populated province. She had been on a study tour to Canada in 1997, which had been exciting and had opened her up to new possibilities.

The Cabinet Secretary’s responsibilities include personally reviewing all the materials going to Cabinet, recording Cabinet minutes and decisions, controlling Cabinet papers, and setting up the Cabinet’s schedule, including managing all the logistics (travel, meeting places, preliminary publicity, etc.) of the Cabinet meetings in the region. In this rural province, the population outside of the capital has no easy access to either government itself or even knowledge of what the government is doing. There are no electronic media, newspaper coverage is thin, and thus information must be by word of mouth. Every couple of weeks the whole Cabinet travels to a different region to hold a community meeting, after which it comes back and communicates with officials so that they can address those problems for which it has capacity. She arranged this feedback. (The geography of the province and the lack of transport infrastructure are constants in all aspects of the work: during the interview, the Cabinet Secretary was interrupted by the provincial DG for a word on a community problem at the furthest reaches of the province. The outcome, impressive even in Canadian geographical terms, was a decision to make use of the whole of Sunday to go by car to attend a 2-hour meeting, a return journey of 1 000 km.)

Provincial officials were agreed that using the PoG required investments in time: time for study and selection of the program after comparison with other aid offerings; time for selection of their own officials for travel and for collaboration with visitors; time for briefings; and time for all other interactions (including dealing with the evaluator!). But they felt it was imperative that they make all such time investments so as to extract the major benefit from all contacts.

Provincial line departments

The DG of a provincial department that combined health, welfare, and environmental functions made the point that the provincial governments were by their very nature line functions. More than 80% of his province’s budget was allocated to his department and the education department. As a South African medical doctor with a special expertise in community medicine and prestigious graduate medical qualifications, in addition to basic medical training, he was in several respects typical of the new cadre of South African top officials. He had taken up his position in 1995; his major experience

before that time had been as a lecturer in medicine in Durban. Nonetheless, he was recognized as a good administrator.²

He strongly believed that it had become necessary to use the twinning agreements to address the managerial capacities in his vast areas of responsibility: hospital management, including remote clinics; transport management for the fleet of medical vehicles, as well as a small plane bought with the help of the Red Cross to bring emergency relief to the remote areas; industrial and mining waste management, including military waste from a tank-testing facility; and occupational medicine, health, and safety. These were only some of the major areas in which he needed to set up structures and establish processes with the help of the PoG.

This DG had so far been assisted by the PoG in visiting Canada. He had drawn great benefit from a well-structured study tour of a week and a half that provided knowledge on hospital management and provisioning and private-sector involvement. He also valued assistance from Canadian officials, who had led a series of workshops in South Africa on how policy can be defined and routed to Cabinet and on the basic requirements of submissions to Cabinet, including financial aspects. In addition, the DG had been able to attend the 1996 PoG workshop on planning and budgeting, held in South Africa.

Another head of a provincial line department had been on a 2-week study tour of the twinned Canadian province. The visit had been well programmed (“tailor made”) for her needs, and she found a great deal of relevance in the institutions she visited. Being a DG of agriculture, she admired and hoped to emulate the Canadian provincial risk-management

² At the time of the interview, he was also personally running the major hospital in the province, as an incidental job. The previous director had left, and no replacement could be found because the families of well-qualified South Africans were not used to the comparative isolation of this province.

efforts, the crop-insurance schemes, and the programs for women and young farmers. After her own trip, she was able to send a small number of farmers to her twinned Canadian province, under the wing of “commercial people,” and this trip likewise had benefits. This DG was adamant that she needed to pursue ways of increasing the competence of small-scale farmers, young farmers, and women, not purely for technical agricultural knowledge but largely for helping to establish the organizational structures to assist with marketing, distribution, storage, and — as in agribusiness — issues of sustainability. These were management issues and involved the kind of planning that would support food security in the longer term.

National department twins

A middle-level manager in a national department was also adamant that really significant educational benefit could be drawn from even a short study tour. In December 1997, this officer had accompanied his DG to look at the Canadian counterpart department. The DG asked the host department to send over two Canadian officials to assess his department, which was done in January. The DG accepted the Canadian recommendations and was using them as a lever to bring his provincial counterparts into a “consortium” to settle on one set of standards for a number of areas.

In the same period, his official was sharing his experiences with South African officials at the operational level. As soon as he returned from Canada, the officer had insisted on being hooked up to the Internet at his work station. This accomplished, he downloaded Canadian department’s documentation and distributed samples to his colleagues. Soon he had colleagues at his work station searching for more examples. The South Africans used the Canadian site to obtain insight into ways of managing and recording foreign property. At that point, South Africa did not yet have an efficient

computerized means of listing its own possessions on foreign soil.

Both the DG and his officer considered themselves twinned with their “mentor” Canadian federal department. “We are going for it,” where “it” was the challenge of benefiting from Canadian knowledge, expertise, and experience of transformation, in view of its many similarities to the South African department’s own path to modernizing its processes. Their next move would be to send over two chief directors for 2 weeks of intense, programed exposure to Canadian practice related to their major files. This completed, they would be accompanied back to South Africa by a Canadian counterpart, who would study the South African context and

make sure that the South African officer’s “application notions” were appropriate. An official from the operational level in each of his department’s major responsibilities would then do the same. Selected officials whose work was in technical areas, such as investment analysis, would stay in Canada for a period of from 4 to 6 weeks.

The DG and his officer felt that the link with the Canadian federal department was “incredibly strong.” It was based on shared businesses and the processes of change. The excitement and stimulation provided by electronic communication solidified the relationship. This provided a constant motivation to ensure one had got the ideas right and then worked on the transfer of ideas “all the way down,” until the ideas became part of institutional practice. Even now, this officer was interacting day by day and sharing analysis and practical support with his Canadian counterparts. Also, a large number of the officer’s colleagues “had got wind” of the Canadian collaboration, in large part because of the Internet experiment, and so had a readiness to take the new ideas on board and act on them.

In addition, the excellent support and follow-through provided by IDRC (PoG) throughout the entire experience sustained the relationship. “You know someone is serious about you and your time when all the arrangements work like clockwork and when the program manager has opened doors for you to places you did not know existed.” Doubtless, the official thought, at some point there would be divergence between the Canadian example and his department. But the fact remained that Canada gave this national department a wide range of practical examples to show how it could modify and modernize its processes. A professional bond has been created through these mutual endeavours.

Ad hoc PoG users

The nodal function of the PoG has already been mentioned in regard to its ability to fulfil the information needs of those with whom it has had a formal relationship. But South Africans also get in touch with the PoG on an ad hoc, or casual, basis. One such South African among the interviewees related that while doing some work for the National Council of the Provinces she heard about the PoG’s work in public participation, which was “a very helpful quick shortcut” for information. This respondent had also been in touch with the PoG for background information on conflict-of-interest legislation elsewhere and “got reams of information.”

Indirect benefits

Good relations

Good relations between countries and general public relations were the aspects of the PoG most often spontaneously mentioned by interviewees and mentioned by more than two thirds of the South Africans. “You have to remember that we do not spend all day chatting with representatives of foreign governments, so when we do make a contact that endures, it takes on considerable importance in our work and social lives.” The “payoff” is seen in ease of subsequent contacts. For example, when one of

the Canadian provincial premiers arrived on a trade mission, the premier was astonished to be met with a “huge explosion” of hospitality from the South African side. There is no mystery about this: the welcome was generated by the twinning arrangement.

The virtual organization

Second most frequently mentioned by interviewees was a side effect of PoG activities, suggested by South Africans who had either traveled to Canada in 1994 for the conference on the Constitution or had participated in the many workshops and other forums sponsored by the PoG since then. This was primarily an effect of the 2-week constitutional work in Ottawa, which “blended the people on the trip,” creating for them a South African network as well as a Canadian network, by force of having shared an important experience. One respondent brought to mind that even the ANC partisans were not “one thing” and that most of them had been dropped into their jobs after the 1994 election and suffered a certain amount of isolation. Thus, their various “lists of participants” became part of their local operations and consultation-seeking; the PoG activities had “created colleagues” for them.

Another senior official noted that what was done in the past (under the apartheid system) in terms of management systems and of even certain kinds of important economic policies “was done in a vacuum.” The PoG method of putting South Africans in contact with large numbers of Canadians with vast experience and comparative knowledge and with South Africans who were new to one another was “tremendously exciting, because you get to learn from other people, and you have control of how quickly the ideas take shape in your own mind.”

Likewise, there is a Canadian “virtual PoG.” This is the network of South Africans and Canadians who continue to work together. Canadian

governments have contributed more than 12 unbilled person-years of formal time to the PoG from its inception to the time of writing. This does not count time spent in preparation of materials and certainly not time many of these individuals continue to spend by helping via e-mail and other forms of communication between Africa and Canada.

Trade

In the provinces, trade relations and negotiations develop as side effects of twinning, but these activities and the time spent on them are not funded by IDRC. So far, trade arrangements in North West Province have focused on a South African provincial furniture factory, food processing, and hog farming. There have also been a couple of South African trade missions to Canada.

Indirect benefits for Canada

Some indirect benefits flow back to Canada in the form of knowledge, noted one official. There are many potential joint ventures opening up in front of Canadian eyes while Canadians collaborate with their twinned South African departments. South Africa is on an uneasy edge between being a First World and being a Third World country. It has very high skills in some areas, without the budget to universalize them. Thus, it has to apply its intelligence to finding efficient solutions, some of which are of interest to Canadians. First on the list are robust, streamlined, and integrated software solutions to avoid the need to constantly upgrade desk-top machines. The South Africans have given more thought to some such issues, simply because of the need for affordability.

One person’s direct benefit is another’s indirect benefit — indirect because it was felt as a bonus on top of timely help. Thus, the most important indirect benefit one respondent could think of was “the constant transfer of skills.” The Canadian provincial counterparts “bring across their message very

well,” such that those who work with them either quickly or gradually “get to understand the whole concept.” There is a constant transfer of both skills and concepts, not only between those working directly together, but downward and horizontally as well. The result is a “general education.” In this sense, the PoG was (albeit secondarily) an educational program, one that was institutionalized within the cooperating bureaucracies.

Canadian partners resident in Canada

The interviews with Canadian partners resident in South Africa are reported separately because the questions differed. The Canadian partners were asked to concentrate on three basic topics: the “practitioner method” as a means of increasing the governing capacity of persons with little experience for their important positions; the various vehicles or instruments that the PoG uses (advice, workshops and conferences, study tours, and the longer exchanges of civil servants); and what Canadians get out of the PoG.

Practitioner method

All seven Canadians were enthusiastic about the utility of having practitioners helping practitioners. As Allan Blakeney pointed out, the first requirement, that for learning, can be met in such one-on-one relationships: one can learn where the other person is starting from and thus build forward effectively on the actual platform of skills possessed by that person. Mr Blakeney, however, looked beyond the immediate. He saw the PoG’s importance in bringing to fruition the promise of the political skills of South African politicians, which he found to be of a very high order: “They understand the need for compromise and can work together extremely skilfully to arrive at goals that are satisfactory to sharply different constituencies.” The gap was between the goals and the ground: “When it comes to implementation skills . . . how to improve school attendance, or how to build more houses, they [South Africans] seem to have fewer skills.”

Frank McKenna said that he was “delightfully surprised with the efficacy of the governance program.” He assessed the twinning between his province and a South African one as extremely successful, particularly given that New Brunswick was on the scene with a mature view of procedure and processes just as the South African province was setting up as a new government. On the practitioner method, he had this to say:

I found the relations between public servants to be strong and most gratifying The experience was very positive for our public servants and very humbling. For the South African public servants, it was akin to a program of mentorship. It appeared to be extremely productive. In fact, I was very impressed with the commitment and calibre of the South African public servants.

Claire Morris found the PoG’s practitioner method to be “an extraordinary approach to capacity-building.” New Brunswick received a South African Premier-to-be in the year he would be elected, in anticipation of

his possible future responsibilities. New Brunswick provided a fixed program and exposed him to Cabinet and Cabinet committees. The South African guest also accompanied Premier McKenna for a number of days to get a feel for the rhythm of governing a province and the types of support he would need. In a sense, Mrs Morris has played the role of the public servant, as described by Mr Blakeney: she has “made it happen” and has sustained the two-Premier vision for creative collaboration. She has also rolled up her sleeves and put her own practitioner skills on the line on several occasions. Most recently, in the spring of 1997, she spent 2 weeks working with a Swedish consultant to develop procedures for document handling in the South African province and took part in a retreat with provincial ministers and heads of departments.

Don Leitch, Claire Morris' counterpart in Manitoba, plays a similar role of sustaining the collaboration between his province and its South African twin. In his view, the practitioner method is a good one because it can be very finely targeted. Manitoba has always felt that it should respond to South Africa's needs as their own people see them. The rule is "never prescribe the fix." The approach is rather to "talk it through" with the South Africans, to give encouragement, and where possible to add the various approaches that have been tried in Canada to the array of emerging options. Because of the extreme financial stringency in South Africa, the "responsive" mode has meant that mentorship has been concentrated on budgeting, planning, recording, and tracking — finding ways to "push the instructions down" into the amorphous mass of the South African civil service below the talented and organized top few layers.

Paul Hart, the Chair of the Manitoba PSC, noted that Manitoba was a good size for the partnership. As its civil-service population is only about 15 000, he said, it is relatively easy to choose individuals with known track records who can be of immediate assistance to the South Africans. He also reported on a similar program funded by CIDA and managed by the Manitoba Institute of Management, in which Manitoba civil servants became partners of their opposite numbers in some countries of the eastern Caribbean. As in the PoG exchanges, specific learning objectives were set, and it was found that considerable progress could be made in 6–9 months. "The ability to relate in a practical way is a very valuable tool. People develop relationships where they e-mail, or fax, or phone on a variety of issues."

Michael Mendelson observed that a person with "real, live experience of a deep kind" can make a valuable contribution in a few months. What is important, he thought, is to support the administration in

stabilizing the country's transition to rule by law, as opposed to rule by gun. "This is what will assist development: stability in government and a working economy." Like Richard Simeon, Mr Mendelson observed that Canada's being in South Africa early and developing a good policy legacy through the apartheid era had a fair amount to do with the acceptability of Canadian mentors to individual South Africans. Dr Simeon has had six major experiences with South Africa, four of them independently of the PoG. He thought that the practitioner mode was a good choice in that its hands-on approach allows it to avoid being didactic, which is what offends South Africans about many other aid programs.

Amelita Armit, whose position is in the federal PSC, agreed that the practitioner mode, along with mentorship, is "essential." Only by undertaking work together do people develop relationships sufficiently grounded for them to define, refine, and address their needs. She thought the biggest gains were to be realized by sending Canadians to help at working levels: "These people want practical help." In terms of mentorship in intergovernmental arrangements generally, Ms Armit also thought that involving Canadian federal public servants alongside provincial public servants was a "reality check" for all sides; in her view, the South Africans she met at the national level had not grasped the "lack of standardization" that pervaded Canadian federal arrangements, but at the same time the Canadian provinces had something of a tendency to exaggerate their autonomy.

All seven respondents saw value in the full range of techniques used by the PoG, with a bias in favour of longer exchanges at working levels. Nonetheless, all found the conferences and workshops useful — in fact, irreplaceable — for getting exposure to issues and personalities, and everyone thought there was value for South Africans in short study tours in that they build a basis for future communication and "telegraph" the basic information.

What's in it for Canadians

"Look, we are just ecstatic to do this," is how Don Leitch responded when asked what Canadians get out of their investment of time and money, not to speak of the physical wear and tear. Working actively

in South Africa means that “you rethink all your basic premises.” For this reason, those at the top of the Manitoba civil service see the exchanges as an unparalleled tool for developing and motivating their own future leadership. Communication and diagnostic skills are sharpened, and cynicism flies out the window because people are reminded of how important stability and

democracy are when you cannot take them for granted. During the period of his involvement, Mr Leitch also noticed that South African exports to Canada had increased: “This is a good way to help.” In his partnership, he had tried to help the South African public servants learn how to “broker” trade for their province.

Claire Morris was of the same opinion about the usefulness to Canadians of the South African openings as developmental assignments. Her approach was to “broaden out the circle” in New Brunswick, involving different people to the extent possible as opportunities arise for assignment to South Africa. Both she and Amelita Armit noted a tremendous enthusiasm among her colleagues for the idea that they could personally make a contribution. Mrs Morris gave a seminar after one visit, in the expectation that 10 people would show up, and 50 came. Ms Armit noted that the PSC personnel who had hosted South African delegations stayed in contact with them, sending materials back and forth. And when the PSC had a speaker from South Africa, “it was full house.”

Others made similar observations. They saw a strong desire on the part of Canadians to help the South Africans stabilize their new democracy so that the benefits of good government could at last be felt by the mass of the population. They thought most skilled civil servants could strongly respond to the PoG because it offers them a chance to apply the skills they acquired in a “comfortable” country to help make another country more comfortable. They worried that the people at the top in South Africa would simply get burned out from being overwhelmed and overworked.

All hoped that the PoG would survive and evolve. The provincial respondents uniformly emphasized that they could not possibly continue their work without the PoG. The time devoted by provincial civil servants was in itself a huge contribution from small provinces that also operate under serious fiscal restraints. Financially, these provinces would have no capacity to fund the travel and accommodation, which is the PoG contribution.

Suggestions for future collaboration

The most apt way to summarize would be to admit that the South Africans interviewed, with two exceptions, wanted considerably more of whatever they had been getting and had suggestions in other areas, some of which do not fit the current PoG themes.

The various ideas raised can be roughly classified as follows:

- A question about where PoG mentoring efforts should be concentrated (at the centre in the executive support bodies or in line departments);
- A desire that national line departments and their provincial counterparts be given detailed analytical and legal assistance with intergovernmental development, particularly on ways to handle concurrency of jurisdiction;
- A need for help in “making budgets real” (implementing them so that departments and agencies stuck to their allocations) as well as advice on how to find a system to reward the virtuous departments, rather than continuously applying across-the-board cuts;
- Requests for Canadian help in extracting best practices from what had been learned so far by South Africans through the Canadian collaboration and compiling these practices in a book or manual;
- Suggestions that the PoG–IDRC–CIDA nexus should be clarified, as the organizational profiles

merged in recipients' minds; and

- A recommendation that some additional dedicated attention be given to developing democracy through assistance to legislatures, executives, and judiciary and through specific courses of training, exchanges, and study tours.

It should also be noted that more than half of the most senior South Africans wished that Canada would find a way to address South Africa's urgent needs in the way politicians organize themselves:

- The need to establish a "central capacity" in the President's or Deputy President's Office to endorse, track, and manage the South African government's take-up of aid;
- The need for a program of education for ministers on the role of a minister as head of administration and on best practices in relationships and links between the permanent Executive and the elected representatives;
- The need for a training module for both ministers and top civil servants on the importance of a career ("merit") public service in a parliamentary government; and
- The need for training for politicians in intergovernmental collaboration.

However, as no South African politician had asked the PoG for assistance in these areas, these issues are unlikely to be addressed before the PoG winds down, at least not by Canadians.

Summary

In the South Africans' own words, the reasons they have appreciated the PoG seem to boil down to the following:

- The solid and high-profile start provided by Dr Johnson, who built the South African network and reputation from 1992/93 onward and whose work with people before the election is remembered;
- The ease of use of the PoG, such as when it helps with diagnostic activity and start-up without requiring formal application forms or start-up costs;
- Its practitioner base;
- The "impeccable" follow-through on projects;
- Its ability to demonstrate managerial competence in all the exercises and interventions;
- Canada's constitutional similarities, its relative success as a "soft liberal" democracy, its tolerable level of corruption, and its acknowledged and instructional differences in organizational design and vocabulary;
- The PoG's knowledge of other governments and its willingness to consider issues in comparative frameworks;
- The PoG's willingness to look for practical, on-the-ground complementarity in the contributions that other countries were making or would be willing to make with collaboration;
- An extremely careful selection and screening procedure, wherein the PoG seems able to find considerable numbers of Canadians who could be characterized as personable workaholics with an openness to different cultures and a refusal to take themselves very seriously;
- The PoG's entrenched habit of seeking feedback on every detail of the study tours it supports and the twinning initiatives' adapting their practices to this feedback;
- The practice of having at least one individual take ownership of the PoG in both the receiving and the giving provinces; and
- The practice of grounding of relationships in a given situation, starting with the knowledge of the individual public servant.

In effect, the PoG manages an effort that goes well beyond its very small presence of three Special

Advisors, a Program Manager, and two officers. This larger effort is the virtual PoG, which comprises the Canadian and South African networks. It moves with the South African context, picks its projects to maximize the use of its own abilities and that of its networks, and moves and reshapes itself with the evolution of the needs and capacity of South Africa.

Appendix 1

List of Persons Interviewed

South Africans

(Except where otherwise noted, these interviews were conducted in person in South Africa, February and March 1998)

Dr Manana Bakane-Touane
Director General
Department of Agriculture
North West

Dr Steven Friedman (telephone interview)
Director
Centre for Policy Studies
Johannesburg

Mr Feroz Cachalia
Government House Leader
Gauteng Legislature

Mr B.R. Hermanus (with Ms June Moilwe)
One-Stop Service Delivery Project
Office of the Premier
Northern Cape

Mr Peter Chiapasco
Investment Analyst
Department of Public Works

Dr Barry Kistnasamy
Deputy Director General
Department of Environmental Affairs
and
Head Department of Health and Social Services
Northern Cape

Mr Jan de Waal
Director
Corporate Support Services
Office of the Premier
North West

Mr Nols du Plessis
Chief Director
Department of State Expenditure

Note: The interviewees gave the author permission to include their names in this report.

Mr Mac M. Maki
Director
Treasury
Department of Finance and Economic Affairs
North West

Mrs E.M. Papenfus
Speaker
Legislative Assembly
Northern Cape

Mr Job Mokgoro

Dr Leila Patel
Former Director General

Director General
North West

Dr Ismail Momoniat
Chief Director
Intergovernmental Relations
Department of Finance

Mr Murphy Morobe
Chair
Fiscal and Financial Commission

Dr Christina Murray (telephone interview)
Professor of Public Law
University of Cape Town

Ms Maggie Nkoane
Secretary to the Cabinet
Office of the Director General
Northern Cape

Dr Sibusiso Nkomo
Head
School of Public Management
University of Pretoria

Mr Charles Page
Director
Information Technology
Department of State Expenditure

Canadians resident in South Africa

(Interviews were conducted in person in South Africa, February and March 1998)

Mr Jean-Pierre Hamel
Senior Trade Commissioner

Mr Grant Hawes
Canadian International Development Agency
Representative in South Africa

Mr Marc Van Ameringen
Regional Director
Regional Office for Southern Africa
International Development Research Centre
Wits

Department of Welfare

Dr Pundy Pillay
Office of the Deputy President

Mr Siphoshezi (interviewed in Ottawa, December 1997)
Director General
Department of Public Works

Mr Nic Van Staden
Director
Human Resources
Office of the Premier
North West

Dr Martin van Zyl
Director General
Northern Cape

Dr Gustav Von Bratt
Chief Director
Planning
Department of Constitutional Affairs and
Constitutional Development

Ms Carolyn McMaster
Minister Counsellor
Canadian High Commission

Mr Art Perron
Canadian High Commissioner to South Africa

Canadians resident in Canada

(Interviews were conducted by telephone, letter, and e-mail, April to June 1998)

Ms Amelita Armit
Executive Director and Secretary General
Public Service Commission of Canada

The Honourable Allen E. Blakeney
Former Premier of Saskatchewan Visiting Scholar
College of Law
University of Saskatchewan

Mr Paul Hart
Chair
Public Service Commission
Government of Manitoba

Mr Don Leitch
Clerk of the Cabinet
Government of Manitoba

The Honourable Frank McKenna
Former Premier of New Brunswick
McInnes, Cooper and Robertson, Barristers and
Solicitors
Moncton, NB

Mr Michael Mendelson
Former Deputy Minister
Government of Ontario

Mrs Claire Morris
Clerk of the Executive Council and Secretary to
Cabinet
Government of New Brunswick

Dr Richard Simeon
Professor
Department of Political Science
University of Toronto
Toronto, ON

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Appendix 2 Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
ANC	African National Congress
CCMD	Canadian Centre for Management Development
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development [United Kingdom]
DG	Director General
DM	Deputy Minister
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration [South Africa]
DPWSA	Department of Public Works [South Africa]
FFC	Financial and Fiscal Commission [South Africa]

IDRC	International Development Research Centre
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
NGO	nongovernmental organization
PoG	Program on Governance [CIDA–IDRC]
PRC	Presidential Review Commission [South Africa]
PSC	Public Service Commission
PWGSC	Public Works and Government Services Canada
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAMDI	South African Management Development Institute
TBS	Treasury Board Secretariat [Canada]
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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