Evaluation Summary

Global Affairs Canada's Partnerships for Development Innovation Branch 2015-16 to 2019-20

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

Global Affairs Canada's Evaluation Division conducted an evaluation of the Partnerships for Development Innovation Branch (KFM) for the period 2015-16 to 2019-20. The objective was to determine the effectiveness of the Branch's approach to working with Canadian civil society organizations (CSOs) in advancing policy and programming objectives and engaging Canadians in international assistance.

KEY FINDINGS

- The Branch positively adjusted its structure to shifts in priorities and to added responsibilities under its mandate, however its programming to engage Canadians in international development lacked a guiding strategy despite meeting policy needs.
- Policy and program priorities and support to applicants were suited to enhance CSOs' work on gender equality though more time and sustained efforts are needed to demonstrate transformative changes.
- The Branch faced organizational challenges to meet the required engagement on policy work linked to its mandate, and had limited capacity to measure results at program level due to gaps in monitoring and evaluation systems and practices.
- Gaps in human resources stability and configuration affected the quality and reliability of responsiveness by the Branch and its use of knowledge and expertise to enhance the learning agenda.
- Branch-funded CSO programming engaged a diversity of Canadians in international assistance, and selection mechanisms encouraged to some degree a diversity of partnerships and innovative programming.
- Procedures tied to project selection and the finalization of funding agreements were lengthy, cumbersome and impacted project implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Articulate and disseminate Branch's unique role in, and value of, engaging CSOs to strengthen public engagement on Canada's development priorities.
2. Clarify Branch's policy mandate and strengthen its policy response capacity.
3. Develop and implement monitoring, evaluation and learning plans.
4. Strengthen capacity on intersectional gender equality assessment, results-based management, and grants and contribution management.
5. Improve agility on selection mechanisms and transparency in criteria and feedback that guide selection decisions.
6. KFM and corporate operations should shorten timelines associated with the Authorized Programming Process in order to improve the delivery of international assistance.