

Executive Summary

With the dramatic growth in Southern-based nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the emergence of broad social movements in both the South and North, which are defining and demanding their own type of people-centred, sustainable development, questions have arisen about the appropriate role for Northern international development NGOs in the field of international development and cooperation. Currently, Northern NGOs are being challenged to adopt a more facilitative role in supporting sustainable and just development by utilizing their international experience, contacts, and networks in order to foster and support international links between social organizations in the North and South

This thesis presents a review of the literature on international development and NGOs, paying particular attention to David Korten's (1990) framework which outlines the generational shifts in strategic orientations of NGOs that culminate in the recent call for a fourth generational approach, described as people's movements. The literature review indicates that while there is a general understanding by Korten and other development theorists as to the possible role that *Northern* NGOs can play in fourth generation development, that understanding is based on speculation, since until recently very few NGOs have had experience with this type of development approach. This review provides the context and rationale for investigating specific cases in order to draw insights from the field.

Therefore, in order to further define the role for Northern NGOs and develop useful models for planning and programming within a fourth generation framework, the author provides a single qualitative case study of CUSO, a Canadian-based international development NGO which has recently undergone significant changes in its organizational mission and focus. These changes are intended to shift the organization's role to a fourth generational framework.

The case study of CUSO is presented in two parts. The first part provides an overview of CUSO's evolution and examines the factors that influenced the decision to shift its focus to a fourth generational framework. This part also examines the nature of this shift and how CUSO defines its role through a discussion of two key policy statements. The section ends with a discussion of the implications of the shift in respect to CUSO's role, programming, funding, and organizational culture, including practical examples of CUSO's programming activities in Latin America. In the second part, a description is given of CUSO's efforts in establishing a partnership with the Union of Ontario Indians (UOI) and its work in facilitating links between the UOI and OREWA -- an Indigenous organization from Colombia and a CUSO partner.

In the final section of the thesis, those issues raised in the case study of CUSO that have implications for Northern NGOs as well as for the fourth generation model are discussed and analyzed. In this discussion the author identifies two prominent themes that have important implications for CUSO and its ability to program effectively within a fourth generational framework. The first deals with CUSO's need to establish credibility as expressed through its commitment to domestic social change -- especially in Canada. The second deals with the survival of the organization as determined by its ability to generate sufficient funds for financing fourth generational programs. The case study indicates that these two themes present challenges and dilemmas for CUSO and as such provide practical insights into Northern NGOs role in fourth generational development.