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From Brain drain to Brain gain

Diaspora:

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Association of Universities
and Colleges of Canada



Association des universités
et collèges du Canada

Editorial

If you happen to mention “diaspora” in a context other than international development, there is a great likelihood that people will have either no idea what you are talking about or if they do, they might think that you are referring to the word “Diaspora”, used for centuries to refer to Jews living outside Babylon and in modern times outside Israel. The term has been adapted to describe the many educated professionals from developing countries who are living and working in host countries such as Canada and are still closely tied to communities in their countries or regions of origin.

In fact, today two types of diasporas are recognized: the scientific and technology diaspora – usually highly educated people who share knowledge with their country of origin – and the other whose members usually send financial or social remittances directly to their families back home.

Our cover story “From Brain drain to Brain gain,” is about the highly educated diaspora, its role and engagement in international development. This past November, freelance reporter Moira Farr attended a policy dialogue for Canadian university diaspora faculty organized by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and sponsored by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). In her article “Challenges and opportunities,” Moira explains how several guest speakers and participants from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe discussed the current “brain drain” afflicting Southern universities and institutions.

In a second story, “Change agents for the developing world,” Moira gives examples of Canadian diaspora faculty who, through the AUCC-managed flagship program University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development (UPCD) and by sharing their experience, have created a “bridge of knowledge” to the Caribbean, Asia and Africa.

Highlights of a study done by AUCC on the diaspora community and its role in international development through the UPCD program were presented at the AUCC-IDRC meeting last November. Various elements of the study are showcased in Harriet Eisenkraft’s article, “Diaspora: its contribution to the UPCD program.”

Do not miss the IDRC segment, “Tapping diasporas for development,” which takes you to Ethiopia, where a new IDRC-funded pilot project has been able to recruit and place expert volunteers from the diaspora in short-term assignments at universities in Gondar and Jimma, in northern and southern Ethiopia.

Diaspora is more than a buzzword. In today’s world, where all of us contribute as global citizens, we are being put on notice by the diaspora community about the added value that they bring, not only to the South but also to the North.

Christine Choury

Cover photo: Participants of the Hydrometeorological and Water Quality Field Course training in stream flow measurement, Guyana.



Éditorial

Si vous utilisez le mot « diaspora » dans un contexte autre que celui du développement international, il est fort probable que vos interlocuteurs ne vous comprendront pas ou croiront à tort que vous utilisez le mot dans le sens qui lui est reconnu depuis des siècles, soit pour qualifier les Juifs vivant hors Babylone ou, de nos jours, loin d’Israël. Depuis peu, le mot diaspora fait également référence aux nombreux professionnels très instruits originaires de pays en développement qui habitent et travaillent dans des pays hôtes comme le Canada et qui continuent d’entretenir des liens étroits avec leur pays ou leur région d’origine.

En fait, on reconnaît aujourd’hui deux diasporas : celle dite scientifique et technologique, habituellement formée de personnes très instruites qui partagent leur savoir avec leur pays d’origine, et la diaspora formée de personnes qui aident directement, sur les plans financier et social, leur famille restée au pays.

Notre couverture « From Brain drain to Brain gain », traite de la diaspora instruite et de son rôle en matière de développement international. En novembre dernier, la journaliste pigiste Moira Farr a assisté à un dialogue politique organisés pour les professeurs d’universités canadiennes membres de la diaspora par l’Association des universités et collèges du Canada (AUCC) et parrainé par le Centre de recherches pour le développement international (CRDI). Dans son article intitulé « Challenges and opportunities », elle relate les propos de plusieurs conférenciers et participants originaires d’Afrique, d’Asie, d’Amérique latine et d’Europe au sujet de l’actuel exode des cerveaux qui afflige les universités et les institutions du Sud.

Dans un second article intitulé « Les membres de la diaspora : agents de changement pour les pays en développement », notre journaliste donne des exemples de professeurs canadiens membres de la diaspora qui, en participant au programme phare de Partenariats universitaires en coopération et développement (PUCD) administré par l’AUCC et en partageant leur expérience, ont su créer des « passerelles de connaissances » vers les Caraïbes, l’Asie et l’Afrique.

Les points saillants d’une enquête réalisée par l’AUCC sur la diaspora et son rôle au profit du développement international par l’entremise du programme de PUCD ont été présentés lors de la rencontre AUCC-CRDI en novembre dernier. Harriet Eisenkraft reprend divers éléments de l’enquête dans l’article « Diaspora: its contribution to the UPCD program ».

Ne manquez pas de lire l’article du CRDI, « Tapping diasporas for development », qui vous emmènera en Éthiopie, où un nouveau projet pilote financé par le Centre a permis de recruter des spécialistes de la diaspora pour effectuer bénévolement des projets à court terme dans les universités de Gondar et de Jimma, dans le nord et le sud du pays.

« Diaspora » est plus qu’un mot à la mode. Dans le monde actuel, où nous sommes tous appelés à agir à titre de citoyens du monde, la diaspora nous interpelle par la valeur ajoutée qu’elle apporte non seulement aux pays du Sud, mais également aux pays du Nord.

Christine Choury

Photo en page couverture : Participants du cours d’hydrométéorologie et qualité de l’eau apprenant à mesurer le débit d’eau, Guyana.

Challenges and opportunities

by Moira Farr *The retention of well-qualified young academics has emerged as a top priority in the South. Increasingly, Southern universities are looking at partnerships that will enable their students to stay at home while specializing in postgraduate training.*

When Wisdom Tettey came to Canada to pursue graduate studies at the University of British Columbia, and later, Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, he left a homeland – Ghana – that did not have the resources to provide a stable, prosperous future to its young academics. And like many of his African colleagues, he stayed in Canada. Today, Dr. Tettey is interim dean and professor of communications and culture at the University of Calgary. He's also the founder of the Ghana Diaspora Educational and Professional Network, a growing group of Ghanaian academics throughout North America who are providing their knowledge and expertise to graduate students in Ghana, via online learning programs and an information database. Their goal is to stop the "brain drain" from their country of origin – "to keep bright young minds at home," in Dr. Tettey's words. "We can't all go back, nor

"Canada should be proud of its many successful research collaborations involving diaspora faculty in international development."

do we necessarily want to. But a lot of resources went into training me, so this is how I am giving my country a return on its investment."

International development initiatives of diaspora faculty provide returns that benefit Canada as well, a fact recognized by a growing number of Canadian universities, NGOs and granting agencies. Fostering

better engagement of Canadian university diaspora faculty in international research collaboration for development was the subject of a policy dialogue, organized by the AUCC and funded by the IDRC in Ottawa last November. The lively, day-long discussion was well attended by senior administrators and academics from both small and large Canadian universities and included several guests from Africa and Europe, as well as representatives from the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), the World University Service of Canada (WUSC), and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Dialogue stemmed from a 2008 AUCC background paper on diaspora faculty engagement at Canadian universities, including a survey of University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development (UPCD) diaspora project directors (see Harriet Eisenkraft's article on page 9).

Subjects for discussion at the November meeting included southern perspectives on key challenges and opportunities for diaspora faculty in research collaborations for development; Canadian university strategies and good practices to encourage diaspora faculty engagement; and, successful initiatives launched by granting agencies and other external stakeholders.

Dr. Boubakar Barry of the Association of African Universities (AAU), based in Ghana, asked Canadian university faculty not to forget the challenges faced by academics in developing countries: the "brain drain" out of Africa continues, meaning limited human and financial resources for those academics who remain, many of whom are aging, and are not being sufficiently replaced by a younger



PHOTO: KEN BENDIKTSEN

Dr. Wisdom Tettey, founder of the Ghana Diaspora Educational and Professional Network.



Dr. Otto Mbambe Ikomé, Université du Québec à Montréal.

“It is unconscionable to siphon brains from developing countries without contemplating the effects.”

generation of professors. Engaging diaspora faculty in building capacity at African universities and developing databases of expertise and online research tools is essential to turning the trend around, he said. His thoughts were echoed by Duma Malaza, Chief Executive Officer of Higher Education South Africa. “Due to high rates of emigration, we have a critical knowledge shortage. Diaspora faculty are key to building sustainable university infrastructure in Africa, through direct collaboration and mentoring relationships.” Dr. Malaza also pointed to an urgent need for data that tracks the success of international development projects involving universities, and a “global umbrella network” of diaspora expertise.

The Ghana diaspora network initiated by Dr. Tettey is just one example of successful knowledge transfer that would come under such an umbrella. Other success stories shared during panel discussions included Simon Fraser University’s (SFU) unique collaborations with educational institutions in India, including student-faculty exchanges in programs ranging from health promotion to providing digital

technology designed by Canadian students to the Bollywood film industry. SFU has also fostered relationships with the Indo-Canadian community in British Columbia. “We’ve collaborated with the Indian community to promote student scholarships funded by the private sector,” said Mario Pinto, SFU’s vice-president of research. “We’ve put our money where our mouth is, and convinced community partners of the value of their investment.”

“Canada should be proud of its many successful research collaborations involving diaspora faculty in international development,” said Otto Mbambe Ikomé, professor of linguistics and translation at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). Senegal, for example, now has an excellent interactive research centre and distance-learning program, thanks to Canadian research funding and support. “Africans are waking up, and these kinds of initiatives are helping them stay awake and get this continent out of stagnation.”

The ethical dimension of the “brain drain” from South to North was also discussed. Canadian postsecondary institutions have an obligation to give back to countries whose “best and brightest” come to study in Canada. “It is unconscionable to siphon brains from developing countries without contemplating the effects,” said Dr. Pinto. University programs should encourage international students to return to their home countries, but maintain their Canadian connections through regular visits and online contact. Luc Mougeot, of Canadian Partnerships at IDRC, pointed to such a pilot program at the University of Saskatchewan. “We need to set up a framework to study the success of programs like this, so we can do more work in the future, and improve and diversify existing programs.”

It’s a concern shared by other external stakeholders. Recent initiatives of the AUF in the fields of life science, engineering, biomedical and information technologies are specifically designed to contribute to scientific advancement in developing countries, said Lucie Parent of the AUF America Desk. “We want to involve diaspora faculty to promote good cooperation between North American and African universities.”

“A key takeaway message from the day of discussion”, said moderator Pari Johnston, AUCC’s director of International relations, was that “Canadian diaspora faculty appreciate support and encouragement to become catalysts in international development and research projects, but do not want necessarily to be “targeted” as a specific group” – a strategy many diaspora faculty see as marginalizing. “We don’t want to be assessed differently or singled out as diaspora,” said Dr. Ikomé of UQAM. The decision to participate in development work in a country of origin is an individual one, they point out, and diaspora faculty want to be judged for research funding and support on their merits as individuals, not as a group with (falsely assumed) shared interests and goals.

Discussion participants also raised the concern that funding levels make it difficult for developing-country partners to sustain projects over the long term. Leveraging the resources of existing initiatives and collaborating with multiple research funding partners is critical.

AUCC will continue to explore the issue, document success stories and good practice examples, and encourage new ideas and reflection amongst its member institutions with respect to how to engage as good global citizens in the context of internationalization on campus.

Diaspora:

Change agents for the developing world

by Moira Farr

Empowering social workers in Nigeria

Uzo Anucha was studying for a graduate degree in social work at the University of Windsor, Ontario, during the mid-1990s, when a professor she'd had at the University of Benin, in her home country of Nigeria, paid a visit. They talked about the problems facing those seeking social change in Nigeria, particularly in the area of women's equality. Dr. Anucha, now a professor at Toronto's York University, and her Nigerian colleague, agreed that without home-grown degree programs to provide training for social workers, the country, like many in Africa, was at a disadvantage in tackling problems of poverty, HIV/AIDS awareness and effective community organization, with an emphasis on women's rights and needs. Dr. Anucha then began looking for ways she and her Canadian university could help enhance academic social-work programs at the University of Benin.

It took time, but "SWIN-P" –

Empowering Women in Building Social Work Capacity in Nigeria – a six-year, UPCD Tier 2 project (sponsored by CIDA and administered by AUCC), was born in 2006. "Social work training has to be relevant to Nigerian real life," says Dr. Anucha, who is working alongside Canadian and Nigerian colleagues to build social-work research capacity at the University of Benin, establish infrastructure (including a library and computer lab and a community centre where social work students do placements) and professionalize social work in Nigeria. "I am convinced that with SWIN-P in the driving seat, social work will be redefined in Nigeria, and re-engineered as a truly professional field," says Nigerian project director, Dr. Chike Okolocha.

Dr. Anucha's work with colleagues in Nigeria is a prime example of how diaspora faculty are playing an integral role in the success of international partnerships between Canadian universities and their counterparts in developing countries throughout the world. "People [in Nigeria] feel you have an extra understanding of the issues, and that you are



Women at a local celebration in Nigeria.



Billboard in Abuja, Nigeria promoting HIV/AIDS prevention.

PHOTOS: GERVAN FEARON

not going to be judgmental," she says.

Canada benefits as well from the intimate knowledge and understanding of their diaspora peers. "There is no question the research enhances my teaching in Canada," says Dr. Anucha. She points by way of example to the experience of York University MSW student, Petra Okeke, who completed a four-month internship at Action Health Incorporated in Lagos,

Nigeria. "It was the most eye-opening and educative experience of the year for me," Ms. Okeke wrote in a blog about attending the Third African Conference on Sexual Health and Rights, where she did a presentation for young people on building relationships. "I met a lot of strong women and men who held very distinct and clear views around the issue of sexual health access and education in Africa."



Above: Water quality awareness session for Amerindian school children in Guyana.

Irrigation training in Southern Ontario with (at left) Canadian Project Director Chandra Madramootoo.

Improving water management training in the Caribbean

The Caribbean Water Initiative (CARIWIN), a partnership between McGill University and the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) in Barbados, seeks to enhance water quality and access throughout the Caribbean, by improving training in water management at CIMH. Chandra Madramootoo, Dean of McGill's faculty of agricultural and environmental sciences, and Canadian project director for CARIWIN, is originally from Guyana, and says he has had a decades-long interest in improving the quality of hydrologic data in the Caribbean. With this CIDA-funded initiative since 2006, he and his colleagues have been challenged to include community outreach as a major project component, particularly around the issue of gender equity in water use and availability. "Women are the traditional drawers of water," Dr.

Madramootoo points out, and they are taking the lead in water-quality projects in the Caribbean. "They have a lot to teach us about the quality of water. They can tell you in detail if it's good for washing or cooking just by looking at it."

Dr. Madramootoo's students are doing a variety of pilot projects, including surveys of water usage in order to move from theory and anecdote to the development of good scientific data on which to base the region's future water strategies. With his contacts and understanding of the Caribbean, he's been able to make connections (with top engineers and politicians, for instance) and open doors for students, in a manner similar to that described by Dr. Anucha. "Growing up in the region, you get a feel for the issues in a very visceral way. You put on that perspective when you get off the plane. You know what the constraints are and you can help bridge that gap – you are viewed as "one of us."

Building environmental governance capacity in Bangladesh

At the University of Manitoba, Emdad Haque, Canadian project director, is opening doors with North South University in Bangladesh, in a broad-based initiative to build environmental governance capacity and ultimately reduce poverty in the region. Dr. Haque, originally from Bangladesh himself, is part of on-going community consultation, to help people manage their own natural resources, such as wetlands, fisheries and floodplains. Through this CIDA-funded project since 2007, he and his team are also helping in undergraduate and graduate curriculum development at North South University. Another aspect of the project is



Above: Local level workshop on the projects community developments at Borolekha, Bangladesh.

Right: University of Manitoba and North South University teams at the academic curriculum development workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh.



a needs and capacity assessment of human resources in environmental management and governance throughout Bangladesh. Gender issues are a big part of the program, with experts from partner institutions conducting workshops and designing a manual on the “greening” of micro-credit for use by community organizations, many of which serve women trying to develop their own businesses. Making these women a part of the decision-making process when it comes to managing the country’s natural resources is key to the sustainability of any environmental strategy in Bangladesh.

Giving back what they’ve gained

For all three Canadian academics, giving back to their countries of origin serves to fulfill individual and institutional goals and to build working models for successful north-south research collaborations. Students, other academic colleagues and community groups clearly benefit from the research and networking capabilities

of diaspora faculty in developing countries. While recognizing the value of the unique knowledge and background resources they bring to international projects, they caution against creating unrealistic expectations of what they can do for southern colleagues, or establishing Canadian development strategies that would single out diaspora faculty as a distinct group in a way that marginalizes and burdens them with extra responsibilities. “When you make ‘diaspora faculty’ a

distinctive category, are you injecting guilt?” asks Dr. Haque. “We should think these policies through, look at the good practices and ask what the diaspora can bring to the table in a catalytic role.”

“You can’t force people to do things,” says Dr. Madramootoo. “The best approach is to put programs in place that people from the diaspora want to contribute to, in a way that gives back to Canada, their university and their country of origin.”

Tapping diasporas for development

by James Boothroyd

WANTED: Ethiopian Canadian physiotherapist with clinical and/or academic expertise for a volunteer 3-6 week assignment to train faculty at Ethiopia's first university physio program. Amharic an asset.

PHOTO: TEMESGHEN HAILU

Ads like this are now circulating in Canada's Ethiopian diaspora, thanks to a pilot project supported by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) – and whoever lands the job can expect a big welcome.

"We have 120 hospitals in the country but without highly qualified physiotherapists we don't have regular rehabilitation services," says Atinkut Alimirrew, head of the department of physiotherapy at Gondar University in northern Ethiopia.

Mr. Alimirrew is 24 years old, and his six other colleagues are just as young. All were among the first cohort of students to graduate two years ago from Gondar's new physiotherapy program. "We don't have any senior staff – people with academic and clinical expertise – to teach us or update our knowledge," he says. This situation should change in early 2009, as Mr. Alimirrew and his colleagues become part of a pilot project to explore new methods of boosting development by tapping the energy and expertise of Canada's Ethiopian diaspora.

The 18-month pilot grew out of solid research, funded over a number of years by IDRC and led by the Association of Higher Education and Development (AHEAD). A group of Ethiopian Canadians founded AHEAD in 1999 to raise money for bursaries and textbooks for medical students in Ethiopia. Its efforts were limited, however, by a lack of capacity, funding and partnerships. In recent years, AHEAD has broadened its focus to include research on diaspora engagement in development work and efforts to mobilize Canada's Ethiopian diaspora. AHEAD's research has revealed a disconnect. Diasporas in Canada and other high-income countries maintain strong emotional, social and financial links with family and friends in their countries of origin. They also give generously to international development. But few mechanisms exist to harness the power of these communities for productive development initiatives in their countries of origin.

The pilot, therefore, tests a new connecting mechanism. Beginning last August, AHEAD

teamed up with two non-government organizations, CUSO-Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) and VSO Ethiopia, to recruit and place expert volunteers from the diaspora in short-term assignments at universities in Gondar and Jimma, in northern and southern Ethiopia. To augment the impact of these assignments, volunteers and host organizations will work together before and after the placements. The research team will also document the experience, plan a second phase and establish a network of stakeholders in the two countries with a view to turning the pilot project into an ongoing program.

"This is something quite new in Canada, working with diaspora groups on long-term development, and keeping volunteers involved after they return," says Theo Breedon, the CUSO-VSO National Volunteering Development Officer. In the past, diaspora groups have tended to focus on fundraising and emergency relief – but that is changing. In addition to the Ethiopian initiative, CUSO-VSO is participating in development projects with groups of Guyanese and Filipino Canadians and working on a financing framework with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) that could support diaspora volunteering over the next five years.

Bathseba Belai, who carried out the AHEAD research, says that while many Canadian immigrants want to help with development, they don't know how to do so. Their representative organizations do not have the capacity to run programs, or they are very busy establishing a career in Canada. "A lot of diaspora professionals do not have six months to stay on site, so three-to-six week assignments are more realistic," she says.

Ms. Belai was part of the three-person delegation of CUSO-VSO and AHEAD representatives that visited universities in



Members of VSO Ethiopia staff in Addis Ababa along with AHEAD and CUSO-VSO delegation from Canada.

Gondar and Jimma last November to identify potential volunteer placements. Physiotherapy training – the first of four assignments during the pilot – would fill a gaping hole in Ethiopia's medical system. Wracked by famines, wars, and a mounting burden of HIV, the country is near the bottom of the United Nations human development index; in other words, in need of healing hands. By further training his fledgling faculty, Mr. Alimirrew said, Canada would kick-start hospital rehabilitation in his country, benefiting thousands of Ethiopians, including accident and stroke victims, patients recovering from surgery, and the soaring numbers of people suffering common side-effects of newly available HIV antiretroviral therapy.

Mr. Alimirrew and his colleagues teach in English. But what they really need is an Ethiopian Canadian with some Amharic, the first language of his faculty, and a familiarity with Ethiopian ways of teaching.

Mr. Alimirrew's commitment, and that of other university leaders, impressed the CUSO-VSO and AHEAD delegation. "It was very humbling," Ms. Belai recalls. "I came back really wanting to fill these placements."

Diaspora: its contribution to the UPCD program

by Harriet Eisenkraft

Canadian diaspora academics play an important role both in assisting with relationships abroad and transforming the communities in which they settle. So say the Canadian government, leaders in the postsecondary sector and even H.E. SHEIKHA HAYA RASHED AL KHALIFA, a past-president of the United Nations General Assembly.

With this in mind, the AUCC collaborated with past and present UPCD project directors who are members of the diaspora from developing countries and conducted a study last year. Its goal was to shed light on the contributions these faculty members make to the international development work of Canadian universities. The report parses out their particular skills and their impact on higher education partnerships around the globe.

“We bring knowledge based on our understanding of the other country. The diaspora is only one part. We are hired for our educational qualification, our research and our teaching,” says Uzo Anucha, associate professor, school of social work, York University and an adjunct professor at

University of Windsor. Dr. Anucha is the Canadian director of a UPCD social work project in Nigeria (story featured on page 5).

Defined as faculty members born outside of Canada and maintaining strong ties to the culture/ language of their country or region of origin, a majority of the study’s 25 respondents have been living here for more than 20 years. Diaspora individuals from developing nations have been project directors on 18 percent of the 154 UPCD projects that CIDA has approved since 1994.

Reflecting their origins, respondents have carried out their development work mainly in Asia and Africa, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean. All of them wanted to contribute directly to reducing poverty in these countries or regions. In most cases, important influences included their knowledge of the local language, culture and subject matter and an existing network of contacts. Almost unanimously, they affirmed their desire to promote Canada.

“Diaspora faculty are in a unique position,” says Emdad Haque, professor and director of the University of Manitoba’s Natural Resource Institute, who has worked as a Canadian faculty member on environmental and resource projects in several southern countries, including Bangladesh, his country of origin, for more than two decades. “I bring Canadian values and ideals. And I understand the [developing country] insider view.” A renowned scholar and author of several books, today Dr. Haque is the Canadian director for a UPCD six- year project in Bangladesh (story featured on page 6), to help a nation that hopes to move forward in economic growth while preserving its natural environment, he says.

Respondents have worked in disciplines ranging from those fostering intellectual or

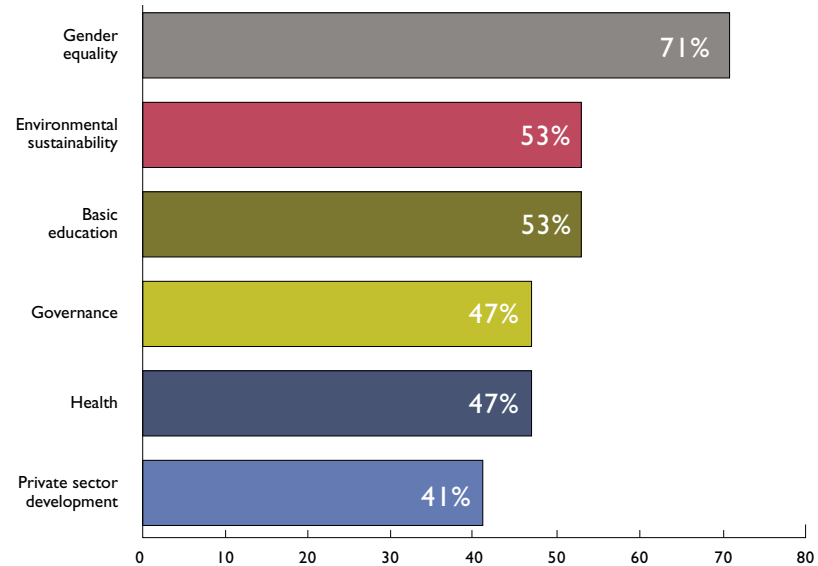


Figure 2: CIDA priority sectors addressed by UPCD diaspora project directors

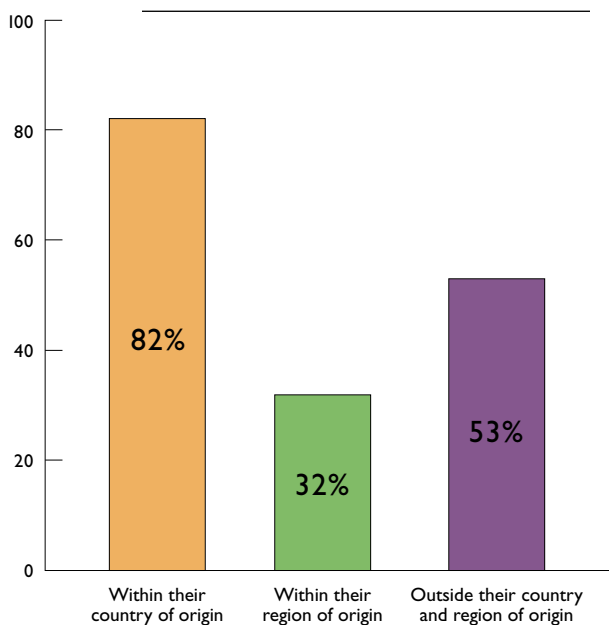


Figure 1: Countries and regions of engagement of UPCD diaspora project directors

academic skills to those advancing economic development to others that built political capital. The common UPCD experience is that “there is enormous potential for policy influence by project directors...considering the importance given to research, especially when their research is relevant to policy makers.” The multi-decade efforts by Dr. Haque and his colleagues on development projects eventually resulted in legislation on resettlement and sustainability.

“If you have familiarity with the local context, you can understand the opportunities to influence policy a little more,” says Dr. Anucha.”

A majority of respondents say that their programs addressed gender equality, a CIDA priority sector.

The survey also notes that diaspora faculty makes salient contributions to the internationalization of Canadian universities. Most respondents say that they discuss, in depth, the realities of the developing world to colleagues and students. They engage them in fieldwork and share curriculum development with their university communities. They may offer forums for cross-cultural dialogue in the classroom, with the hope that they will lead to better cross-cultural understandings. More

Le présent article est la version en français de l'article présenté à la page 5

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than 90 percent of respondents believe that these North-South collaborations lead to scientific knowledge-sharing.

Furthermore, respondents to the diaspora study said a lack of recognition and reward by their universities were not major barriers when considering whether or not to undertake UPCD or international development projects. These findings differ to some degree from a former, and broader, AUCC internationalization survey (2007): it reported that paucity of recognition, reward and internal institutional support ranked second and third in a list of three barriers to faculty engagement in research collaboration with developing country partners (with 47 percent and 39 percent respectively).

Funded by IDRC, AUCC also conducted research in 2008 and hosted a policy dialogue on recognition and reward of Canadian university faculty involved in international research collaboration for development. From this emerged a better understanding of both formal practices, including hiring, tenure and promotion, and informal practices, including measures that convey how much a university values its faculty members. The AUCC study concluded that UPCD project directors have already attained tenure and are generally experienced in their fields. These faculty members may be less concerned with formal recognition than with addressing other factors and challenges related to engaging in international development cooperation. The diaspora study also revealed that the level of recognition varies from one institution to another.

Universities recognize that internationalization is important to the institution and its role in an increasingly globalized world. Dr. Anucha brings students with her to Nigeria as interns, an initiative that the Canadian university partner funds at her request. One project leader has learned enough to head her own program in another part of the country. Dr. Haque says that his institution is fully committed to international initiatives. It also provides infrastructure including computers, office space and financial support for staffing.

Internationalization relationships have reciprocal benefits for all involved, says Dr. Anucha, and Dr. Haque agrees. He says diaspora members have a hand in conveying multicultural values and issues, both in and out of the Canadian classroom. "Diversity," he adds, "strengthens us."

Les membres de la diaspora : agents de changement pour les pays en développement

par Moira Farr

Du pouvoir d'action pour les travailleurs sociaux du Nigeria

Au milieu des années 1990, Uzo Anucha étudie aux cycles supérieurs en travail social à l'Université de Windsor, en Ontario, quand elle reçoit la visite d'un professeur qui lui a enseigné à l'Université du Bénin, dans son Nigeria natal. Ils discutent des obstacles aux changements sociaux dans ce pays, surtout en ce qui touche l'égalité des femmes. Mme Anucha, qui enseigne maintenant à l'Université York à Toronto, et son collègue nigérian sont d'avis qu'en l'absence de programmes d'études en travail social conçus dans leur pays, le Nigeria est mal outillé, comme nombre de pays africains, pour s'attaquer à la pauvreté, à la sensibilisation au VIH/sida, au renforcement de l'efficacité des organismes communautaires et, surtout, aux questions des droits et des besoins des femmes. Mme Anucha se met alors à chercher des moyens pour elle et son établissement canadien de contribuer à améliorer les programmes de travail social à l'Université du Bénin.

Après un certain temps, le projet « SWIN-P » (Empowering Women in Building Social Work Capacity in Nigeria-Donner du pouvoir aux femmes en consolidant les capacités du Nigeria en travail social), d'une durée de six ans, réalisé dans le cadre du volet 2 du programme de PUCD, financé par l'ACDI et administré par l'AUCC, est mis sur pied en 2006. « La formation en travail social doit être adaptée à la réalité des Nigériens », explique Mme Anucha, qui collabore avec des collègues canadiens et nigériens à renforcer les capacités de recherche de l'Université du Bénin, à mettre en place une infrastructure (bibliothèque, laboratoire informatique et centre communautaire où des étudiants en travail social effectuent des stages) et à faire reconnaître le travail social comme

profession au Nigeria. « Je suis persuadé qu'il sera possible, grâce au rôle moteur du projet SWIN-P, de redéfinir la pratique du travail social au Nigeria pour en faire une véritable profession », explique Chike Okolocha, directeur du projet au Nigeria.

Le travail réalisé par Mme Anucha et ses collègues nigériens montre bien le rôle que peuvent jouer les professeurs de la diaspora dans la réussite des partenariats entre universités canadiennes et établissements des pays en développement. « Les gens [au Nigeria] ont l'impression que nous comprenons vraiment leurs problèmes et craignent moins d'être jugés », explique-t-elle.

Le Canada profite aussi des connaissances approfondies des professeurs de la diaspora. « Mes travaux de recherche profitent à coup sûr à mes activités d'enseignement au Canada », précise Mme Anucha. Elle cite l'exemple d'une étudiante à la maîtrise en travail social à l'Université York, Petra Okeke, qui a effectué un stage de quatre mois au sein de l'organisme Action Health Incorporated à Lagos, au Nigeria. « Ce fut l'expérience la plus révélatrice et la plus formatrice pour moi cette année », écrit-elle sur un blogue portant sur la troisième conférence sur la santé sexuelle et les droits en Afrique, où elle a présenté un exposé à l'intention des jeunes sur l'établissement de relations. « J'ai rencontré beaucoup d'hommes et de femmes aux fortes personnalités qui ont exprimé des points de vue divergents et très clairs sur la santé sexuelle et l'éducation en Afrique. »

Améliorer la formation sur la gestion de l'eau dans les Caraïbes

L'initiative de gestion de l'eau dans les Caraïbes (CARIWIN), réalisée en

partenariat avec l'Université McGill et l'Institut de météorologie et d'hydrologie des Caraïbes à la Barbade, vise à accroître la qualité de l'eau et l'accès à cette ressource partout dans les Caraïbes en améliorant la formation offerte par l'Institut sur la gestion de l'eau. Chandra Madramootoo, doyen de la faculté des sciences de l'agriculture et de l'environnement à l'Université McGill et directeur du volet canadien du projet CARIWIN, est Guyanais et s'intéresse depuis plusieurs décennies à l'amélioration de la qualité des données sur l'eau dans les Caraïbes. Cette initiative financée par l'ACDI depuis 2006 l'a amené, avec ses collègues, à relever le défi d'inclure au projet d'importantes activités de communication avec la collectivité, particulièrement concernant l'équité hommes-femmes en matière d'accès à l'eau. « Ce sont traditionnellement les femmes qui puisent l'eau, » souligne-t-il, ajoutant qu'elles sont les moteurs des projets sur la qualité de l'eau dans les Caraïbes. « Elles en ont beaucoup à nous apprendre sur la qualité de l'eau. Un seul coup d'œil leur suffit pour dire avec exactitude si l'eau peut être utilisée pour faire la lessive ou pour cuisiner. »

Les étudiants de M. Madramootoo réalisent divers projets pilotes, dont des enquêtes sur l'utilisation de l'eau, dans le but de passer de la théorie et des faits ponctuels à la collecte de données scientifiques valables destinées à établir des stratégies de gestion de l'eau pour la région. Il a mis à profit un phénomène analogue à celui décrit par Mme Anucha : fort de ses relations et de sa connaissance des Caraïbes, il a pu mettre ses étudiants en contact avec des ingénieurs et des politiciens de premier plan et leur ouvrir des portes. « Le fait d'avoir grandi dans la région donne une perception instinctive des problèmes. C'est ce qu'il faut se dire en arrivant sur place. Étant au fait des obstacles, nous pouvons contribuer à combler les connaissances manquantes et sommes perçus comme "un des leurs". »

Consolider les capacités de gouvernance environnementale au Bangladesh

Emdad Haque, directeur de projet à l'Université du Manitoba, travaille à ouvrir des portes grâce à un partenariat de vaste portée avec l'Université North South du Bangladesh qui vise à consolider les capacités de gouvernance environnementale dans le



La communauté explique au Dr. Haque les problèmes d'accès aux ressources naturelles du Hakaluki Haor sous le régime présent du bail.

but de réduire la pauvreté dans la région. Originaire du Bangladesh, M. Haque participe à un processus continu de consultation publique pour aider les gens à gérer leurs ressources naturelles (marécages, poissons et terres inondables). Par l'entremise de ce projet, que l'ACDI finance depuis 2007, il contribue également avec son équipe à élaborer des programmes d'études au premier cycle et aux cycles supérieurs à l'Université North South. Il s'agit aussi d'évaluer les besoins et les capacités des ressources humaines en gestion de l'environnement et en gouvernance pour l'ensemble du Bangladesh. Les questions sexospécifiques occupent une place importante; des experts des établissements partenaires animent des ateliers et travaillent à la conception d'un manuel sur l'« écologisation » du microcrédit offert aux organismes communautaires, nombreux à aider des femmes à démarrer leur entreprise. La durabilité de toute stratégie environnementale au Bangladesh repose sur le fait de permettre à ces femmes de participer au processus décisionnel concernant la gestion des ressources naturelles du pays.

Partager leurs acquis

En aidant leur pays d'origine, les universitaires canadiens cités dans ces trois projets remplissent des objectifs à la fois personnels

et professionnels tout en constituant des modèles fructueux de collaboration de recherche Nord-Sud. Les étudiants, les autres professeurs et les groupes communautaires bénéficient manifestement des travaux de recherche et des aptitudes de réseautage des professeurs de la diaspora dans les pays en développement. Tout en reconnaissant la valeur des connaissances et des ressources uniques qu'ils apportent aux projets internationaux, ces professeurs se méfient toutefois de ce qu'on attend d'eux concernant leur éventuelle contribution auprès de leurs collègues du Sud et de l'établissement de stratégies canadiennes de développement qui feraient d'eux un groupe à part portant le fardeau de responsabilités additionnelles. « Le fait de rassembler les professeurs de la diaspora dans une catégorie à part ajoute-t-il une certaine dose de culpabilité?, s'interroge M. Haque. Nous devrions passer ces politiques au crible, évaluer les pratiques exemplaires et nous questionner sur le rôle de catalyseur que la diaspora peut jouer. »

« On ne peut forcer la main à personne, » précise M. Madramootoo. « L'idéal est de mettre en place des programmes auxquels les membres de la diaspora voudront contribuer et qui sont bénéfiques pour le Canada ainsi que pour les universités et le pays d'origine des professeurs. »

NEW
UNI WORLD WEB EXCLUSIVE

UniWorld is now accepting your stories for publication online. Southern and Canadian project directors are invited to submit articles related to development, 500 to 700 words in length. The topics can range from trends you are noticing in international development circles, to lessons learned and best practices, to personal experiences in development.

Our first two submissions are "The role of radio in addressing societal issues in rural coastal Tanzania" by Mr. Hamisi Dambaya of the University of Dar es Salaam and Dr. Anthony Dickinson of Memorial University of Newfoundland, and "Reframing a society: A participatory video production with recyclers" by Dr. Jutta Gutberlet and Bruno de O. Jayme of the University of Victoria. Both stories can be found at www.aucc.ca/publications/aucppubs/magazines/uniworld

Please be advised that all items are subject to revision by our editorial staff. Along with your articles, we encourage you to submit photos, as well as caption information and a photo credit. All submissions should be addressed to Christine Choury at cchoury@aucc.ca.

NOUVEAU
UNIMONDE EXCLUSIF SUR LE WEB

Les directeurs de projet du Sud et du Canada du programme de PUCD sont invités à soumettre pour publication en ligne des articles pour UniMonde. De 500 à 700 mots, ces articles peuvent porter sur les tendances observables dans le milieu du développement international, les leçons tirées et les pratiques exemplaires, ou encore sur une expérience personnelle du développement.

Les deux premiers articles soumis en anglais, s'intitulent : « The role of radio in addressing societal issues in rural coastal Tanzania » de Hamisi Dambaya, University of Dar es Salaam, et d'Anthony Dickinson, Memorial University of Newfoundland; et « Reframing a society: A participatory video production with recyclers » de Jutta Guberlet et Bruno de O. Jayme de l'University of Victoria. Vous trouverez ces articles au www.aucc.ca/publications/aucppubs/magazines/uniworld

Tous les articles soumis seront revus par le personnel de rédaction du magazine. Nous vous invitons à joindre à vos articles des photographies, accompagnées d'une légende, ainsi que leur provenance. Faites parvenir le tout à Christine Choury à cchoury@aucc.ca.

Décès

Mukadi Kankonde, professeur de la faculté des sciences agronomiques à l'Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN) en République démocratique du Congo, est mort en octobre dernier d'une crise cardiaque. M. Kankonde était membre du comité de gestion du programme PUCD « Renforcement des capacités visant la sécurité alimentaire » en partenariat avec l'Université Laurentienne de Sudbury. Le projet a pour but d'améliorer la capacité

de la faculté d'agronomie de l'UNIKIN et d'appuyer les collectivités dans les domaines en lien avec le développement durable et la sécurité alimentaire. Grâce au projet, l'UNIKIN a maintenant un centre multimédia et une salle informatique avec tous les équipements requis. M. Kankonde était co-responsable du curriculum pour le nouveau programme Diplôme d'études approfondies. M. Kankonde manquera grandement à ses collègues.

Professeur Kankonde Mukadi présentant une séance d'information aux ingénieurs agronomes admis au nouveau programme de 3^e cycle en sécurité alimentaire à l'Université de Kinshasa.



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